

ATTACHMENTS

Speeches and presentations

1. Opening
 - 1.1 Dr. Heinz Fischer, President of the Federal Republic of Austria
 - 1.2 Dr. Josef Moser, President of the Austrian Court of Audit, Secretary General of INTOSAI, Austria
 - 1.3 Dr. Thomas Stelzer, United Nations/DESA

Abschrift der Videogrußbotschaft von Bundespräsident
Dr. Heinz Fischer anlässlich des
INTOSAI-Symposiums vom 11. bis 13. Februar 2009
im Vienna International Center

Presse/Rys//Thiemer/3.2.2009

Meine sehr geehrten Damen und Herren!

Hochgeschätzte Gäste!

Es ist mir eine wirkliche Freude als Bundespräsident der Republik Österreich, Sie alle hier in Wien, in der Republik Österreich, begrüßen zu können.

Ich begrüße Sie beim 20. INTOSAI-Symposium, und ich kann Ihnen versichern, dass mir die Bedeutung der INTOSAI, die Bedeutung der Zusammenarbeit der Rechnungshöfe weltweit, sehr bewusst ist.

Als Jurist und Universitätsprofessor für Politikwissenschaften habe ich sehr genau die Entwicklung der Rechnungskontrolle in Österreich verfolgt, wo wir schon in der Bundesverfassung von 1920 sehr präzise Bestimmungen über das Rechnungswesen und die Rechnungskontrolle enthalten haben, die seither weiterentwickelt und ausgebaut wurden, und ich habe auch mit großer Aufmerksamkeit die Entwicklung von INTOSAI verfolgt, eine Gründung aus dem Jahr 1953, wenn ich es richtig in Erinnerung habe, eine Initiative, die von Kuba ausgegangen ist, und die sich dann im Laufe der Zeit sehr durchgesetzt und bewährt hat.

Seit den späten 60er-Jahren ist Österreich mit der ehrenvollen Aufgabe betraut, das Generalsekretariat der INTOSAI zu stellen und zu betreuen, und die damit verbundenen Aufgaben zu erfüllen. Ich glaube, dass ich den österreichischen Präsidenten des Rechnungshofes, die seit dieser Zeit im Amt waren, zu dieser Aufgabe gratulieren darf, mich herzlich bedanken kann und soll.

Diesmal ist das Thema, dem sie sich widmen, im Besonderen der Korruptionsbekämpfung gewidmet. Wir alle wissen, dass das ein Thema ist, das unsere volle Aufmerksamkeit erfordert, wo wir Erfahrungen austauschen sollen, wo wir gemeinsame Interessen haben, wo wir gemeinsame Chancen haben, durch Zusammenarbeit, durch die Orientierung an best-praxis-Erfahrungen diese Aufgabe erfolgreich zu bewältigen.

Es würde mich sehr freuen, wenn die Konferenz hier in Wien einen Meilenstein, oder zumindest einen wichtigen Fortschritt bringen würde.

Ich habe vor kurzem mit dem Österreichischen Präsidenten des Rechnungshofes, Herrn Dr. Moser, gesprochen. Ich kenne auch den Inhalt seines Referates, seiner Ausführungen, wo er sich sehr konkret und sehr konstruktiv mit diesen Fragen auseinandersetzen wird, und damit auch eine gute Grundlage für Ihre Arbeit und für Ihre Diskussion legen wird.

Sie haben auch noch andere Tagesordnungspunkte oder andere Themen auf Ihrer Tagesordnung, die ebenfalls von großer Bedeutung sind, und Österreich ist stolz, dass diese Beratungen in

unserem Land stattfinden, und ich kann Ihnen versichern, dass der Rechnungshof in Österreich, und überhaupt die Idee des Rechnungshofes, in Österreich ein sehr, sehr hohes Ansehen hat.

Wir freuen uns über Gäste, die wir gerne beherbergen, die wir gerne willkommen heißen, wir freuen uns über Gedankenaustausch, wir freuen uns über gemeinsame Projekte und in diesem Sinne alles Gute für Ihre Konferenz, für Ihr Symposium und besten Dank für das, was Sie im Interesse einer sauberen Verwaltung, im Interesse einer funktionierenden und kontrollierten Demokratie leisten.

Alles Gute, viel Erfolg!



20th UN/INTOSAI Symposium
20^o Symposium ONU/INTOSAI
20. VN/INTOSAI Symposium
20^o Simposio NU/INTOSAI
الندوة ٢٠ للأمم المتحدة والانتوساي

11 – 13 February 2009, Vienna, Austria / 11 – 13 février 2009, Vienne, Autriche
11. – 13. Februar 2009, Wien, Österreich / 11 a 13 de febrero de 2009, Viena, Austria
٢٠٠٩ / ٢ / ١٣ – ١١

Topic/Thème/Thema/Tema

- INTOSAI: Active partner in the international anti-corruption network;
Ensuring transparency to promote social security and poverty reduction •
- INTOSAI : Partenaire actif dans le réseau international contre la corruption ;
assurer la transparence afin de promouvoir la sécurité sociale et réduire la pauvreté •
- INTOSAI - Aktiver Partner im internationalen Netzwerk zur Korruptionsbekämpfung:
Herstellung von Transparenz zur Förderung der sozialen Sicherheit und zur Beseitigung von Armut •
- INTOSAI: Agente activo en la red internacional anticorrupción;
asegurar transparencia para promover seguridad social y reducción de pobreza •

منظمة الإنتوساي: شريك فعال في الشبكة الدولية لمكافحة الفساد:
توفير الأمن الاجتماعي والحد من الفقر

OPENING STATEMENT
20th UN/INTOSAI Symposium

INTOSAI - Active partner in the international anti-corruption network;
Ensuring transparency to promote social security and poverty reduction

Ladies and gentlemen,

Corruption is one of the most daunting challenges of the 21st century. As Hans Herbert von Arnim, professor at the German University of Administrative Sciences, rightly stated, “corruption flourishes in the dark and the cultivation of transparency therefore becomes a key issue“.

The effective fight against corruption uncontestedly requires transparency and cooperation of all relevant stakeholders, so that every institution involved fulfils the tasks entrusted to it and a well-functioning exchange of information is assured. For this very reason, it is the purpose and intention of this Symposium entitled “INTOSAI – Active Partner in the International Anti-Corruption Network: Ensuring transparency to promote social security and poverty reduction“ to strengthen cooperation and step up this exchange of information.

I am therefore utterly delighted to welcome some 150 top-level representatives of the United Nations, the OECD, the World Bank, the IIA, anti-corruption institutions such as OLAF or INTERPOL, SAIs, and in particular relevant INTOSAI bodies.

By way of introduction let me express my sincere and cordial thanks to the United Nations for lending – once again – such generous support to this Symposium and for the many years of excellent cooperation. The very fact that we are hosting the 20th UN/INTOSAI Symposium this year underlines the lastingness and outstanding quality of our cooperation.

The large and wide-ranging audience at this joint UN/INTOSAI Symposium is convincing evidence of the interest in the fight against corruption, but in particular the interest in cooperating and the need for an exchange of experience.

In 2008, the second session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption was held in Indonesia.

In 2008, UNODC and INTERPOL signed the agreement to establish the world’s first International Anti-Corruption Academy just a couple of miles from here in Laxenburg.

In late 2009, the topic of fighting corruption will be dealt with on the global agenda by the 3rd session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Against Corruption in Qatar.

It is therefore only logical that INTOSAI is visibly manifesting its interest in an interdisciplinary fight against corruption with this Symposium, as corruption poses a

massive threat to the rule of law, to the fundamental principle of democracy, and to attaining the United Nations Millennium Goals.

The entire international community of nations is called upon to effectively address the challenges arising in the fight against corruption.

To achieve this aim, all organisations must contribute their specific strengths to ensure the best possible success. Quite naturally, INTOSAI, the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions, lives up to this responsibility as well.

This Symposium aims and is intended to

- make the different tasks of the partners involved in the international anti-corruption network transparent,
- shed light on the mutual expectations,
- underline the contribution made by INTOSAI and its members, and
- spell out in concrete terms the requisite conditions.

Structure and content of my presentation

I will divide my presentation on the contribution of INTOSAI as an active partner in the international anti-corruption network as follows:

- 1. Challenges**
- 2. Role of SAIs**
- 3. Role of INTOSAI**
- 4. Requirements to be met to fight corruption effectively**
- 5. Summary**

1) Challenges

As mentioned, the fight against corruption and the abuse of power is one of the most daunting challenges of the 21st century. The European Security Strategy pertinently states that:

"Bad governance, corruption, abuse of power, weak institutions and lack of accountability (...) corrode States from within. In some cases, this has brought about the collapse of State institutions (...) State failure is an alarming phenomenon that undermines global governance and adds to regional instability. (...)

Spreading good governance, supporting social and political reform, dealing with corruption and abuse of power, establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights are the best means of strengthening the internal order."

These fundamental statements apply not only to Europe, but hold universal validity. Corruption actually is a phenomenon that is not confined to any one region of the world, but can be found in developing and transition countries as well as in "developed" industrialised nations. We can therefore rightly say that no state and no society are impervious to corruption.

According to a generally acknowledged definition, corruption has been described as the abuse of vested power or decision-making authority (e.g. as an official in government, business, or politics) for private gain (i.e. to obtain personal advantages) at the detriment of society at large, in other words, the abuse of a position of power for one's own benefit.

As can be gathered from the definition, corruption is not exclusive to the public administration, but can also be identified in the private-sector economy. At the same time, corruption is not a phenomenon of modern times, but has been associated with humankind throughout its history in the most diverse manifestations.

On a positive note we find that corruption in its various manifestations is increasingly being recognised as a scourge. This sharper awareness can be attributed not least to the fact that every detected incidence of shortcomings has created transparency and such unfolded a special and general preventative effect.

In given cases, criminal and court investigations are of fundamental importance.

And the preventative effect plays a central role here. Government audit, as exercised by Supreme Audit Institutions and control bodies, creates transparency and, in doing so, has a preventative effect, it is therefore suitably placed to prevent abuse.

To be able to deliver this task, the requisite conditions must be created in the public sector as are necessary to bring about transparency, to close gaps in audit coverage, and to prevent bodies and institutions from “evading” audit.

Likewise, structured international cooperation of the different players within their remits, and a well-functioning exchange of information, are required. The best possible results can only be achieved if repressive and preventative measures are interlinked, aligned to one another, and complemented by training measures.

Against this backdrop, I see the main challenges of the international fight against corruption as follows:

- stepping up international cooperation for a better exchange of know-how and uniform standards,
- integrating the different approaches of the bodies involved in the fight against corruption to ensure the best possible exchange of information,
- implement an interdisciplinary approach that addresses the variety of different manifestations of corruption, and
- increased use of transparency-creating instruments in order to strengthen prevention.

In this context, SAIs must actively use their reputation and their know-how within their constitutional mandates to fight – and especially to prevent – corruption.

The question now arises, in which conditions can SAIs effectively fulfil their role?

2) The role of SAIs

Auditing the utilisation of public funds constitutes the core task of SAIs.

Even though the fight against corruption is not a primary task of government audit, but – as mentioned – of designated bodies such as the law enforcement and prosecution authorities and courts, government audit must still contribute its share to fighting waste and mismanagement, in particular corruption, with control, prevention and transparency being of key significance.

SAIs should live up to this responsibility not least against the backdrop of the United Nations Conventions Against Corruption (UNCAC), which entered into force in 2006 and pursues i.a. the following major goals:

- Promote and strengthen measures to prevent and combat corruption more efficiently and more effectively;
- Promote the integrity, accountability, and proper management of public affairs and public property.

Consistent with the spirit of UNCAC, SAIs promote transparency, make potential threats visible, and such lay the foundations for preventing or eliminating ill-directed developments.

In their work, SAIs pay attention to seemingly harmless circumstances that can always be prone to corruption, such as:

- high-level concentration and centralisation of public administration,
- cumbersome procedures,
- excessive regulation, but also
- the lack of an adequate legal basis.

A fundamental prerequisite for SAIs to function well and effectively is functional and organisational independence in the fulfilment of their tasks.

Independence of SAIs has been embedded in the Lima Declaration of Guidelines on Auditing Precepts, adopted by INTOSAI in 1977, as a fundamental principle of government audit. The Lima Declaration contains basic postulates and a definition of key terms. Government audit has been described as follows:

"The concept and establishment of audit is inherent in public financial administration as the management of public funds represents a trust. Audit is not an end in itself but an indispensable part of a regulatory system whose aim is to reveal deviations from accepted standards and violations of the principles of legality, efficiency, effectiveness and economy of financial management early enough to make it possible to take corrective action in individual cases, to make those accountable accept responsibility, to obtain compensation, or to take steps to prevent--or at least render more difficult- such breaches."

The Mexico Declaration on SAI Independence, which was adopted in 2007, fleshes out and complements the Lima Declaration. With independence being a key issue, INTOSAI has placed the year 2009 under the motto of "Strengthening SAI Independence".

SAIs, whose primary task is to make government operations more transparent, efficient and effective, have after all a key role to play in ensuring good governance and fighting corruption.

Good governance, democracy, and the rule of law, along with financial accountability, an independent judiciary, the engagement of civil society, and effective control mechanisms are indispensable in the fight against corruption.

SAIs who report their audit findings and recommendations to Parliament and publicize them through the media, create a climate of transparency that largely contributes to detecting and even preventing corruption. SAI's raise public awareness for financial management issues, they furnish valuable, reliable and objective information on government activity, and thereby allow the citizens to take their governments to account.

In order to reach the goals of UNCAC it is critically important - as is demanded by the text of the Convention - that all internal and external government audit institutions cooperate effectively in an international network. In keeping with its motto of "Experientia mutua omnibus prodest" this is a central role of INTOSAI, which I will address in the following.

3) The role of INTOSAI

Corruption can only be fought effectively if efforts are orchestrated and coordinated. This also applies to SAIs.

And it is the reason why individual SAIs have joined forces under the umbrella of INTOSAI. INTOSAI's main task is to promote good governance, raise transparency, guarantee accountability, fight corruption and strengthen public confidence. The activities INTOSAI has unfolded in the past, and especially its present commitment, clearly show that INTOSAI is living up to this task with all its energy. This very Symposium is the best proof.

3a) INTOSAI activities in the past - internal

In the past, INTOSAI addressed the “The role of SAIs in fighting corruption and mismanagement” as early as in 1996 at an UN/INTOSAI seminar in Vienna.

In the final recommendations of the seminar it was proposed to adopt measures that enhance efficiency and transparency of SAIs, promote the engagement of the civil society, and heed citizens’ concerns.

In 1998, the INTOSAI Congress in Montevideo addressed the subject of corruption and identified the following areas of government as being specifically prone to corruption:

- collection of levies (in particular of customs) and charges,
- public procurement,
- privatisation processes,
- the awarding of subsidies,
- recruitment of public servants.

SAIs agreed that comprehensive accountability and reliable budgetary accounting ensure the greatest possible transparency of government operations and prevent corruption.

At the same time, SAIs agreed on the need for audit reports to be published and for SAIs to have access to the media.

The final proceedings of the Montevideo Congress contained recommendations for SAIs to make an effective contribution to the fight against corruption which are still valid today, such as e.g.

- SAIs should enjoy financial, functional and operational independence,
- the audit mandate of SAIs should be as comprehensive as possible,
- SAIs should play an active role in evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of financial and internal control systems (in particular of internal audit),
- SAIs should focus their audit strategies on areas and transactions that are particularly prone to corruption,
- SAIs should publish their audit reports and forge effective links with the media,
- SAIs should cooperate with national and international organisations involved in fighting corruption,
- SAIs should promote a code of ethics for the public service.

Until this day, these postulates have been the basis underlying the daily audit and control activities of individual SAIs and the starting point for INTOSAI's current activities, allowing it to make a decisive contribution to the fight against corruption.

The following examples of activities which INTOSAI carried out in the last three years emphasize the importance which INTOSAI accords to international cooperation, to the creation of transparency, and the development of required guidelines and frameworks:

1) Establishment of the UN/INTOSAI Platform on Government Accountability

This platform was established in the wake of the last INTOSAI Congress in Mexico City in 2007 with the aim of promoting cooperation between INTOSAI and the United Nations. It allows for structured and coordinated cooperation of the INTOSAI players with the various UN bodies. The fight against corruption is one of four priority areas that have been defined.

2) Cooperation with civil society (Global Forum on Reinventing Government)

The UN Global Forum on Reinventing Government, which was held in June 2007 in Vienna and which INTOSAI attended as an active partner, was the starting point for dealing more extensively with issues relating to innovative governance that is responsive to citizens' needs. The core themes of the forum have been the fight against corruption and enhanced cooperation between governments, civil society and government audit institutions, in particular INTOSAI.

3) Capacity building in cooperation with international partner organisations

Capacity building is one of the overarching goals of INTOSAI and has been included in three of the four goals set out in INTOSAI's Strategic Plan that was adopted in 2004. In this process, the INTOSAI Development Initiative headed by the SAI of Norway plays a leading role as trainer and international networking partner.

Special mention must be made of goal 2 of the Strategic Plan ("Institutional Capacity Building"), chaired by the SAI of Morocco, which is to promote and facilitate the transfer and application of organisational know-how and skills to individual SAIs through training, technical assistance and other development measures.

Goal 1 of INTOSAI "Professional standards and accountability", headed by the SAI of Denmark, is just as essential in this context, since it creates the requisite framework for the daily audit work of SAIs by developing adequate and effective professional standards.

Both goals create the prerequisites for SAIs to lead the fight against corruption and abuse in an effective manner.

4) Cooperation in the cross-border use of funds ("INTOSAI Tsunami Initiative")

We all still recollect the disastrous impact of the tsunami on 26 December 2004 that unleashed international aid activities on an exemplary scale.

Given the existence of gaps in audit coverage, these activities that were deployed by private and public bodies, a variety of states, and international and national organisations, harbour the risk of aid deliveries not being used according to their intended purpose.

The UN/INTOSAI Symposium in June 2006 therefore discussed how to strengthen global government audit. The conclusions of the Symposium provide guidance to various stakeholders (national Parliaments and governments, aid organisations, multilateral institutions etc.).

Presented in November 2008, the results of the Task Force on the Accountability and Audit of Disaster-Related Funds that was set up in the wake of the Symposium is yet another milestone in ensuring an efficient and needs-oriented use of donor funds.

5) Value and benefit of SAIs and international organisations

Transparency is a fundamental prerequisite for credibility, reputation and acceptance, which in turn requires that our own performance (the value and benefit of our work) is made visible.

Transparency has always been and remains one of the most effective means of general and special prevention in the fight against corruption.

Government audit and international organisations must therefore lead by example in making their work transparent.

With this in mind, INTOSAI devoted itself to this topic at the 19th UN/INTOSAI Symposium in March 2007 in Vienna on the "Value and Benefits of SAIs in a Globalised Environment".

This topic will constitute one of the two principal themes at the upcoming INTOSAI Congress in South Africa in the year 2010.

6) INTOSAI Working Group on the Fight Against International Money Laundering and Corruption

The Working Group on the Fight Against International Money Laundering and Corruption was established at the INTOSAI Congress in 2007 in Mexico City in succession to a task force. It will devote all its efforts to drafting guidelines, promoting an exchange of experience in the field of prevention, and defining criteria and instruments for institutional networking to facilitate the fight against corruption.

These examples are convincing evidence that

1. INTOSAI attaches utmost importance to transparency, prevention and the fight against corruption,
2. INTOSAI is aware that it must lead by example and takes this role seriously,
3. INTOSAI is fully committed to internal, but especially to international cooperation with partner organisations.

In order to effectively implement these three objectives, each individual SAI must be able to accomplish its mandate independently, objectively and effectively.

For that, each individual SAI must be granted a maximum degree of independence within their constitutional framework.

4) Requirements for an effective fight of corruption by SAIs

As I have outlined, only strong and efficient SAIs can play a key role in the government accountability process. They can deliver their tasks objectively and effectively only if the constitution endows them with the required independence in functional, staffing and organisational terms, and if they enjoy free and unlimited access to information.

All of this has been laid down clearly as key prerequisites in the 1977 Lima Declaration of Guidelines on Audit Precepts, the Magna Charta of government audit.

The key principle of SAI independence has been reaffirmed by the 2007 Mexico Declaration and endorsed by INCOSAI XIX.

The responsible state bodies must be aware that independent government audit is a key pillar in their constitutional framework and that only an audit function that is independent of the executive will be able to deliver significant added value in tackling

the most pressing challenges of our times – the fight against corruption, poverty, illiteracy and environmental degradation.

In industrialised as well as in developing countries, it is SAIs who are responsible for auditing a wide spectrum of government activities (e.g. social affairs, health, education, etc.). They have the required technical know-how to audit the realization of the millennium goals and assess the adequacy of government structures and procedures; they communicate and act globally and draw on relevant international audit standards.

Each and every citizen has a legitimate interest in being informed on the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of public funds. Each and every citizen should therefore enjoy public access to the findings of SAI audits.

SAIs are uniquely suited for their fundamental role as watchdogs of public finance: they ensure transparency and an optimal allocation of resources, provided however that they are endowed with the independence that is required to fulfil their tasks.

To achieve this aim, the international community of states must subscribe to the principles of independent, objective and effective government audit.

As Secretary General of INTOSAI I invite each and every one to ensure that the fundamental principles laid down in the Declarations of Lima and of Mexico find their way into the body of law governing the international community of nations. This could be done, for example, by passing a UN resolution that adopts or acknowledges the Declarations of Lima and Mexico.

INTOSAI has already undertaken or initiated activities towards this end.

- The matter I just mentioned was put on the agenda of an ECOSOC (...) meeting in July 2008.
- Moreover, INTOSAI signed a Memorandum of Understanding with IFAC (...) and with IIA (...) on these activities. The conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding with the OECD and with donor organisations such as the World Bank is currently under way.

5) Conclusion

Summing up, one can say that:

INTOSAI is willing and able to meet the challenges it is facing. In order to fight corruption and mismanagement effectively, it is necessary to:

- 1) promote those instruments which enhance transparency and therefore prevention. For this, SAI independence and public access to SAI reports must be strengthened,
- 2) pursue an interdisciplinary approach that takes into account the variety of forms in which corruption manifests itself,
- 3) interlink the different approaches of all bodies and institutions involved in the fight against corruption and ensure the best possible exchange of information, and in particular
- 4) step up international cooperation for a better exchange of know-how and uniform standards.

Taking a glance at the programme of the UN/INTOSAI Symposium we see that the major stakeholders in preventing and fighting corruption are present here today: representatives of the United Nations, chairs of INTOSAI bodies, representatives of many SAIs, of the OECD, the World Bank, and different anti-corruption institutions such as OLAF or INTERPOL. An exchange of knowledge and experience is therefore guaranteed. The contributions from different angles will shed light on the topic of fighting corruption from all sides and convey an understanding of the different tasks and contributions made in the fight against corruption.

We should therefore be able to gather vital insights and reach conclusions that will allow us to address corruption and mismanagement even more effectively in the future within our given mandates.

I personally would consider this Symposium a success if by the end we managed to adopt joint conclusions aimed at:

- strengthening international and inter-institutional cooperation,
- interlinking the different tasks,
- emphasising the importance of SAI independence in the fight against corruption.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish you an interesting and informative Symposium, stimulating debates and productive deliberations.

To conclude I hope that by the end of these three days we will all be able to make a more vigorous, coordinated, and such more effective contribution to the fight against corruption.

Thank you for your attention!