

21 June 2002

**Statement of H.E. Dr. Han Seung-soo,  
President of the 56th Session of the General Assembly,  
before the Ad Hoc Committee for the Negotiation of  
the Convention against Corruption**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to address the second session of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Negotiation of the Convention against Corruption.

The work of this Committee represents an important element of a broad agenda for promoting a better world. We have come to recognize that sustainable social and economic development and in many cases domestic and regional peace and security depend on good governance and the rule of law, which in time have to rely on an acceptable and stable corruption-free public administration.

In the Millennium Declaration, Member States took action to promote core values and principles which included freedom, equality, solidarity and shared responsibility. They also clearly stated that there is a fundamental need to strengthen respect for the rule of law in international as well as in national affairs and to fight transnational crime in all its dimensions. More generally, the Declaration also speaks of the challenge of development and poverty eradication for which good governance and transparency are keys to success.

Your work takes efforts against corruption to a higher, global level, in accordance with your mandates established by the General Assembly.

The International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico in March earlier this year, was the first collective exchange of views between four key stakeholders on global economic issues: governments, civil society, the business community and key economic institutions. In that Conference, I emphasized that the core elements of an infrastructure for success in development include good governance, a strong anti-corruption ethic, and the transparently-applied rule of law. I had to point out at the time that, while the Millennium Declaration sets important international targets for 2015, progress so far has been unfortunately slow.

However, I am pleased to say that despite of the slow progress, some efforts have been successful, and that the establishment and work of this Ad Hoc Committee can be counted as one of those successes. The broad terms of reference by the General Assembly clearly establish that the United Nations and its Member States are committed to fighting corruption in all its aspects, and with all of the means at their disposal, including prevention, criminalization, international cooperation, and the return of funds of illicit origin. I am sure that the next major international conference, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which will take place in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September, will no doubt acknowledge the developments which have taken you thus far, and will encourage you to do your utmost to fulfil your mandate.

This Committee has a challenging task. Both developing and developed countries are here together in an effort to develop an effective international legal instrument. I have followed the course of your negotiations closely, and I know that the time schedule set by the General Assembly to complete your work is very tight. However, I have a full confidence in your abilities, commitment and dedication to the work ahead.

I know that many of you were involved in the negotiations of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three Protocols. I am sure that you will be able to build on that work, and on the experience you have gained, in a renewed spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding. We have already shown that with a strong will to tackle a serious threat, Member States were able to complete four international instruments in just two years. I believe that the fight against corruption represents a similar challenge for all of us.

In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity to strongly appeal to Member States which have not yet signed the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols to do so and to Member States who have already signed, to ratify them as early as possible. The Road Map to implement the UN Millennium Declaration encourages Member States to put these instruments into force. The fight against transnational organised crime is the fight against corruption, eventually facilitating good governance and sustainable development.

The existence and mandate of this Committee strongly demonstrate that corruption is a serious form of transnational crime which can and must be deterred, and that it is a phenomenon which can and should be prevented. Prevention involves setting clear standards for integrity and service in public administration. The people everywhere expect a successful completion of your important work.

Fighting corruption is a long-term process in every country. Long-term institutional commitments by Governments and civil society, as well as the mass-media and the academic community, together with the sustained commitment of adequate resources are critical to the success of our efforts.

Your very presence here is a major step forward in our struggle against corruption. The development of a new international legal instrument will be seen as a major success and will provide a basis for further progress. I am sure that this new instrument, when finalized, will

herald a new era of international cooperation against corruption. This will guide us to build and leave a better world for our future generations. I wish you every success in your deliberations.

Thank you.