

## Regional Initiatives: Corruption Convention

### QUESTION

Is a corruption convention really going to make a difference in view of the wide-spread corruption at the top levels of government in this region? Why hasn't Canada signed the Caracas convention?

### SUGGESTED REPLY

- Hemispheric leaders made a clear commitment to eliminate corruption in the Declaration at the Summit of the Americas. The Inter-American Convention Against Corruption is an important first step in this battle.
- Canada has indicated its willingness to sign the Convention on several occasions.
- Canada could not sign the Convention at the 1996 signing ceremony for a variety of reasons:
  - insufficient time to seek authority to sign;
  - discrepancies in different language versions of the text, now corrected;
  - questions as to whether necessary legislative changes had to be in place in Canada before the Convention was signed.
- Work is now underway to produce legislation to criminalize bribery according to an OECD convention (Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions), so the legislative changes are being resolved.