

# REPORT FROM THE ROUNDTABLE ON INTERNATIONAL CORRUPTION

June 21, 2001  
Ottawa, Ontario

On June 21, 2001, the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development organised a **Roundtable on International Corruption**. Legal experts, business representatives, NGOs and government officials discussed mechanisms aimed at combatting corruption, including business integrity pacts. Among the participants were Bronwyn Best (Transparency International), Michael Davies (Canadian Council of International Business), Frances Gordon (International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy) and Keith Morrill (Criminal Law, Privileges and Immunities, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade). Steven Lee (Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development) chaired the meeting.

This report is divided into 4 parts:

1. Corruption: an Overview
2. Legal Mechanisms to Combat Corruption
3. The role of Business
4. Summary of the Discussion

## 1. Corruption: an Overview

Bronwyn Best (Transparency International) gave a brief overview. A new consciousness about corruption has developed in the recent past, accompanied by an increased media coverage. She drew attention to the 1998 Transparency International Mission Statement, which provides an effective synopsis of the corruption issue:

Corruption is one of the greatest challenges of the contemporary world. It undermines good government, fundamentally distorts public policy, leads to the mis-allocation of resources, harms the private sector and private sector development and particularly hurts the poor. Controlling it is only possible with the cooperation of a wide range of stakeholders in the integrity system, including most importantly the state, civil society and the private sector. There is also a crucial role to be played by international institutions.

She made several additional points:

- Corruption can be conceptualised as either "grand" or "petty." An example of the former includes abuse of public power for private gain (i.e., corruption in a state-led construction project). Petty corruption often affects the poor and includes "looting" or "large-scale economic delinquency" (looting is prevalent in countries with weak institutions).