



**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**  
**Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD)**

**Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting on  
Deepening the Judiciary's Effectiveness in Combating Corruption**

**Addis Ababa, 19-21 November 2007**

**Opening Remarks**

**by**

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**Director**

**Governance and Public Administration Division**

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Experts,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and indeed, on behalf of the Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD), I wish to extend to all of you a warm welcome to Addis Ababa and to this Ad-hoc Expert Group Meeting on “Deepening the Judiciary’s Effectiveness in Combating Corruption.” I thank you for taking time from your busy schedules and responsibilities to come to this meeting and share with us your invaluable expertise in this area.

You will all agree with me that the theme of our deliberations at this meeting on the role of the judiciary in combating corruption is an important one. Corruption has a corrosive effect on development. It increases the cost of doing business, undermines the efficient delivery of services, compromises the capacity of the state and creates a wedge between the governors and the governed. A major institution germane for the control of corruption is the judiciary. The judiciary is the custodian of the law and due process, and ensures that unjust and corrupt acts, and the abuse of power, which violate the law are duly punished. The ECA African Governance Report, 2005 clearly indicates that corruption remains a major challenge to our development process in Africa, which is rampant in many state institutions including the judiciary itself. The challenge therefore for the judiciary is twofold. First is for the judiciary in assisting in curbing corruption in the society and secondly, the judiciary purging itself of corruption within its own ranks. These are the dual challenges we shall be deliberating upon in the next two days.

Specifically, this meeting will review and discuss the background paper prepared by the ECA on this issue, which is before you, with a view to proposing practical modalities at enhancing the role of the judiciary in combating corruption. After your review and comments and having incorporated your suggested changes into the paper it will be published and widely disseminated so that the necessary awareness could be raised to combat corruption on the continent.

By way of context, the first draft of this paper was submitted to a peer review process from 4 to 5 December 2006 here in Addis Ababa. The review meeting involved anticorruption commission and agency officials, who are tasked with the preparation and implementation of projects and programs on anticorruption or who raise the topic of corruption to the level of policy dialogue. That meeting recommended, among other things, that after their review of the paper, ECA should submit the revised version to an ad hoc expert group meeting involving judicial and law enforcement officials and major actors in civil society to discuss and make inputs into the paper before being finalized and disseminated.

It is against this background that this meeting is being convened. I am firmly convinced that at the end of your deliberations you will be able to draw up specific policy recommendations, program and

action plans for the Judiciary to curb the debilitating problem of corruption in Africa, in a permanent and sustained manner, so as to promote socioeconomic development on the continent.

I believe that each of you have demonstrable experience, expertise and exposure to contribute meaningfully to the issue before you. I hope that your contributions will not only help enrich the background paper but also bring refreshing perspectives to how our continent can effectively control the problem of corruption in all its ramifications. I must acknowledge that a number of countries have made some strides in this effort, but a lot needs to be done!

Before I conclude my remarks, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the GTZ for its generous contributions, without which this meeting would not have been possible. Let me also thank my colleagues in the Governance and Public Administration for the ECA for their varied contributions towards making this meeting possible.

With these few remarks, I wish to thank you, once again, for being here with us and wish you successful deliberations.

I thank you.