



**TI Recommendations for Strengthening the MESICIC  
X Committee of Experts Meeting  
Washington D.C., 11-16 December 2006**

Transparency International (TI) chapters across the Americas, <sup>1</sup>the leading civil society network devoted to the fight against corruption, respectfully submit the following recommendations urging action to strengthen the follow-up mechanism (MESICIC) and otherwise promote implementation of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (Convention).

TI is gratified that the Conference of States Parties agreed to several recommendations submitted by TI, particularly to reinstate on-site visits by the Committee of Experts under Article 32 in the MESICIC Rules of Procedure.

We take this opportunity to urge further consideration of other TI recommendations that will strengthen the MESICIC process and ultimately lead to broader, more effective implementation of the Convention.

TI has been particularly active in support of the Convention and in the MESICIC process, contributing to its creation and working to promote an effective and transparent process which includes civil society participation at all stages. Since the review process began, 15 TI chapters from across the hemisphere have submitted responses to the Committee's questionnaires. They have presented findings at every Committee meeting. Through this collaborative process, we believe we have contributed to progress toward our common objective of strengthening systems to reduce corruption in our countries.

As the Committee meets this week, it has been almost a decade since the Convention entered into force. While many governments may have made progress toward implementation, the MESICIC process has proceeded slowly and, with the review of only a few provisions completed, it is difficult to assess the full extent of implementation. Now is the time for the Committee to intensify and accelerate reviews of Convention implementation and on country-specific recommendations, informing citizens of progress to date, and enhancing the involvement and capacity of civil society in all aspects of the MESICIC and in-country actions.

**I. All States Parties Should Report to the 2007 General Assembly on Progress Implementing the Convention**

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<sup>1</sup> The names of organizations in the TI movement in the Americas are listed at the end of this document.

Ten years after conclusion of the Convention, it is time for each States Party to report to the 2007 OAS General Assembly on steps it has taken to implement the entirety of the Convention. The pace of the MESICIC reviews should not delay action by the States Parties to carry out their obligations under the Convention and report on progress in this regard.

## **II. The Committee Should Strengthen the MESICIC Methodology and Accelerate Reviews to Promote Convention Implementation**

### **1. The Committee should immediately undertake on-site visits as part of the country review process.**

With the Conference of States Parties having restored Article 32 in the MESICIC Rules of Procedure, the Committee should immediately begin to conduct on-site visits to follow up on its recommendations for the first round to promote and assess implementation. For the second round, the Committee should include on-site visits in the collection of data during the country review process. On-site reviews are now within the Committee's discretion, and should be performed as a matter of course.

### **2. The Committee of Experts should bring to bear the requisite expertise on issues subject to review.**

The expert's recommendations form the critical basis for reform. Given the highly technical nature of the provisions being reviewed, the Committee should ensure that it has acquired or brings to bear the necessary technical skills to issue specific, detailed recommendations providing guidance on how to address deficiencies in implementation of the Convention. The Committee should consider how the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) could assist the Committee in developing or mobilizing the requisite expertise.

### **3. The Committee should accelerate the pace of MESICIC reviews.**

The MESICIC should accelerate the pace of reviews by holding three annual meetings each year (reviewing at least five countries per meeting) to ensure that each round is completed within two years. Ten years have elapsed since the Convention was concluded, and yet many provisions will remain to be reviewed even after completion of the second round. The MESICIC must act now to increase the pace of its reviews.

## **III. All States Parties Should Publish Action Plans and Annual Progress Reports on Actions to Implement Recommendations.**

## **IV. The Committee Should Enhance Civil Society Participation**

### **1. The Committee of Experts should institutionalize and afford adequate time for civil society participation.**

TI applauds the States Parties' commitment expressed in the Inter-American Program of Cooperation to Fight Corruption to promote civil society involvement in all aspects of the MESICIC process and urges the Committee to act on this commitment by

institutionalizing opportunities for civil society participation in its meetings and providing adequate time at these meetings to accommodate the number of civil society organizations (CSOs) participating. The Committee also should provide for CSOs to serve as observers of the Committee's work.

**2. The Committee should encourage broader participation by civil society, particularly academic institutions, private sector and other interested CSOs.**

In this regard, the Committee and Secretariat should broaden their outreach to civil society and encourage States Parties to support dissemination of relevant information.

**3. States Parties should support civil society capacity to participate.**

Noting the proven value of civil society engagement in the MESICIC process and the technical nature of the issues, States Parties should consider how to enhance civil society capacity to participate in the MESICIC and play its meaningful oversight role. The recent increase in the Inter-American Anti-Corruption Fund and commitment from the IADB to support the MESICIC can provide potential sources of support.

**4. The Rules should provide adequate time for civil society submissions.**

The Committee should provide CSOs with a grace period of thirty days after the governments present their reports in which to present civil society reports. This will help ensure that civil society can supplement, question or elaborate on aspects of the country reports.

#### **IV. Technical Cooperation**

**1. The Committee should develop and encourage the use of indicators and best practices, as it did for the first round, to assist countries with the implementation of the Committee's recommendations.**

**2. As the Conference of State Parties has recognized the importance of asset recovery and extradition in the Inter-American Program, these matters would benefit from further discussion as topics of collective interest during the second round.**

**3. Given the commitment of the World Bank and IADB to anticorruption and to supporting convention implementation, States Parties should pursue country assistance from these institutions for implementation of the MESICIC recommendations and commitments under the Convention.**

TI appreciates this opportunity to submit these recommendations and urges prompt action. We look forward to continued cooperation and to further exchanges in the pursuit of our mutual objective to reduce corruption in the hemisphere.

## Member Organisations of Transparency International in the Americas

Argentina	Poder Ciudadano	<a href="http://www.poderciudadano.org">www.poderciudadano.org</a>
Brazil	Transparência Brasil	<a href="http://www.transparencia.org.br">www.transparencia.org.br</a>
Canada	TI Canada	<a href="http://www.transparency.ca">www.transparency.ca</a>
Chile	Chile Transparente	<a href="http://www.chiletransparente.org">www.chiletransparente.org</a>
Colombia	Transparencia por Colombia	<a href="http://www.transparenciacolombia.org.co">www.transparenciacolombia.org.co</a>
Dom. Rep.	Participación Ciudadana	<a href="http://www.pciudadana.org">www.pciudadana.org</a>
Ecuador	Corporación Latinoamericana para el Desarrollo	<a href="http://www.cld.org.ec">www.cld.org.ec</a>
Guatemala	Acción Ciudadana	<a href="http://www.accionciudadana.org.gt">www.accionciudadana.org.gt</a>
Mexico	Transparencia Mexicana	<a href="http://www.tm.org.mx">www.tm.org.mx</a>
Nicaragua	Etica y Transparencia	<a href="http://www.eyt.org.ni">www.eyt.org.ni</a>
Panama	Fundación para la Libertad Democrática	<a href="http://www.libertadciudadana.org">www.libertadciudadana.org</a>
Paraguay	Transparencia Paraguay	<a href="http://www.transparencia.org.py">www.transparencia.org.py</a>
Peru	Proética	<a href="http://www.proetica.org.pe">www.proetica.org.pe</a>
Trinidad & Tobago	The Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute	
USA	Transparency International-USA	<a href="http://www.transparency-usa.org">www.transparency-usa.org</a>
Venezuela	Transparencia Venezuela	<a href="http://www.transparencia.org.ve">www.transparencia.org.ve</a>

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