



Mr. Secretary-General,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates and Participants,
Ladies & Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues & Friends,

We have come a long way. And still we are only at the start. Your presence here today and the interest that has poured in from around the globe, however, makes me know that it is a very promising start indeed. This Conference is history in the making where this vision of an international anti-corruption academy will turn into a reality.

According to World Bank estimates, a staggering 1-2 trillion USD are lost to corruption every year, or ten times the annual budget of all OECD countries combined. Even in health care systems - in so the called developed countries - 3 to 10% of the overall expenses are lost to fraud and corruption.

Billions are lost to feed the greed of a few and consequently deprive millions of their basic human rights. It is no longer disputed that corruption is cross-cutting and can undermine the foundations of a society where

🚩 A baby's life is neglected because the mother could not pay the bribe for medical care;

- ✚ Children are not taught because a civil servant stole the education funds;
- ✚ Elderly people do not get their pensions because the trust fund manager embezzled millions of their savings;
- ✚ Voters are cheated because gangs and big corporations bought the votes;
- ✚ Development aid never reaches the suffering because the people in the middle pocket an overwhelming share.

Or to quote an Afghan tribesman, who I met during a field mission last year: [quote] "Why shall I buy your concept of the Rule of Law, if I subsequently have to literally buy this so called 'justice' in every single case." [unquote]

Training to prevent and combat corruption has been ad hoc, at best and educational programmes have often lacked specialization and at the same time, a comprehensive and solid framework where

- ✚ Prosecutors are trained as prosecutors.
- ✚ Police officers as police officers.
- ✚ Aid workers as aid workers.
- ✚ Compliance officers as compliance officers.
- ✚ And so on.

Having until recently been the head of a national anti-corruption body myself, I am talking out of experience.

However, these practitioners are to also step out of their areas of specialization and understand the intertwined manner in which corruption manifests itself, and draw on the knowledge and expertise of other areas and their peers, so as to more efficiently and effectively work together to combat this plague called corruption.

In 2005, when I came back from the Crime Congress in Bangkok, I brought with me an idea; a fascinating idea that derived from discussions with Interpol's International Group of Experts on Corruption.

The idea was to set up a pioneer institution that would overcome current shortcomings in knowledge and practice in the field of anti-corruption; namely, an international anti-corruption academy that would function as an independent centre of excellence in the field of anti-corruption education, training, networking and cooperation, as well as academic research. An institution that would be holistic and comprehensive, and take on an inter-regional, inter-cultural and inter-sectorial approach.

A institution that would further the goals and objectives of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

This idea then was further developed with some colleagues and friends from INTERPOL, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). Among these dear friends was also the late Director-General of OLAF, Mr. Franz-Hermann Brüner, one of the *spiritus rector* and a strong and true supporter of the Academy.

During my last visit to his house in January of this year, he left with us a legacy: [quote] "The Academy is one of the most important initiatives not only for us professionals but for all of our societies as such. Let us translate it *from vision into reality!*" [unquote]. Franz, together and with all these people before me here today at this Conference, we are doing just that and translating it into a resounding reality. It is with great pleasure - even more so as Mrs. Ingrid Brüner is with us here today - to announce that the Academy's International Steering Committee took to liberty to honour Mr. Brüner's life-long commitment in the fight against corruption by naming the main hall of IACA, "the Franz-Hermann Brüner Ceremonial Hall".

Institutionally, UNODC, Austria and OLAF became the founding Partners that brought the Academy to life. The Austrian Government took over the responsibility of supporting the concept of the Academy and decided to purchase and refurbish a now state-of-the-art training facility in Laxenburg which will host IACA, and we look forward to taking you on a tour of this later today.

The Academy's goal is to build knowledge and skills for those battling in the front-line against corruption, thus creating a new generation of top-notch practitioners in the field. In doing so, the Academy will observe geographical and cultural diversity, and seek broad partnerships with public and private sector institutions, including academia, civil society and NGOs from all the regions. And as it goes global, building and establishing – with your help and support – regional offices in the mid-term should also be a priority so as to also address local and regional needs.

The curricula, which will embrace diverse cultural traditions and focus on country- or client-specific requirements, will be flexible enough for participants and students to balance their careers and studies. The services are to be five-fold:

1. Standardized trainings and research;
2. Tailor-made trainings and research;
3. (Inter-disciplinary) Academic degree-based programmes;
4. A platform for dialogue and networking activities; and
5. To be an anti-corruption think tank that also develops benchmarking activities.

As we speak, IACA is hosting its first course with the Basel Institute of Governance. The Academy will start to roll-out its full spectrum of activities including its first academic degree programmes by the summer of 2011. And it is to be remembered that we are striving to develop an inter-disciplinary Academy by professionals for professionals. We will therefore seek to ensure that its services will be available and affordable to all, no matter where you come from.

It is about empowerment by a global family of peers and like-minded for peers and like-minded, both in the public as well as in the private sector.

It is to help contribute towards keeping health services clean, education systems up and running, elections fair, aid mechanisms transparent and effective, and bridging the gap between various disciplines, between practice and science in the anti-corruption community.

No longer are practitioners (who often also risk their lives) to feel that they are ill-equipped to face the perils of corruption. Education, training and research are key to laying the foundation of a solid framework. The Academy is to become an institution that produces some of the finest anti-corruption practitioners who will further be able to pass on their knowledge and experiences to others inside and outside the walls of IACA, and onto generation upon generation.

So far for the good news.

But let me finally also raise one *caveat* with you. IACA will never be able to produce silver bullets, easy-fixes or a "one fits all" solution. It will leave with the policy makers, the politicians, the legislators, the businessmen and businesswomen, with civil society and the media and – ultimately - with all

of us the overall responsibility to say, and to say it loud and clear, No! to corruption.

Your presence here today indicates that the global community will do so and is ready to translate the Academy's vision into a reality. We will proudly be able to say that voices are not being left unheard and reinforce the momentum that currently exists.

We look forward to working closely with many, if not all, of you.

Thank you.