



*African Parliamentarians' Network Against Corruption
Réseau des Parlementaires Africains Anti-Corruption*

**6th Global Conference of
Parliamentarians against Corruption**
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PRESS RELEASE

MPs DISCUSS CORRUPTION ERADICATION....

By Fabrice Fifonsi, Executive Director APNAC Secretariat, Africa Region

Law makers from 74 Countries constituting the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) participated in a three-day meeting in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and considered strategies to eradicate Grand Corruption which has the potential of hindering the achievement of the recently UN-adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Grand Corruption is corruption committed by high public officers involving monies and other resources meant for national development which are self-appropriated and which are often stashed away in foreign countries.

“Combating grand corruption is not only a keystone to achieving the SDGs in an environment of equality of opportunity but, as well, it fosters equity and justice”, GOPAC Vice-Chair Hon Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu said during the opening of the conference at the Royal Ambarrukmo Hotel, Yogyakarta.

The conference itself was opened by the Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives, Rt. Hon Setya Novanto. Also in attendance was the Indonesian Legal and Security Affairs Minister, Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, 70 lawmakers from Indonesia, many MPs from 73 other countries and several Indonesian and international anti-corruption institutions.

Mr. Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu who is the Minority Leader in Ghana's Parliament and who also doubles up as the Chairman of the African Parliamentary Network Against Corruption (APNAC) said that the conference had the theme of "bringing perpetrators of grand corruption to justice for a sustainable world where all citizens can live in equity and prosperity".

"The theme", according to him, "reflects GOPAC's on-going work towards establishing grand corruption as a crime in international law to enable international institutions and alliances to apprehend, prosecute, judge and sentence the guilty".

He added that the theme also incorporates GOPAC's commitment to supporting measures to fight corruption as part of the SDGs. "In this regard, we strongly submit that there cannot be sustainable development without measures to fight corruption", he stressed.

Mr. Fadli Zon, a deputy Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives and GOPAC Indonesia Chairman, said at the opening that the conference represented an important opportunity for legislators to learn more about grand corruption issues, asset repatriation and the role of women in corruption eradication.

Rt. Hon Setya stated that Indonesia established GOPAC Indonesia Chapter in 2012 and joined the South East Asian Parliamentarians Against Corruption (SEAPAC).

Setya who is also SEAPAC chairman expressed his shock and dismay about data released by the World Bank stating that monies embezzled worldwide from grand corruption practices amounted to between US\$1 trillion and US\$1.5 trillion annually. Grand corruption in developing countries account for more than sixty percent of the total, Mr. Setya recounted.

"In the meantime, the funds needed to achieve the SDGs amount to US\$135 billion. If the monies from grand corruption practices were converted to achieve the SDGs then the world would have an enormous source of funds to create a better place to live in", Mr. Setya stressed.

Mr. Setya expressed the hope that GOPAC could play a key role in the eradication of grand corruption by creating an international mechanism to track down and punish the perpetrators.

“Corruption has been a serious obstacle in the eradication of poverty, famine and the fight against limited access to health and education for the people”, he concluded.

GOPAC is based in Ottawa, Canada and has membership from five continents.