



***Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC)
Position Statement and Resolution on Resource Revenue
Transparency
Kuwait, November 19, 2008***

Context

Citizens of many countries that are rich in exportable natural resources do not receive the benefits of revenue from those resources. In some cases, the rights to those resources might belong to prominent individuals rather than to the state. In others, much of the wealth from state resources is obtained by individuals in positions of power who access it for their personal benefit. The principal international initiative to address this issue is the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). A resolution at the 2006 Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) Global Conference in Arusha, Tanzania directed the GOPAC Executive to look into international public accounting standards in an effort to help ensure transparency of such revenues. (see GOPAC web site)

The GOPAC Board, responding to an offer made by the GOPAC Chair, agreed that he should pursue the idea directly. In response, a presentation to the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board at a meeting in Montreal, June 2007 led to their acceptance to consider the matter. (see GOPAC web site.) Although the response was positive, the Board has established procedures for considering such changes to standards and has not yet completed these steps.

ARPAC, the Arab chapter of GOPAC, initiated a regional program that aims at advancing legislative oversight over the government on revenues with a focus on oil, gas and mineral resource revenues. The initial findings from the country case studies imply variations in linking resource revenues to other sources of revenues as a part of a disciplined budget process. These studies also show significant offbudget funding from resource revenues sources. It is clear therefore that a lack of transparency exists in the governments' reporting to parliaments and to the public on resource revenues.

Position Statement

GOPAC believes that any revenues generated by resources owned by the state should be used for the public interest and included in a transparent way in the public accounts of government.

Resolution

Aware of the above Context and GOPAC Position Statement, GOPAC resolves to:

- establish a GOPAC Global Task Force for resource revenue transparency, in view of its importance as a source of revenue, and in view of the widely differing arrangements for

public reporting, and also the desire in many jurisdictions to invest a portion of the revenue from a depletable resource so as to provide downstream benefits;

- have the task force encourage country studies in other regions and for resources other than oil to provide for a broader base of experience similar to the efforts undertaken by ARPAC; and
- have the task force establish links with related initiatives, such as EITI, Revenue Watch Institute, Publish What You Pay and others.