

Working Paper:

Athens Statement on Political Corruption

Statement following the TI Western Europe group meeting in Athens

13-15 September 2002

Representatives of the TI Western Europe group's chapters and contacts met in Athens on 13-15 September 2002 to exchange national experiences of political corruption in Europe and about the action of their national parliaments and governments to address this problem. The meeting was hosted by TI Greece. Delegates from 11 countries attended (Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK). Members of the TI-Secretariat were also in attendance.

All delegates recognised the importance of transparency in the financial activities of political parties as a means of exposing potentially corrupt practices and influences, and the need for civil society to play an active role in this respect. Following a constructive exchange of views and information, they all agreed to work towards implementing minimum standards for transparency in that field in all European States. To that end they resolved to produce a draft statement of principles for transparency in political party funding and election spending to be presented for adoption by the TI Western Europe group at its meeting during TI's Annual General Meeting in Casablanca in October 2002.

In addition, they agreed to produce and publish a report by early 2003 that will analyse the current regulatory and legislative framework dealing with transparency requirements for political party funding and expenditure in Western European group States¹. The report will also deal with current standards of enforcement and contain detailed recommendations for legislative and regulatory reform and modernisation, where relevant.

Delegates recognised the work already done by other TI groups on political party funding, but noted that European States varied in their approach to transparency, with some States still having no regulation or legislation in the area².

Delegates stated that they valued the work of the Council of Europe on the financing of political parties and that TI would make contributions to it. They also took into consideration the work of the

EU in examining the same issue as part of the programme of preparation for EU enlargement following the Nice Treaty. They recognised the urgency and importance of that work in light of the potential enlargement of the EU from 2004. The TI delegates therefore pledged the support and contribution of their chapters to the work of the EU in this area. As a first step in contributing to that discussion, the group proposes to work towards producing draft EU standards for transparency in political party funding and election spending for adoption by Member States.

20 September 2002

Adopted by meeting participants:

<i>Arvanitakis, A.</i>	<i>TI-Hellas Secretariat</i>
Aznar, Jorge Gonzalez	Board member, TI-Spain/ University professor
Borgen, Jan	Secretary General, TI-Norway
Burgess, Kristjan	TI's contact in Iceland/ Journalist
Dell, Gillian	Programme Manager - TI-Secretariat
Doublet, Yves-Marie	Member, TI-France/ Ecole Nationale d'Administration
Elshorst, Hansjörg	Acting Executive Director, TI-Secretariat
Ewing, Keith	TI's Senior Adviser on Political Corruption/ King's College, University of London
Ferretti, Maria Paola	Member, TI-Italy/ University researcher
Hatzidimitriou, Zafiris	Board member, TI-Hellas/ Lawyer
Ishøy, Torben	Chairman, TI-Denmark/ Medical consultant
Koechlin, Lucy	Committee Member, TI-Switzerland
Kurtulus Ercis	Chairman, TI-Turkey/ Financial expert
Kurtulus, Shirley	Member, TI-Turkey
Lederberger, Zora	Project Coordinator, TI-Switzerland
Makrydimitris, A.	University Professor, Greece
Miguet, Arnaud	London School of Economics and Political Science
Moore-Williams, Anne	Executive Committee, TI-United Kingdom/ Lawyer
Papayiannides, A.	Journalist, Greece

Rohde-Liebenau, Björn	Executive Committee, TI-Germany/ Lawyer and consultant
Strauss, Michael	Board Member, TI-United Kingdom
Syrigos, Angelos	Board Member, TI-Hellas/ Lawyer
Theodossiou, Vaki	Board Member, TI-Hellas/ Physicist
Tsouderou, Virginia	Chair, TI-Hellas
Wolkers, Marie	Programme Officer, TI-Secretariat

Footnotes:

1. TI's Western Europe group: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom. The Western European group chapters represented in Athens call on all European chapters to contribute to discussion and to work in collaboration on the issues noted in this statement.

2. The delegates also welcomed that Political Corruption will be the subject of the next Global Corruption Report.

About TI

Transparency International, the only international non-governmental organisation devoted to combating corruption, brings civil society, business, and governments together in a powerful global coalition.

TI, through its International Secretariat and more than 90 independent national chapters around the world, works at both the national and international level to curb both the supply and demand of corruption. In the international arena, TI raises awareness about the damaging effects of corruption, advocates policy reform, works towards the implementation of multilateral conventions and subsequently monitors compliance by governments, corporations and banks. At the national level, chapters work to increase levels of accountability and transparency, monitoring the performance of key institutions and pressing for necessary reforms in a non-party political manner.

TI does not expose individual cases (that is the work of journalists, many of whom are members of TI chapters). Rather, in an effort to make long-term gains against corruption, TI focuses on prevention and reforming systems.

A principal tool in the fight against corruption is access to information. It is in this spirit that we offer this web site to everybody with an interest in the fight against corruption. We hope it will make a valuable contribution to assessing the gains made in recent years, and to contemplating the challenges that still lie ahead.

Peter Eigen, Chairman of the Board of Directors