

Report on the Seminar on “Corruption, Ethics and Good Governance”

Friday, 6th May, 2011

[Organized by the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) in cooperation with the O.P.Jindal Global University]

The AALCO, in cooperation with the O.P Jindal Global University, had organized a Seminar on “*Corruption, Ethics and Good Governance*” at the AALCO Headquarters, New Delhi on Friday, 6th May, 2011 from 5.30 pm -7.30 pm. The Seminar was attended by around 25 participants which included Diplomats, Professors, Researchers and Students from various Universities.

The Inaugural Session of the Seminar commenced with the Welcoming Remarks made by Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad, Secretary-General of AALCO. While noting that corruption has become a matter of great concern to the international community of States, he briefly highlighted the work of AALCO in the area of corruption. He made a specific reference to the two Special Studies that AALCO has conducted on the issue of corruption, namely, “*Combating Corruption: A Legal Analysis*” (2005) and the *Rights and Obligations under the UN Convention Against Corruption* (2006).

While Introducing the Theme of the Seminar, Prof. C. Raj Kumar, Vice Chancellor, O. P. Jindal University, narrated how the vice of corruption undermined a host of phenomenon that included; the institution of democracy, rule of law, human rights and others. He added that any solution to the issue of corruption needed to be multi-pronged and should include a variety of actors including the private sector and the judiciary.

While delivering the Key Note Address, Prof. Charles Sampford, Director, The Institute for Ethics, Governance and Law and President, International Institute for Public Ethics, remarked that corruption could not be dealt with by law alone and that it needed to be tackled with various means. While giving a detailed account about the creation of the National Integrity Systems which are key to governance reform and the fight against corruption, he observed that integrity and corruption are conceptually linked terms – with one the obverse of the other. Dwelling on the ethical aspects of combating corruption, he opined that there could not be one single institution or set of rules which could combat corruption and establish integrity, and that we needed a number of institutional pillars mutually reinforcing and supporting. He added that measuring integrity could be done by employing such processes as a checklist approach or a systems approach. In this context, he referred to Hong Kong as providing the prime example of a highly successful Anti-Corruption Commission. He also added that though its achievements have been impressive, its success depended on other factors as well – including strong political will, generous funding and a non-corrupt judiciary.

The address was followed by a number of presentations made by the faculty members of the O. P. Jindal Global University focusing on diverse areas of corruption and corrupt practices. While paying attention to the transnational aspects of corruption, Prof. Sreeram Chaulia, Professor and Vice Dean, Jindal School of International Affairs, noted that free-market corporate globalization was instrumental in the creation of transnational corruption. He added that Multinational Corporations, acting in connivance with the State and local partners, exploit the natural resources of various societies. Prof. Ashwani Kumar, Associate Professor, O. P. Jindal Global Business School, made a presentation which focused on the taxation aspects of corruption. Prof. Y.S.R

Murthy, Associate Professor and Assistant Dean, Jindal Global Law School, focused on the negative effects of corruption on the human rights, particularly, of the poor and vulnerable sections of the population. Prof. Shounak Roy Chowdhury, Assistant Prof. and Assistant Dean (Academic), Jindal Global Business School dealt with the issue of corruption within the matrix of good governance which he defined as fairness. Prof. J. Aniruddha, Assistant Prof. and Assistant Director, Centre on Public law and Jurisprudence, Jindal Global Law School dealt with the nature of laws on corruption. He stressed that laws on corruption, which are reactive in nature, needed to be replaced by pro-active legal regimes. The final presentation was made by Prof. Yugank Goyal, Assistant Prof. and Assistant Dean, Jindal Global Law School, who focused on the efforts of the grass-roots movements in the fight against corruption. With that presentation the Seminar came to an end.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Xu Jie, Deputy Secretary-General, AALCO. On behalf of AALCO, and the O.P. Jindal Global University, he thanked all the participants for showing keen interest in the topic and for taking an active part in its deliberations. He also thanked all the Distinguished Panelists for giving thought-provoking presentations on various aspects of corruption. He extended a special thanks to Prof. Dr. Rahmat Mohamad, the Secretary-General of AALCO, for his constant support and cooperation throughout the process of arranging the Seminar.