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# Third Inter-American Conference on the Problems of Fraud and Corruption in Government



Broadcast Via Satellite from  
Washington, DC  
Caracas, Venezuela  
Lima, Peru

**FINAL REPORT**  
June 13, 1996

**RESPONDACON III**

Sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development  
in Cooperation with Twenty-two Countries

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The RESPONDACON III program was intended to create a public forum in which citizens from all over the Americas could debate current issues related to corruption. No government or organization is affirming legal points in this report or judging the guilt or innocence of individuals. At issue was the principle of investigating allegations of corruption. The opinions expressed in this program should not be attributed to any particular government or organization.

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# RESPONDA CON III



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**R**ESPONDACON III, the Third Inter-American Conference on the Problems of Fraud and Corruption in Government, was held on June 13, 1996, in coordination with the Venezuelan national conference Democracy Against Corruption. More than 4,000 persons participated at twenty-six conference viewing locations in twenty-two countries. The potential television viewership, through national network broadcasts, reached into the millions. Other media outlets, including national newspapers, magazines, and television shows, increased exposure to the videoconference by millions more. Local and national organizations committed to the fight against corruption sponsored the event, with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The RESPONDACON III videoconference was broadcast from Washington, DC, via the U.S. Information Agency's (USIA) WORLDNET network, with direct satellite uplinks from Caracas, Venezuela, and Lima, Peru.

RESPONDACON III, third in a series of conferences calling for a swift response to fraud and corruption, concluded that if democracy is to be preserved, all sectors of society must strongly oppose corruption. Its message emphasized the importance of public ethics, citizen participation in demanding public-sector accountability, and the role of the media in exposing corrupt practices.

The goals of the videoconference were to

- Educate the greatest number of citizens in the importance of honesty, transparency, and integrity in government
- Publicize the global nature and threat of corruption
- Motivate governments and civil society throughout the region to mobilize in support of the fight against corruption
- Provide a forum for a free and open exchange on common issues, problems, and solutions

RESPONDACON III featured the presidents of four countries, high-level public officials concerned about corruption, and representatives of the media, nongovernmental and professional organizations, universities, and other leading inter-American organizations.

The videoconference created a forum in which political figures and experts interacted with participants throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, examined corruption issues, and generated strategies that would strengthen democracy and safeguard economic resources.

The event supported broader hemispheric initiatives agreed to in the Summit of the Americas and the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption. Open telephone lines to each viewing location afforded concerned citizens and public officials throughout the region the opportunity to ask questions on the air. Some 150 questions were posed, ranging from "Is democracy a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for avoiding corruption?" to "What role should international organizations play in national anticorruption campaigns?" The event was successful at

identifying possible strategies for combating corruption at national and international levels, and it generated media interest in the fight against corruption.

Following the broadcast, comptrollers general, journalists, judges, government officials, representatives of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and members of professional associations met locally to discuss national issues related to the problems of fraud and corruption in government.

Recommendations made during the regional broadcast and related country-level meetings included:

- Increase transparency of financial operations and citizen oversight of governmental actions, especially with respect to privatization
- Create citizens' networks to fight corruption
- Demand accountability from government representatives
- Coordinate an attack on corruption from all sectors of society
- Promote an independent judiciary that upholds the rule of law
- Educate all sectors of society in honesty and ethics
- Promote citizen participation in the political process
- Strengthen the role of media in the fight against corruption
- Audit election campaign and political party finances
- Promote enforcement of international mechanisms

RESPONDACON III received extensive press coverage throughout the region, including many articles in newspapers and magazines and feature stories on radio and television news broadcasts. Several countries plan to use portions of the program as part of follow-up activities.

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## **PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES**

In videotape presentations, four Latin American presidents—Rafael Caldera of Venezuela, Carlos Roberto Reina of Honduras, Eduardo Frei of Chile, and Alvaro Arzú of Guatemala—emphasized the debilitating effects of corruption upon democratic systems and confirmed their commitment to fight corruption.

President Caldera defined corruption as fraud against the public and suggested that all branches of government must become involved in the fight to stop it. He called on his country's executive branch to ensure transparency in its activities, the legislative branch to ensure enactment of laws designed to fight corruption, and the judicial branch to ensure prosecution of corrupt judges while protecting the honest. President Caldera cited the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption, signed this year in

Caracas, Venezuela, by members of the Organization of American States (OAS), as a major step in the fight against corruption in Latin America. The convention demonstrates the will of the guarantor countries to place the fight against corruption at the forefront of the hemispheric agenda.

President Reina stressed the importance of strengthening civil society's role in the fight to prevent illicit practices, especially in the management of public funds. The fight against corruption not only strengthens democratic institutions; it prevents economic distortions, mismanagement, and the deterioration of society's morale. He added that states must work together to overcome corruption as its causes and effects cross borders unhindered.

President Frei stated that corruption is a result of the relationship between the public and private sectors and expressed the need for high ethical standards in both. Participants were reminded that laws concerning transparency in the public service are frequently enacted, but, in the end, every citizen's attitude is more important than those laws. President Frei called on governments to remember at all times that public servants must be responsive to the citizenry, and public service and political activity must be marked by a sense of ethics.

President Arzú identified a number of the impediments to development caused by fraud and corruption. He cited Guatemalan efforts to improve governmental effectiveness, such as drafting legislation and decentralizing government. However, while it is necessary for government to have a strong institutional framework, the success of the fight against corruption depends upon the involvement of all citizens.

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## **SPECIAL ADDRESSES**

The videoconference included addresses by Harriet Babbitt, U.S. ambassador to the OAS; Edmundo Vargas Carreño, Chilean ambassador to the OAS and president of the OAS Working Group on Probity and Public Ethics; and Peter Eigen, president of Transparency International (TI), an international nongovernmental organization (NGO) active throughout the world in the fight against corruption.

Ambassador Babbitt stressed the significance of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption, which marked the first time in history that a regional bloc agreed to cooperate on the issue of corruption. The signing of this convention illustrates the global leadership the OAS member countries have taken in the fight against corruption. This effort, she noted, is essential to strengthening democratic institutions and promoting economic development.

Ambassador Edmundo Vargas Carreño emphasized that corruption is a priority issue on OAS's agenda. He pointed to the Summit of the Americas held in Miami in December 1994, where the fight against corruption was included in its Plan of Action. He also discussed how the OAS Probity and Public Ethics Working Group drafted the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption, which was approved at a plenary session held in Caracas, Venezuela, in March 1996. The convention includes provisions for cooperation and assistance between states and defines terms such as corruption, transnational bribery, and extradition. The convention addresses differing legal principles in its effort to effectively combat corruption. For example, the convention does not alter the principles of asylum but does stipulate that acts of corruption do not justify or warrant granting political asylum.

Mr. Eigen defined TI's mission as coalition building among the different sectors of society. He emphasized that NGOs are essential to the successful fight against corruption. While recognizing the importance of government actions, Mr. Eigen noted that governments must have powerful partners in civil society. He proposed supporting local initiatives to create TI chapters in Latin America. These chapters bring together people of different professions and interest groups to act as independent, technical partners with governments in designing and implementing strategies against corruption.

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## CASE STUDIES

Experts discussed three case studies and the role of civil society in combating corruption. Each segment was followed by a question-and-answer period where participants throughout the region interacted with the panelists via telephone.

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### Italy

The first panel of experts examined the anticorruption operation in Italy known as "Operation Clean Hands," which led to the investigation of prominent political and business leaders, including then Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Luigi Manzetti, associate professor of political science at Southern Methodist University, discussed why the investigations of these corrupt acts were successful. He emphasized the ability of the judiciary to shelter itself from political interference while conducting the investigations and the role of the media in disseminating information.

Stanton Burnett, senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), explained why the investigations took place in 1992, although the problem existed earlier. He remained optimistic about the future of Italian democracy, but raised some concerns about the detrimental impact of recent political changes on democracy and due process.

Filippo Vagnoni, director of the Office of the Comptroller General of Venezuela, drew lessons from the Italian example: as a government grows and its role in social and economic affairs increases, corruption also is likely to increase.

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### Colombia

The second panel of experts analyzed "Process 8,000," which charged President Ernesto Samper of Colombia with accepting more than \$5 million supplied by the drug cartels to finance the second round of his 1995 presidential campaign.

Alfonso Valdivieso, Colombia's prosecutor general who has led investigations of many politicians, including the President, offered his perspective of the June 12, 1996, exoneration of President Samper by the Colombian Congress.

Alfredo Keller, professor at the Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración in Caracas, Venezuela, took a broad view of corruption, emphasizing that the problem of corruption and drug trafficking is not limited to Colombia—it exists throughout the world. The problem is linked to the perception of impunity in the political sphere in Latin America. Dr. Keller drew parallels between economic globalization and the increase in corruption, and he emphasized the need to educate the citizenry to better confront the problem.

Robert Leiken, president of New Moment, Inc. and author of numerous articles and books on Latin America, stated that the drug problem in Colombia is a by-product of the demand for narcotics that exists in the United States. He also spoke on the issue of money laundering, calling for an international effort to overcome the problem.

The power of money in political campaigns, an issue at the core of the Colombian case, was the main topic of James P. Wesberry, Jr.'s comments. He stated that citizens must be aware of the origin of campaign funds before deciding to vote for a particular candidate, and he called for absolute transparency, accountability, and total auditing of funds received by political parties.

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## Peru

The third panel analyzed "The Electric Train" construction project in Peru. Construction began under the administration of President Alan García, who signed a bilateral agreement with Prime Minister Bettino Craxi of Italy to facilitate a \$100 million line of credit to the Italian group Tralima. Project funds were depleted quickly with only 20 kilometers of track laid; both President García and Prime Minister Craxi were charged with receiving illicit payoffs.

Martha Chávez, president of the Peruvian Congress, emphasized that identifying the causes of corruption is a crucial step in its prevention. She spoke of privatization and reorganization of public agencies and the positive impact these actions have had in Peru. Ms. Chávez labeled corruption as the chief cause of poverty, stating that public officials must be educated to use their positions to provide services rather than to profit individually.

Flor de María Maita, prosecutor in "The Electric Train Case," reiterated that the investigation had not suffered from any political pressures, demonstrating the independence and autonomy of the judicial branch. She stated that both public opinion and the press played important roles in exposing corruption cases in Peru. She urged citizens to engage in greater political participation to counteract the forces of corruption.

Congressman Andrés Reggiardo spoke on the importance of strengthening the democratic system and encouraged citizens to strongly demand that their governments be more responsible, efficient, and transparent. He reiterated the need to audit public accounts to monitor acts of corruption.

International cooperation on bank secrecy rules and the granting of political asylum to individuals charged with corruption were central to Congressman Fernando Olivera's remarks. He noted that democracies must take action against fugitives from the law to send a strong signal that they will not tolerate corruption and to deter future occurrences. The congressman spoke on the importance of maintaining the independence of the justice system, and he proposed several measures to combat corruption.

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## Civil Society and the Media

The fourth panel of experts, comprising media and NGO representatives, discussed the role of civil society in the fight against corruption. I. Roberto Eisenmann, Jr., president of Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Libertad Ciudadana (a Panamanian NGO) and former director of *La Prensa* in Panama, described the media as the first line of defense against corruption. The

media are the first to denounce corrupt practices and are responsible for following up on cases of fraud and corruption in government. Mr. Eisenmann reported on the results of a 1996 national survey conducted by Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Libertad Ciudadana, on anti-corruption, civil empowerment, and the role of the media.

Hermán Schlageter, president of the Asociación Salvadoreña Contra la Corrupción (a Salvadoran NGO), expressed the need for a close relationship between the citizenry and the media. He spoke on the role of NGOs and the media in El Salvador, calling for more citizen involvement. Mr. Schlageter also called for stronger enforcement of current anticorruption laws.

Luis Moreno Ocampo, co-founder of Poder Ciudadano (an Argentine NGO), emphasized the importance of freedom of the press, greater citizen participation, and enforcement of current legislation. Mr. Moreno Ocampo gave examples of how bribery and corruption are international issues and called on leaders to take action. In addition, he recommended that civil society demand accountability from government.

Flavia Sekles, Washington correspondent for the *Jornal do Brasil*, described how the Brazilian press has responded to different cases of corruption. She noted the importance of exposing and combating all cases of corruption rather than limiting coverage to high profile cases.

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## **QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS**

Participants viewing the videoconference at organized sites had the opportunity to respond to a questionnaire on perceptions of corruption and possible ways to combat corruption. The purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain feedback from the participants to better tailor future programs to their interests and needs. Information gathered from the questionnaire is included in the final chapter of this report. Viewers in sixteen countries returned completed questionnaires to the conference organizers. The individuals who responded to the questionnaire represent a highly selective example of their countries' populations, and the perceptions described in this report cannot be generalized beyond the selected audiences that participated.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

Asociación de Contadores Públicos, El Salvador  
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 Colegio de Contadores Públicos, Nicaragua  
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 Comisión Nacional de Rescate y Formación de Valores, Costa Rica  
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 Contraloría General de la República, Venezuela  
 Corporación de Contadores, El Salvador  
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 Martha Chávez      President of the Congress of Peru  
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Fernando Olivera	Congressman, Peru
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Alfonso Valdivieso	Attorney General, Republic of Colombia
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Bolivia	Mexico
Brazil	Nicaragua
Chile	Panama
Colombia	Paraguay
Costa Rica	Peru
Dominican Republic	Trinidad and Tobago
Ecuador	Uruguay
El Salvador	Venezuela



## OPENING REMARKS

### **Mark L. Schneider**

*Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean  
U.S. Agency for International Development*

Corruption is a problem that affects all societies, regardless of the country involved. It weakens democratic institutions and contributes to a distortion in the allocation of scarce resources. Corruption impedes economic development and drives citizens away from the political process. Narco-corruption is an even more immediate danger because it generates violence and debilitates democratic governments.

Corruption is not just a Latin American phenomenon; it is a problem in all other areas of the world. In the case of Latin America, where institutional conditions have caused corruption to flourish, Mayor Ronald McLean of La Paz, Bolivia, summarizes the problem by this equation: "The monopoly of power plus ample discretion minus accountability equal corruption." This means, first, that the tradition of pluralism in the area is weak. Second, necessary legal norms to overcome personalist governments have not been established or are not respected. Third, the lack of competition in the political as well as the economic realm has also been a key factor in the promotion of corruption. And, finally, the citizenry has not assumed responsibility with regard to public transactions. These conditions must be changed in order to reach a new equation: "Decentralized power plus transparency plus accountability equal good governance."

The Inter-American Convention Against Corruption could be one of the most significant actions taken by the leaders of our region in the fight against corruption since the Summit of the Americas in Miami. It requires each signatory country to make bribery of public officials by national and international companies a crime. I want to emphasize that to overcome the political, economic, and social menace that corruption represents, it is of utmost importance to have the commitment of all legislators and the citizenry, to have the pressure of a free and independent press, and to intensify regional efforts.

# RESPONDACON III



## PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

### **Strengthening Democracy is Essential to the Fight Against Corruption**

**Rafael Caldera**

*President of the Republic of Venezuela*

Overcoming corruption is not only a moral imperative; it is essential to strengthening democratic institutions. It is a difficult and arduous struggle that requires serious effort and will. Public opinion is the most important judge on this subject: the public knows who is corrupt. Therefore, the struggle must be directed with honesty and dedication. We must bring the corrupt to trial and provide the evidence necessary for conviction. This is a fundamental task of our democratic system, which is matched against the corrupt, who are trying to find ways to divert attention and create confusion among the citizens.

Corruption can be defined as fraud against the public. To stop these actions, it is necessary to involve all branches of government in the fight. The executive branch, of course, must ensure transparency in its activities. The legislative branch must enact effective instruments to fight corruption. The judicial branch must support honest judges and prosecute corrupt individuals. These steps must be taken so that we may once again have a system that is trusted by the public.

And finally, there must be cooperation between nations in order to eliminate the abuse of political asylum and the opportunity for impunity. The Inter-American Convention Against Corruption, signed this year at the OAS plenary session in Caracas, is a major step forward because signatory countries are strengthening the effort to deny political asylum to the corrupt and are making it possible for those people to be returned to their countries to face the penalties established by their national laws. I am deeply committed to this struggle because I believe that true awareness now exists in our nations regarding the safeguarding of our democratic institutions.

### **Fighting Corruption in the Public Sector**

**Carlos Roberto Reina**

*President of the Republic of Honduras*

Corruption undermines the legitimacy of public institutions; it taints society, justice, and moral order. Representative democracy, stability, peace, and the development of the region, by their very nature, require that corruption be fought from all fronts, especially with regard to those acts that are tied to the exercise of public power.

The fight against corruption strengthens democratic institutions and prevents economic distortions, mismanagement, and the deterioration of society's morale. It is essential to increase the participation of civil society in the struggle to prevent these illicit practices.

In some instances, corruption has international repercussions, requiring coordinated actions by states to fight it effectively. Ties are ever closer between corruption and profits from illegal drug trafficking, which together, at all levels of society, undermine and weaken legitimate commercial and financial ties.

The fight against corruption and the eradication of impunity are responsibilities of states, which must cooperate to overcome these problems. There is a need to make every effort to prevent, detect, sanction, and eradicate corruption in all its forms, especially those tied to the exercise of public power.

## **Honesty and Ethics**

### **Eduardo Frei**

*President of the Republic of Chile*

Corruption is an evil that, unfortunately, exists throughout the world. We need to fight corruption with great strength. We must have an ethical sense of public service—that is basic—but we must also be concerned with the private sector. Corruption is a result of the relationship between the public and private sectors.

In our country, fortunately, we have a long tradition of honor in public service, and this is something we want to preserve. We want everyone to understand that this sense of ethics is extremely important and that we must serve as an example to all sectors of society. It is a matter of understanding what public service is all about. For example, we can draft many laws and we can put forward many measures as far as public sector transparency is concerned, but, in the end, it comes down to the attitude of every citizen in both the public and private sectors. From the viewpoint of government, there are two things to bear in mind at all times: first, to be public servants we need to work with the people and, second, public service and political activity must be marked by a sense of ethics. We are going to continue in this direction, and our efforts shall never cease.

## **Restoring Credibility in the Public Sector**

### **Alvaro Arzú**

*President of the Republic of Guatemala*

Citizens cannot trust authorities if they suspect corrupt activities in the government. Citizens will not make accusations of criminal activities if they believe the criminals have eyes and ears within the government. They will not pay their taxes if they know their resources will not help the development of their country but will be wasted and will enrich corrupt members of government.

Investors will not invest their money in productive ventures if the rules of the game are just hollow words as a result of fraud. Corruption lessens the credibility of the state as a promoter of civil society.

Guatemala is carrying out intensive activities at the institutional level that will increase our effectiveness. Draft legislation dealing with honesty and governance is being sent to Congress for enactment.

It is necessary to have the proper institutional framework, but it is important to realize that its success will depend on the involvement of all citizens. Therefore, the entire effort is guided at decentralizing government, which, at its core, facilitates involvement of the population in public administration.



## SPECIAL ADDRESSES

### **The Inter-American Convention Against Corruption: An Effective Instrument**

**Edmundo Vargas Carreño**

*Ambassador of Chile to the Organization of American States*

It cannot be denied that corrupt practices have had an adverse impact on the legitimacy of democratic systems and have helped degrade social morale and public trust. They also affect the economy and hamper modernization efforts.

The issue of corruption has been added to the agenda of the OAS. In 1994, the General Assembly established the Working Group on Probity and Public Ethics. In December 1994, at the Summit of the Americas held in Miami, all participating heads of state agreed to include the fight against corruption in the Summit's Plan of Action. In addition, President of the Republic of Venezuela Rafael Caldera proposed that an Inter-American Convention Against Corruption be drafted by the working group. The proposal was accepted and, after several months of deliberations, the working group approved a preliminary draft, adopted at the Caracas plenary session in March 1996.

The Inter-American Convention Against Corruption became the first instrument of its kind in history. High-ranking officials represented their governments at the signing ceremony, demonstrating the political resolve of their governments not to tolerate corruption. This instrument is useful because it contains provisions for cooperation and assistance among states to define terms such as acts of corruption, transnational bribery, and extradition.

The convention also addressed the differing legal principles in the effort to effectively combat corruption. It does not alter the principle of asylum but emphasizes that acts of corruption should never be considered as political crimes that justify or warrant the granting of asylum. It does not alter the rule of bank secrecy but does allow a certain period of time during which states whose assistance is requested cannot claim bank secrecy as a reason for denying such assistance.

### **Leadership Role of the Organization of American States in the Fight Against Corruption**

**Harriet Babbitt**

*Ambassador of the United States to the Organization of American States*

The most extraordinary aspect of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption is that, for the first time in history, a regional bloc of countries has approved such a document in this field. The member countries of the OAS have taken the global lead in the fight against corruption.

Corruption is not only a regional problem; it is a global problem. Taking that into account, the countries of the region have agreed to combat this evil with a global vision, and they are seriously committed to this fight in which they have taken leadership.

Corruption is a problem that weakens democratic institutions and impedes financial investments in the region. The countries in this region continue to fight the problems of fraud and bribery. Our commitment to fight this problem is strong, and we continue to develop mechanisms of cooperation to overcome it.

## **Role of the Nongovernmental Organizations**

### **Peter Eigen**

*President of Transparency International*

The mission of Transparency International (TI) is based on building coalitions among the different sectors to fight corruption, which has become a near deadly issue within the international market, as well as within individual governments.

While it is important that governments sharpen their tools against corruption, it is also necessary that governments have powerful partners in civil society, thus making the creation of local chapters of TI very important. In Latin America, active national chapters in Argentina, Ecuador, and Panama are doing outstanding work, while in countries such as Bolivia and Colombia similar chapters are beginning to emerge.

The role of the national chapters in the fight against corruption is to bring together those elements in society from different professions and interest groups that will be independent, technical partners of the government in designing strategies against corruption and in helping to implement those strategies.

There are a number of tools that TI is making available, like the TI Source Book, which puts together in a systematic way all the different elements of an integrity system. An integrity system must be strong and rational if it is to protect society against corruption.



## CASE STUDIES

### Italy: “Operation Clean Hands”

Italy’s “Operation Clean Hands” had as its objective the investigation of the alleged illegal activities of political leaders. This process began when a group of magistrates in Milan launched an investigative campaign into corrupt practices, such as tax evasion and other illegal financial transactions. The investigation implicated the former prime minister and the presidents of several Italian businesses in serious matters of corruption. In only four years, more than 3,000 politicians and businesses were investigated, triggering a serious political crisis.

In December 1994, then Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and his cabinet resigned after trying and failing to block the investigation of illegal payments allegedly made by one of Mr. Berlusconi’s businesses. The magistrates of Milan accused Mr. Berlusconi’s FININVEST Group of making illegal payments to tax officials in exchange for favorable audits. The media reported that the ex-Prime Minister did not deny the payment of \$237,000 in bribes by his company; however, he declared he had no knowledge of the bribes. In addition to Mr. Berlusconi and his brother, Paolo, various business executives and tax inspectors were involved in the case.

#### Panelists

Stanton Burnett	Senior Advisor, Center for Strategic and International Studies, USA
Luigi Manzetti	Associate Professor of Political Science, Southern Methodist University, USA
Filippo Vagnoni	Director, Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic of Venezuela

#### Historical Context

Filippo Vagnoni described the rise of two powerful political parties in Italy in the aftermath of the Second World War. The rise of these parties was “based on the need of the great mass of Catholic Italians to confront Communism, leading to . . . the development of the largest Catholic [- supported] and Communist parties in the world.” The parties continued to strengthen in size and importance, with funding derived from Italy’s increasing industrial wealth. The political parties “made themselves owners of the apparatus of the state,” according to Mr. Vagnoni, and began to think of themselves as “owners of state resources.” Political leadership embraced this paradigm of power and, with the advent of television, competition for power within the party increased.

Stanton Burnett, responding to an audience question, confirmed Mr. Vagnoni’s view of party entrenchment. Dr. Burnett noted that none of the players had changed, although there had been innumerable governments formed and reformed in Italy since the Second World War. It was “the same parties, the same people. The situation was frozen.”

## **Political Parties**

Mr. Vagnoni and Dr. Burnett both claimed illegal funds were used in order to maintain these enormously powerful political parties and, to a lesser extent, to preserve the positions and lifestyles of individual politicians. Dr. Burnett noted, "They conducted expensive campaigns, paid big money for media time, had enormous staffs and big offices in all major cities, and had palaces in Rome." Luigi Manzetti added, "Stealing for the party was accepted."

## **Opportunity for Change**

It was long known that the political parties were spending too much money. Dr. Burnett asked, "Why was it that in 1992 they [the magistrates of Milan] decided to act?" Panelists pointed to a combination of factors: one, according to Dr. Burnett, being the motivation of the magistrates to bring about a "new" Italy in the context of the European Union. According to Dr. Manzetti, the "old" Italy was receiving poor marks from the international community. Also, the magistrates were among those most likely to benefit from the dissolution of the traditional pattern of political power. In fact, during the 1970s, the magistrates had openly declared a class struggle against such paradigms. Dr. Burnett cautioned that the magistrates were not outsiders merely acting in the interest of justice but were, in fact, highly political players with their own agenda.

The second factor contributing to the timing of the magistrates' "Operation Clean Hands" hinged on the political and public support needed to carry out such an operation. According to Mr. Vagnoni, with the disappearance of the Communist Party and the elimination of much of the motivation behind the support of the Catholic Party, the equilibrium was broken and the traditional parties began to lose support. The magistrates understood, too, that they could garner strong political support from the opposition parties. Meanwhile, the magistrates capitalized on the public's frustration with political corruption, which had reached levels where action was demanded.

## **Keys to Successful Prosecution**

Dr. Manzetti described why, once they decided to move forward, the magistrates were successful in undertaking "Operation Clean Hands." In Italy, the magistrates are relatively independent. According to Dr. Manzetti, "the judiciary is not accountable to the minister of justice, but rather to an independent council of the judiciary, two-thirds of which is elected by members of the judiciary and one-third appointed by political nomination." The magistrates, therefore, "were able to shelter themselves from political interference."

The magistrates also gained significant support from the media. Dr. Burnett described the close relationship between the media and the magistrates, noting the magistrates regularly provided transcripts of legal proceedings to the media in violation of confidentiality statutes. Dr. Burnett further cautioned that much of the media was politicized and, therefore, those that were controlled by the opposition party provided significant coverage favorable to the magistrates. In that fashion, political support was generated by the media. Political support also was apparent in more overt forms, as members of the opposition parties, including state prosecutors, openly supported the magistrates. The last key to the magistrates' success was the development of public support, with the help of the media and the opposition parties. Dr. Manzetti noted that "there was skillful manipulation of public outcry."

The magistrates became a powerful political force. In fact, Dr. Manzetti described them as the “judiciary party” that became a “power broker.” Dr. Burnett noted that, in many cases, the magistrates abused their newfound power. According to Dr. Manzetti, politicians were subjected to lengthy preventive detentions and numerous careers were ruined by accusation alone, since, in essence, those accused were guilty until proven innocent. Meanwhile, Dr. Burnett noted that several magistrates had taken advantage of their newfound authority and had gone on to pursue political office.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The panelists offered several concluding remarks, applicable not only to “Operation Clean Hands” but to similar situations worldwide. Mr. Vagnoni claimed, “It is easier for corruption to exist in large governments.” He called on governments to limit their size, arguing that transparency and access to information deteriorate as governments become larger. He reaffirmed his belief that civil society, through its electoral voice, is the first level of control in the fight against corruption.

In response to a call-in question on the relationship between democracy and corruption, Mr. Vagnoni noted that (1) a democratic system is not a guarantee that corruption will not occur, (2) democracy can self-correct, and (3) a coup d’état is not needed to overcome corruption.

Dr. Burnett stressed that “Operation Clean Hands” should be viewed as a cautionary tale rather than as an example. He emphasized that the magistrates disregarded due process, illicitly leaked information, and politicized the investigative process. He noted, too, that in the aftermath of the crisis, the three largest remaining political parties are “Berlusconi’s party (a loose alliance of support clubs), the former Communist party, and the former Fascist party.” According to Dr. Burnett, “That’s not a pretty picture.”

Dr. Manzetti stressed that “corruption is not just about a few individuals . . . it is a system.” He drew a comparison between the magistrates of Italy and the judiciary of Latin America. He noted that the judiciary is not as independent in Latin America, lowering the odds of success for an investigation similar to “Operation Clean Hands” in the region.

**Colombia:** | “Process 8,000” is the name given to the scandal rising out of the charge that Colombian President Ernesto Samper used \$5 billion Colombian pesos, supplied by the drug cartels, to finance the second phase of his presidential campaign. President Samper denied having any knowledge of this.

“Process 8,000”

The case passed through many phases, each one generating a new revelation that further deepened the country’s political crisis. In June 1994, the media discovered the existence of “narcotapes”—taped conversations providing evidence that the Cali cartel had financially assisted President Samper’s campaign. Several politicians have been investigated and, in some cases, arrested. Among those alleged to be involved are the defense minister, a senator, and several members of the Colombian Congress.

Alfonso Valdivieso, Colombia’s Attorney General, ordered the investigation of the congressmen who allegedly received payments from Export Café, a Cali cartel business. The drama shook the very roots of the drug cartel, its drug barons including the brothers Miguel and Gilberto Rodríguez Orejuela, Guillermo Palomari, the accountant for the cartel, and Henri Loaiza, also known as “the Scorpion.” These people either surrendered or were arrested.

### Panelists

Alfredo Keller	Professor, Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración (IESA), Venezuela
Robert Leiken	President, The New Moment, Inc., USA
Alfonso Valdivieso	Attorney General of the Republic of Colombia
James P. Wesberry Jr.	Principal Adviser on Accounting and Auditing for Latin America and the Caribbean, The World Bank

### The Balance of Power in Colombia

Alfonso Valdivieso described how the balance of power in Colombia affected the case against President Ernesto Samper. According to the Colombian Constitution, the attorney general has the power to file a charge against the president, but it is the Congress that makes the final decision regarding innocence or guilt. In this particular case, after Mr. Valdivieso’s office presented the charges, the Congress reviewed the case and exonerated President Samper.

While the case against President Samper remained the most important and the most widely publicized, Mr. Valdivieso asserted that the decision by Congress to exonerate President Samper merely provided closure to that particular case. It “does not close the cycle of investigations in Colombia because it is just one case that forms part of a bigger process.” He added that “other investigations that are currently being undertaken should continue,” noting that the complexity of the crisis caused by the problem of corruption requires a long-term approach.

Alfredo Keller viewed the decision to exculpate President Samper as a major setback for the judicial system. The exoneration of President Samper, he explained, “affects the credibility of the justice system in terms of its ability to overcome its deficiencies in the fight against corruption.” These shortcomings, he noted, arise because “the problem of narco-trafficking and corruption, not only in Colombia but in all of Latin America, is linked to the perception of impunity enjoyed by the political elite.”

## **The Impact of Narco-trafficking on Society in Colombia**

According to Mr. Valdivieso, the problem of corruption in Colombian society results from the pervasive and widespread influence of narco-traffickers. The corruption surrounding narco-trafficking, he added, originally was unnoticed and, at times, tolerated and even favorably perceived. However, he added, "Today, Colombia is going through a period of awakening, where society realizes the seriousness of its problems and is willing to confront them."

Mr. Valdivieso emphasized that the Attorney General's Office must work to break the links narco-traffickers have created with society. In the past, when corruption based on these links was widespread and camouflaged throughout various sectors of society, combating it was impossible. Mr. Valdivieso continued: once those links begin to weaken, the problem can be directly confronted and those individuals connected to narco-trafficking can be identified and properly sanctioned by the judicial system. It is at this stage, he asserts, that Colombia currently finds itself.

Mr. Valdivieso added that, while narco-traffickers are no longer welcome in the social and power circles of Colombia, the process of changing society's attitude toward corruption requires additional exposure to its debilitating effects. This possibly could result in massive social protests against the corrupt forces. Society must "understand the existence of this problem," stressed Mr. Valdivieso, "and have a strong determination to combat corruption."

## **Educating Society**

The panelists agreed that society is capable of making significant contributions to the fight against corruption only if it is well informed. Dr. Keller emphasized that a vital part of the struggle against corruption is the teaching of values such as honesty. There must be clarity in defining corruption: what is legitimate? and what is not? Dr. Keller further stated that Latin American leaders have failed to educate the citizens; as a result, one cannot challenge citizens to be honest if they are not taught to be honest.

The panelists agreed that a responsible media is important in providing the general public with objective and complete information. Mr. Valdivieso noted that the media's contribution in Colombia has been positive to the extent it has provided the public with some points of reference, though, at times, it has hindered investigations.

## **Globalization of Corruption**

Dr. Keller spoke on the effects of the globalization of corruption. For example, one of the consequences of drug trafficking is money laundering, which knows no borders. Dr. Keller stated that corruption arises in response to market opportunities where the risk of sanctions is negligible. As the economy becomes more global, so does corruption; thus, there must be an attack on all fronts.

Robert Leiken noted that much work has been done on a hemispheric level in the fight against money laundering, as demonstrated last fall by the signing of an anti-money-laundering agreement in Buenos Aires. He added: each country must act strongly against money laundering and cooperate with other nations. He suggested this problem can be dealt with successfully if there is political will, which he believes exists in the region.

### **Corruption and Campaign Financing**

Dr. Keller referred to the issue of corruption in campaign financing. He stated that financing political parties and campaigns in Latin America is a subject that has taken on more importance as the costs of political campaigns rise. When a politician who does not have access to money competes with one who does, the individual with less money becomes a potential target of corruption. The role played by the state in campaign financing potentially could be very important.

James P. Wesberry, Jr. added that "the 'Achilles' heel' of democracy is the power of money in political campaigns. Absolute transparency of the funds that are contributed to political campaigns is necessary, regardless of the source." According to Mr. Wesberry, transparency in the process enables citizens to know the origin of campaign funding before making a decision to vote for a candidate. He called for "transparency, accountability, and total auditing of funds from political parties."

**Peru:** Under ex-President Alan García's administration, a mass transit system was to be built as part of Lima's metropolitan infrastructure plan to alleviate traffic congestion. To carry out the project, Mr. García's government signed an agreement with the government of Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi. Italy donated more than 350 rail cars for the system and facilitated a line of credit of \$100 million and grant of \$20 million for construction by the Italian group Tralima.

**“The Electric Train Case”**

Scandal broke out when the representatives of Tralima alleged that Mr. García had accepted money in exchange for the project's approval. Although Mr. García denied the accusations, a series of investigations was launched.

The mass transit system project was suspended once public funds were depleted, with only one-third of the expected 20 kilometers partially completed. Today, the construction pillars remain standing as a testimony to public waste and abuse of power.

The Peruvian government charged Mr. García with receiving illegal payments from Italian businesses. To avoid prosecution, Mr. García sought and was granted political asylum in Colombia. To this day, the government of Peru is attempting to secure his extradition.

### Panelists

Martha Chávez	President of the Congress, Peru
Flor de María Maita	Prosecutor of “The Electric Train Case,” Peru
Fernando Olivera	Congressman and member of the investigative committee for “The Electric Train Case,” Peru
Andrés Reggiardo	Congressman and chair of the investigative committee for “The Electric Train Case,” Peru

### An Environment Ripe for Corruption

According to Martha Chávez, identifying the causes of corruption is crucial to preventing future scandals. Ms. Chávez noted that “a series of elements encouraging corruption were found” when Mr. García's successor, President Alberto Fujimori, took office in 1990. Key elements identified were exchange rate manipulation, tax irregularities, unwieldy administration, bureaucracy, and unfair federal contracting procedures. Identifying the causes of corruption in Peru, Ms. Chávez added, is a starting point for federal and state government actions to increase accountability.

### Allegations

Andrés Reggiardo contended that the \$100 million credit extended to Peru was used to pay for over-priced construction materials. Businesses involved in the scandal then used the excess profits to pay off the leaders of both countries. In Mr. García's case, according to Congressman Reggiardo, who was chair of the committee investigating the scandal, the money was placed in a secret financial haven in the Grand Cayman Islands. Congressman Reggiardo alleged it is commonly known that Mr. García has a secret account of more than \$7 million, of which \$1 million are connected to the mass transit project.

## The Investigation

Fernando Olivera asserted that the investigation into Mr. García's dealings had followed constitutional guidelines and that a suspect in Peru is innocent until proven guilty. He noted that a formal charge was made against the ex-president and that he had obtained legal representation.

Flor de María Maita said that both the Attorney General's Office and the congressional investigative committee concluded that Mr. García was guilty of financial mismanagement. She noted that Peru's laws forbid sentencing the ex-president in absentia, and she said that the attorney general is seeking his extradition from Colombia.

Contrary to the claim that Mr. García was politically persecuted, Congressman Olivera stated that the Peruvian Congress unanimously charged him with accepting illegal contributions. Ms. Maita stressed that the country's judicial branch acted independently and without political pressure during the investigation. What this signified, said Congressman Reggiardo, was that the people of Peru had taken a stand against corruption—"a moral imperative that transcends the lines of political leadership."

Ms. Maita noted that the main obstacle in the investigatory process was the secret bank account in the Grand Cayman Islands. Although the Grand Cayman government promised to cooperate with both the Attorney General's Office and the congressional investigative committee, it has released no concrete information concerning the ex-president's account. As a result, Mr. García's account is not available for investigation.

## Concluding Remarks

"The Electric Train Case" illustrates that corruption often involves multiple parties, including even high-ranking federal officials. As Congressman Olivera noted, when corruption takes on this dimension, it becomes more difficult to control since corrupt persons tend to watch out for each other.

Another lesson learned, noted Ms. Chávez, is that corruption damages more than just the economy of a country. "The Electric Train Case" in Peru clearly eroded the morale of the younger generation and honest government officials and threatened the integrity of the country.

Several key instruments in the fight against corruption were identified by Congressman Olivera: transparency in public financial management, international cooperation in the extradition of suspected criminals, enforcement of sentences issued by the courts, and effective legislation to prevent impunity.

Congressman Reggiardo stated that the greater the political involvement of the people, the more accountable their leaders. The citizenry, he added, is perhaps the most important element in the fight against corruption.

## Civil Society's Role in Combating Corruption

### Panelists

I. Roberto Eisenmann Jr.	President, Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Libertad Ciudadana, Panama
Luis Moreno Ocampo	Co-founder, Poder Ciudadano, Argentina
Hermán Schlageter	President, Asociación Salvadoreña Contra la Corrupción, El Salvador
Flavia Sekles	Washington Correspondent, <i>Jornal do Brasil</i> , Brazil

### The Media and the Exposure of Corruption

I. Roberto Eisenmann, Jr. called the media “the first line of defense in the fight against corruption.” He stressed the importance of having an independent media to provide the public with objective information. Citing the results from a survey conducted in Panama by Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Libertad Ciudadana, he indicated that Panamanian citizens believe

- Panamanian journalists are honest
- The media effectively expose cases of corruption
- The citizens have free access to the media

Flavia Sekles stated that the media in Brazil do a good job of reporting acts of corruption but fail to follow up. She added: the media do not exert enough pressure on the judiciary and the other branches of government to deal with situations once the corrupt acts are exposed.

Hermán Schlageter asserted that to fight corruption successfully, “there needs to be a close interrelationship between the citizens and the media.” In El Salvador, he said, there seems to be a duality where citizens and the media encourage each other. Mr. Schlageter believes that if the media are not brave and are unwilling to challenge established institutions, then the citizens will feel vulnerable and powerless.

### The Media and the Consolidation of Democracy

Patricio Bañados, RESPONDACON III moderator and anchor for Televisión Nacional de Chile, stated that during the years of military dictatorships in many countries of the region, the press was censored, and denunciations of corruption were not made. With the democratic transition, the press has more freedom to denounce corrupt acts. This means the public is becoming more aware of corruption. Mr. Bañados posed an important question: “While it is essential for the media to continue to denounce all corrupt acts, is it possible that this information can be manipulated by certain forces within the political spectrum to undermine the credibility of democracy as an institution?”

In response to this question, Luis Moreno Ocampo said it is possible that certain individuals can manipulate the issue of exposing corruption to undermine democracy, but there are cases that show how media exposure strengthens democracy. Citing the Venezuelan example (during the second presidency of Carlos Andrés Pérez), Mr. Moreno Ocampo stated that numerous scandals

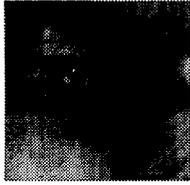
were exposed in the media, resulting in a strong demand by the public to control corruption. Under these circumstances, a military coup was attempted, but it failed, and democracy survived. The information revealed and reported by the media regarding government corruption helped make headway in the investigations, and the president was taken to trial. Mr. Moreno Ocampo emphasized, “if the media remain quiet, then nothing can be done, and the region will go back to authoritarian systems.”

Mr. Eisenmann agreed with Mr. Moreno Ocampo and stated, “people should not be afraid of denouncing corrupt practices.” He questioned the claim made by some government officials that the press must restrain its criticisms of government to avoid harming democracy. Mr. Eisenmann argued that a strong press, which investigates and reports acts of corruption, strengthens democracy.

### **The Role of Nongovernmental Organizations and the Citizenry**

Mr. Moreno Ocampo noted that corruption is a global problem, and he called on citizens to create citizens’ networks throughout the world to confront this problem. The importance of civil society’s participation in this arena was shared by other panelists. Mr. Schlageter stated that, in order to maintain democratic systems in Latin America, citizens must assume a more active role in the struggle against corruption. Mr. Eisenmann added that preventing corruption in our societies depends on public empowerment. Ms. Sekles urged citizens to combat corrupt acts in society at all levels. She added that society must not lose focus in the fight against minor acts of corruption, such as bribery of public officials to obtain basic documents like passports or drivers’ licenses.

The panelists also agreed that another problem in Latin America is the attitude of leaders—though strong legislation may be passed, the rule of law remains absent because of lack of enforcement. Mr. Eisenmann pointed out there is a tendency to believe the problem is solved once legislation is passed. He called on citizens to be more attentive to the actions taken to enforce the law rather than to the process of passing a law. To underscore the point, Mr. Moreno Ocampo urged people to hold their elected representatives accountable by writing to them repeatedly and by requesting to meet with them frequently. Mr. Schlageter added that civil society must “demand honesty and probity from its government officials.”



## CLOSING REMARKS

### **James P. Wesberry, Jr.**

*Principal Advisor on Accounting and Auditing for Latin America and the Caribbean, The World Bank*

James P. Wesberry, Jr. identified the following individual and organizational strategies to fight corruption:

- Latin American countries do not really need to draft new laws. They need to implement existing anticorruption legislation, especially as it relates to punishment of criminal acts.
- Purchase and read independent, factual newspapers. Boycott the politicized press, especially when owned by, or loyal to, political parties.
- Support the independence of the judiciary, the prosecutor or attorney general, and the auditor or comptroller general.
- Strengthen the functions of oversight and investigation in the legislative branch, including its use of auditors to gather facts and investigators to gather evidence.
- Forbid exile of corrupt politicians. Apply pressure to those countries that accept these exiles.
- Follow the money: insist on transparency and audit of public funds and of funds collected and used in political campaigns.
- Encourage citizens to demand accountability by public servants and elected officials.



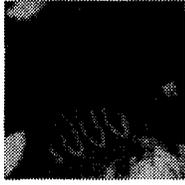
## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Panelists and local participants underscored the seriousness of the threat of fraud and corruption to the survival of democratic governments and continued economic and social development throughout the Americas. It is imperative that citizens have faith in government institutions and the political leadership for democracy to be consolidated. Not only must governments' institutional frameworks be strengthened, but, more importantly, civil society must be empowered and drawn into the struggle against corruption.

There was widespread consensus that the press must play a prominent role in exposing cases of corruption and providing the public with objective information. The media cannot retreat—they must scrutinize governmental investigations of corruption to exert pressure on all parties involved, especially on the judiciary to enforce the law. It must be made clear that no one is above due process of the law. In addition, the judiciary must be independent and above reproach. Public officials must be convinced that stealing public resources and abusing their power is not worth the risk. Finally, the panelists and local participants alike called for transparency, accountability, and auditing of public resources, and election campaign and political party finances.

Also at the forefront of the discussion was the education of all sectors of civil society in honesty and ethics. The diverse group of panelists, as well as the participants at local sites, agreed that the educational system has failed to instill basic values of responsibility and respect for the law.

Citizens were encouraged to participate more vigorously in the political process and to make their voices heard in demand for public sector accountability. Recommendations included writing to and meeting with government officials, informing the press of fraudulent acts, and joining NGOs active in the fight against corruption.



## SUMMARY OF SELECTED COUNTRY REPORTS

### Argentina

Poder Ciudadano, a voluntary NGO that is also the Argentine chapter of Transparency International (TI), served as the local coordinator of RESPONDACON III. There were approximately eighty participants, including representatives from government, law, the media, and civil society.

Following RESPONDACON III, a panel discussion was held. The panel was composed of Silvio Huberman, radio and print journalist (moderator); Antonio Cartaña, ombudsman for the city of Buenos Aires; Carlos Manfroni, lawyer, advisor to the minister of justice, and president of a recently created NGO, Fundación Ética Pública; and Adrián Ventura, columnist for the daily *La Nación*. Conclusions and recommendations included the need to increase the transparency of financial operations; to assert citizens' control over government actions, especially with respect to privatization; and to achieve effective international cooperation to fight corruption.

Three local dailies, *El Cronista*, *El Clarín*, and *La Nación*, reported on the conference. In a front-page story, *El Cronista* reported, "in an attempt to try to introduce the issue in the region, there was an inter-American videoconference on corruption in government, during which participants insisted on financial controls and the creation of an international cooperation network." The paper also ran a front-page editorial stating that, finally, a videoconference was organized "to deal with one and only one issue: corruption." Another story in *El Cronista* under the headline "Further Financial Control Proposed to Fight Corruption" featured Eduardo Frei, president of Chile, and Luis Moreno Ocampo, Argentine panelist in Washington, DC, and co-founder of Poder Ciudadano. The report detailed the transmission of and the local debate that followed the event. In addition, evening television news programs and Marcelo Lombardi's highly respected prime-time public affairs show, *Punto Límite*, featured videoconference excerpts.

The daily *La Nación* ran two articles on the videoconference, both under the headline "Corruption, Via Satellite" and subheaded "Large screen: Latin American countries in direct connection to debate over lack of honesty; wrongdoing without frontiers." The first article reported, "the word corruption was the star of the day . . . the big screen rescued some strategies aimed at reversing the lack of honesty among public and private persons: a greater participation by civil society, the importance of freedom of the press, and true enforcement of current legislation." The second article focused on the comments of Luis Moreno Ocampo, using his statement, "transparency does not enter into pacts with governments," as the story headline.

*El Clarín* covered the videoconference under the headline "Debate over Corruption" and reported "one of the conclusions reached during the program . . . is that 'the power of the press is one of the key instruments to fight corruption.'" It also quoted Salvadoran panelist and president of the Asociación Salvadoreña Contra la Corrupción, Hermán Schlageter: "what makes a democracy reel is corruption, not the press."

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## Bolivia

RESPONDACON III was viewed by seventy-five individuals. The diverse audience included prosecutors and auditors from the comptroller general's office, representatives of NGOs, and professors and students from the Catholic University of Bolivia/Harvard University Master's Degree Program in Financial Control and Auditing.

Among the notable figures participating were Dr. Rend Blattman, minister of justice; Dr. Bernardo Wayer, deputy secretary of justice; Dr. Willy Luna Barrera, president of the Superior Court (District of La Paz); Senator Antonio Sánchez de Lozada; and Mr. Juan Antonio Morales Anaya, president of the Central Bank of Bolivia.

The audience concluded that this type of videoconference is significant because it creates awareness among the Bolivian population that all citizens must combat corruption. Among the recommendations were: create citizens' networks to fight corruption, strengthen the role of the media, and generate inter-institutional debate.

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## Brazil

The videoconference was organized by Transparência, Consciência e Cidadania, a local NGO and national chapter of TI, at four local sites: Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Recife. Approximately 125 people participated in the event, which was also broadcast by cable NET-TV throughout Brazil.

In attendance at the RESPONDACON III videoconference were officials from the Ministry of Justice, the Congress, the Federal Accounting Office, state governments, the customs office, and the federal prosecutor's office. Also in attendance were university professors, journalists, and NGO representatives. The participants found the comparative nature of the discussions useful in demonstrating that the problems and challenges facing those fighting corruption are similar throughout the continent. There was also interest in the frequent references made to Brazil during the program and in the comments by Flavia Sekles, Washington correspondent for the *Jornal do Brasil* and RESPONDACON III panelist.

TV Manchete covered the event, and leading newspapers *Jornal do Brasil* and *O Globo* published stories on the program. *Jornal do Brasil* used RESPONDACON III as one of the lead stories the day after the videoconference. It reported that one of the principal conclusions of the program was that, when there is no effective control of electoral campaign financing, corruption and democracy co-exist. Referring to the Colombian Congress's acquittal of President Ernesto Samper, it quoted World Bank official James P. Wesberry, Jr., a Washington, DC, panelist: "transparency in accounting for campaign funds is fundamental." The report featured comments by Judge Denise Frossard, a respected Brazilian anticorruption advocate, on the legal barriers that impede a unified attack on corruption. She was quoted as saying, "Brazil is a legislative desert against money laundering." The story notes that Lino Martins de Silva, chief financial controller of Rio de Janeiro—accused of misusing official funds—also viewed the program at the Rio de Janeiro site. *O Globo* mentioned the program in a sidebar.

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## Costa Rica

Coordinated by the Comisión Nacional de Rescate y Formación de Valores, RESPONDACON III drew about seventy participants and was aired live on cable channel 40. Representatives from the executive, judicial, and legislative branches were in attendance, including Rodrigo Oreamuno Blanco, vice president of Costa Rica; Rodrigo Montenegro Trejos, vice president of the Supreme Court; and Congressman Ottón Solí Fallas. Also present were representatives of NGOs, the media, academia, and the private sector.

Costa Rican Vice President Rodrigo Oreamuno Blanco offered opening remarks. Hernán Vega Miranda, president of the Comisión Nacional de Rescate y Formación de Valores, spoke next, emphasizing that when corruption penetrates a society, "it does not limit itself to destroying the individual, but also destroys the bases of the society, propitiating anarchy and destabilization of the democratic systems." He continued, "The fight against corruption goes further than just denouncing and prosecuting corrupt individuals and disseminating information; there must also be a committed effort to accomplish a change in society's attitude, where honesty becomes a daily practice and the fight against corruption becomes a personal responsibility for each citizen."

The conference was covered by several radio stations, including Radio Columbia, Radio Monumental, and Radio Reloj.

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## Dominican Republic

Organized by Fundación Institucionalidad y Justicia (FINJUS), a local NGO, RESPONDACON III was viewed by a diverse audience of thirty that included journalists, labor union officials, judges, lawyers, and representatives of NGOs. The program was useful in encouraging local NGOs, which, according to participants, sometimes feel they are alone in fighting a losing battle against corruption. The NGO representatives gained a renewed sense of solidarity with others in Latin America who are waging the same battle.

The final hour of the program was broadcast live over UHF/CABLE television station 27/51 in Santo Domingo and nationwide via the AM/FM "Projections and Transmissions" radio network. Channel 27/51 transmitted the first two hours of the program on Saturday, June 15, and the final two hours on Sunday, June 16. The entire program was transmitted live by cable to San Pedro de Macoris, Bonaio, and San Cristobal.

One columnist for *Listín Diario*, the largest newspaper in the Dominican Republic, said that RESPONDACON III demonstrated "the healthy intention of seriously confronting the problems of government corruption." He described the videoconference as "a wake-up call . . . because it seems that corruption is damaging to the foundations of public and private institutions in the region."

*El Caribe*, a daily newspaper, headlined its article on the event "Executive Branch Insists on Fight Against Corruption." The article emphasized statements made by the four Latin American presidents, noting that the fight against corruption "constitutes not only a moral imperative, but also a necessity in order to clean up and strengthen democratic institutions." *Hoy*, another daily newspaper, highlighted the presidential statements, reporting that corruption "poses a danger to moral values, the economy, democracy, and development of nations."

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## El Salvador

Approximately 300 Salvadorans participated in RESPONDACON III, organized by the Colegio de Contadores Públicos Académicos, the Corporación de Contadores, the Asociación de Contadores Públicos, and the Asociación Salvadoreña Contra la Corrupción. Raúl Corpeño, president of the Asociación de Contadores Públicos de El Salvador, delivered opening remarks. He was followed on the program by Pablo Alcides Ochoa, president of the Colegio de Contadores Públicos Académicos de El Salvador, who explained to the audience the objectives of the program. Following the videoconference, a local panel focused on issues pertaining to El Salvador and featured Rafael Hernán Contreras, president of the Court of Accounts; Manuel Enrique López, division chief for the Defense of the State's Interests, Office of the Attorney General; Ernesto Zelanyadía, president of Probidad; and René Fernández, president of the Asociación Interamericana de Contabilidad. The national program offered the following conclusions and recommendations:

- Public funds must be adequately controlled by the Court of Accounts to prevent fraud and corruption in government.
- The nomination of president of the Court of Accounts should be based on technical expertise rather than on political criteria, and the individual should be an accounting professional.
- The president of the Court of Accounts, as well as the attorney general of the Republic, should not have ties to any political parties, and their confirmations should be based on a qualified, not a simple, majority of votes in the Congress.
- Public officials must carry out their international commitments to fight corruption.

The event was covered in national newspapers, including *La Prensa Gráfica*, *El Diario de Hoy*, *Diario El Mundo*, and *Diario Latino*. Announcements regarding the videoconference were made on channels 2, 4, and 6 and on the local radio station Radio Cadena YSKL. According to national surveys, this radio station is heard by three million people in El Salvador (approximately 60 percent of the population). The day before the videoconference, channel 12 interviewed several government officials and, on the day of the event, interviewed Ernesto Zelanyadía, president of Probidad, an NGO that conducts anticorruption seminars. The four-hour version of the videotape was to be shown at universities around the country.

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## Guatemala

Organized by the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, some 280 participants—including senior government officials, professors, and journalists—were present for the event. An inaugural session prior to the broadcast was led by Dr. Nelson Amaro, dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala. Among participants was Mauricio Barrera, general manager of the newspaper *Siglo XXI*, which has the second largest circulation in the country.

RESPONDACON III was transmitted live in its entirety by two cable companies: Red Maya Cable and Comtech. The June 20 issue of *Diario La Hora* included an article entitled “RESPONDACON III,” by Ing. Carlos Asturias Paz, and the June 27 issue of *Siglo XXI* featured an article entitled “Centralism + secretiveness – accountability = fraud and corruption in the government,” by Dr. Nelson Amaro.

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## Jamaica

RESPONDACON III was organized by the Jamaican chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of the Caribbean (ICAC). The videoconference was viewed in Kingston by twenty-two participants, including representatives of the media, the police fraud squad, various government departments, the Embassy of Venezuela, the National Consumers League, the Jamaican Labour Party, and the Jamaican chapter of ICAC.

Participants expressed interest in the case studies and were able to relate much of the material to the Caribbean experience. They concluded that the conference was timely and informative and that the level of corruption in Jamaica was comparable to that of other countries. Other conclusions reached:

- The main reasons why corruption is an issue in Jamaica are the unwillingness of citizens to get involved, the ineffectiveness of international cooperation to limit corrupt acts (e.g., narco-trafficking), and weak legal sanctions.
- Educational programs that instill ethical values and warn citizens of the detrimental effects of corruption are effective in combating corruption.

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## Mexico

Eighty-five participants attended the event organized by Movimiento Ciudadano por la Democracia. Representatives of the Ministry of the Comptroller (SECODAM) and the Office of the Attorney General (PGR), two of the most important agencies dealing with corruption in government, made up more than one-third of the audience. Journalists and representatives of NGOs were also in attendance. Panelists and audience members represented ten prominent Mexican NGOs interested in corruption-related issues. The panelists were Luz Rosales Esteva, executive secretary of Movimiento Ciudadano por la Democracia; MarieClaire Acosta, chair, Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos and professor, Universidad Autónoma de México (UNAM); Manuel Canto, director, Centro Antonio Montesinos and professor, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana; Jaime González Graf, deputy counselor, Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) and director, Instituto Mexicano de Estudios Políticos; and Ignacio Peón, Pacto de Grupos Ecológicos. The panel analyzed the case studies presented during the videoconference and drew comparisons between Mexico and Italy, Colombia, and Peru. Participants found the videoconference made it clear that corruption originates at high levels of power where there is discretion to make decisions in one's own favor without being caught.

Other conclusions reached:

- Demand government accountability.
- Form citizens' networks.
- Keep track of the business activities of public officials.
- Establish pressure mechanisms to demand accountability for campaign financing.
- Demand ratification of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption. Mexico has not ratified the convention, making the resolution of this issue one of the short-term tasks for those seeking sustainable democracy in Mexico.

- Examine the destination and use of funds confiscated from prosecution of corrupt acts.

Two of Mexico's main television stations, Televisa and Multivisión, were represented at the event, as were print media agencies (*Agencia Lemus, Excelsior, La Reforma, La Afición, La Noticia, Directores y Columnistas, and Uno Mas Uno*). Initial media placement in Mexico City included a brief segment on the 7:00 p.m. news on *Televisa's* commercial channel 9 (estimated viewers: 6.2 million); a longer segment on the 9:00 p.m. news of commercial pay-television service *Multivisión* (estimated viewers: 50,000); and a page-12 story in the independent daily, *Reforma*. The local organizers announced RESPONDACON III on their Internet home page.

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## Nicaragua

Coordinated by Grupo FUNDEMOS (a local NGO), Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas (INCAE), and the Colegio de Contadores Públicos, RESPONDACON III attracted more than 700 participants in Managua. The audience included journalists, government officials, and representatives of the private sector, labor organizations, academia, and NGOs.

Opening remarks prior to the videoconference were made by FUNDEMOS President Emilio Alvarez Montalván and Executive Director Violeta Granera de Sandino. Dr. Alvarez Montalván emphasized the need for transparency in public administration to consolidate the democratic process, and Ms. Granera de Sandino stressed the importance of the event in the fight against corruption and explained why FUNDEMOS committed itself to organizing the event.

Following the videoconference, U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua John Maisto opened the local panel discussion, entitled "Fraud and Corruption: Implications for the Development of a Country." The panel addressed several issues in the fight against corruption in Nicaragua. Panelists included Dr. Emilio Pereira, minister of finance; Agustín Jarquín Anaya, comptroller general; Gerardo Salinas, president of Consejo Superior de la Empresa Privada; Dr. Danilo Lacayo, director of the television program *Buenos Días*; and Dr. Guillermo Rosthschuh, dean of Communication Sciences of the Universidad Centroamericana.

The panel concluded:

- Organizations responsible for law enforcement often do not take any action against corruption. In cases where the comptroller's office has presented evidence, corrupt individuals often are not sanctioned. This creates an atmosphere of impunity, which makes the fight against corruption difficult.
- The atmosphere of impunity leads citizens to accept corrupt practices as normal; on a daily basis, citizens attempt to resolve their problems by unlawful means such as bribery.
- The consensus is that there must be greater citizen participation in combating corruption, and the press must be more active in uncovering corruption and informing the public of corrupt activities.

Channel 2, a leading television station, featured reports on RESPONDACON III, both on its June 13 evening newscast and on the June 14 edition of its top-rated morning show *Buenos Días*. Ambassador Maisto's opening remarks were highlighted on *Buenos Días*. Channel 6 reported on the conference on its June 13 evening newscast.

The daily newspaper *La Prensa* printed an article on RESPONDACON III in its June 13 edition, as did the daily *La Tribuna* on June 14.

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## Panama

Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Libertad Ciudadana, a local NGO that is also the Panamanian chapter of TI, coordinated the event. Approximately fifty individuals attended, including public officials, journalists, academics, and representatives of the private sector and NGOs.

According to local observers, press coverage by television, radio, and print media was effective. A one-page advertisement of the videoconference appeared in the leading newspaper *La Prensa*. Following the event, *La Prensa* also dedicated one page to the conference, featuring each of the four panels and the main highlights of the program. The government educational television station, channel 11, broadcast the videoconference in its entirety.

The videoconference coincided with the release of the results of an anticorruption survey conducted by the Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Libertad Ciudadana. Together they have shifted the focus of Panamanian society toward this issue. I. Roberto Eisenmann, Jr., president of Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Libertad Ciudadana, participated as a videoconference panelist in Washington, DC.

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## Paraguay

With a number of corruption cases dominating the local press, RESPONDACON III generated strong interest. The program was organized by the Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo del Comité Paraguayo-Kansas (CIRD), a local NGO. The participants, numbering around 250 and representing various sectors of society, commented repeatedly on the quality of the discussion and the timeliness of the program.

The local coordinating group organized a two-hour panel discussion to follow the four-hour broadcast. The program featured senior representatives, among them, Dr. Alvaro Caballero, member of the board of directors of the Central Bank of Paraguay; Dr. Emilio Camacho, vice-comptroller general; Dr. Dionisio Borda, CADEP (a leading NGO fighting corruption in Paraguay); Angel Auad, president of the Paraguayan Chamber of Commerce; Gabriel Cosp, businessman; Stella Ruffinelli, independent journalist; and José María Caniza, businessman.

Opening remarks before the broadcast were made by Dr. Agustín Carrizosa, president of CIRD. William Harris of the U.S. Embassy in Paraguay made a short speech highlighting the need for nations to work together in the battle against corruption. Following the videoconference, Terry Davidson, public affairs officer at USIA in Paraguay, opened the panel on corruption issues pertaining to Paraguay, reviewing the importance of freedom of the press in combating corruption.

The participants agreed that Paraguay needs a coordinated attack on corruption, but disagreed on strategy(ies). Alvaro Caballero, one of the directors of the Central Bank of Paraguay—which has been the subject of major corruption investigations—warned the audience that an all-out war on corruption could destroy the Paraguayan economy and bring about civil strife. He told the audience he did not want to see a “French Revolution” in which heads might roll in the plazas of Asunción.

Angel Auad, president of the Paraguayan-American Chamber of Commerce, said that corruption is a problem in Paraguay. He argued that anyone buying contraband products is corrupt. Newspapers that accept advertising for illegally imported vehicles are also corrupt. In short, he concluded that corruption is not limited to a few politicians who steal; rather, society as a whole is compromised.

Business leader Gabriel Cosp focused his comments on the need for transparency in government contracts. He related personal experiences in which government purchases were designed to benefit one supplier, often costing the nation millions of dollars.

The event received extensive press coverage. The daily *Ultima Hora* ran several stories. The newspaper *El Día* published an article on June 14 entitled “Everyone Against Corruption is the Watchword; Videoconference on the Theme in the Teatro de las Américas,” while the daily *ABC Color* headlined its story “Without Coordinated Action, No Big Fish Will Go to Jail.”

The videoconference received detailed coverage in the June 16 edition of the newspaper *Noticias*, which devoted its four-page economic supplement to RESPONDACON III. Titled “In the Country of Impunity,” the story described how “via a videoconference called RESPONDACON III, our country was connected last Thursday with the United States, Venezuela, and Peru to discuss a common issue: ways to develop strategies to combat fraud and corruption in government.” Meanwhile, in the Paraguayan-American Cultural Center, a debate on issues relevant to Paraguay was held. One of the conclusions reached was that where there is no will to combat corruption in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, the guilty will not be punished. It also concluded that “if the state does not modernize and become transparent, the call to fight corruption will prove no more than empty words. But the most important lesson was that there is still time to change history, before it is too late.”

In addition to the print media coverage, RESPONDACON III also received television coverage. The June 13 evening newscast of channel 9 television featured a five-minute report on the event, with most of the focus on the Paraguayan local panel.

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## Peru

More than 400 participants viewed RESPONDACON III at two separate sites in Lima, organized by the Contadoría Pública de la Nación and the Instituto Interamericano de Auditoría y Contabilidad. The audiences included public officials, members of academia, members of the private sector, and journalists, as well as representatives of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the government.

Following the broadcast, there was a local panel discussion moderated by Manuel Luna Victoria Sánchez, accountant general. Panelists were: Dr. María Teresa Moya, magistrate of the National Council; Emilio Aguirre Calderón, vice-dean of the Colegio de Contadores Públicos of Lima; and Dr. Oscar Jasau Sabat, dean of the Colegio de Economistas.

Dr. Jasai Sabat proposed that corruption exists when two individuals voluntarily exchange illegal favors. He called attention to the deterioration of ethics in the country and called for greater honesty and transparency in the government.

Mr. Aguirre Calderón emphasized the need for professionals to abide by codes of ethics issued by their professional institutions. He also stressed the need for the Colegio de Contadores Públicos to take an active role in the fight against corruption, especially in communicating its views and concerns to the media.

Dr. Moya noted that high-ranking leaders must set ethical examples for the citizenry by governing with honesty. She also stated that professional institutions must be transparent in order to protect their image.

Two cable channels transmitted the program; several daily newspapers published articles on the videoconference.

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## Venezuela

Organized by the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic, RESPONDACON III formed part of a two-day (June 13-14) anticorruption conference, "Democracy Against Corruption: International Conference on the Problems of Fraud in the Government." Dr. Rafael Caldera, president of Venezuela, and Dr. Eduardo Roche Lander, comptroller general, opened the program.

RESPONDACON III was followed by a panel discussion, "Role of the Media in the Fight Against Corruption." Panelists included Dr. Alberto Quirós Corradi, former director of the newspapers *El Nacional* and *El Diario de Caracas*, and Román Orozco, director of the Spanish magazine *Cambio 16*.

The second day of the conference included several panels and presentations on a wide range of corruption issues, including:

"The Attorney General's Office in the Fight Against Corruption": Dr. Alfonso Valdivieso, attorney general of Colombia and Dr. Iván Darío Badell, attorney general of Venezuela

"Ethics Against Corruption": Rev. Dr. Luis Ugalde, dean of Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, Caracas, Venezuela

"The Public Power Against Corruption": Dr. Cecilia Sosa Gómez, president of the Supreme Court of Justice of Venezuela, and Dr. Ramón Guillermo Avelo, president of the House of Representatives of Venezuela

"Diagnosis of Corruption in Venezuela": Dr. Rogelio Pérez Perdomo, professor, Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración (IESA), and Dr. Humberto Njaim, academic and writer

"Public and Private Sector Corruption": Enrique Sánchez, Venezuelan entrepreneur, and Richard Werksman, assistant general counsel of the United States Information Agency

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“Strategies at the Institutional Level to Fight Corruption”: Dr. David Turbay Turbay, comptroller general of Colombia; Ileana M. Colón Carlo, J.D., comptroller general of Puerto Rico; Javier Castillo Ayala, accountant general, Ministry of Finance of Mexico; Víctor Enrique Caso Lay, accountant general of Peru; and Dr. Enrique Paixao, auditor general of Argentina

The panelists concluded:

- The problems of fraud and corruption can destroy the moral, ethical, legal, and institutional fibers of any society.
- All Venezuelans must fight corruption.
- All levels of the educational system must be involved in the process of strengthening ethics and morals.
- Private industries must adopt and apply a strict code of conduct for all their members, with the objective of eliminating bribery of public officials.
- Public officials must strictly follow laws, rules, and procedures in performing their duties.
- Journalists must be more aggressive and willing to denounce corrupt acts.

# RESPONDACON III



# Questionnaire Results

## INTRODUCTION

This section summarizes information collected by means of a questionnaire distributed to RESPONDACON III participants at organized viewing sites throughout the region. Of the twenty-two countries that participated in this event, sixteen returned completed questionnaires to the conference organizers. The purpose of administering the questionnaire was to obtain feedback from the participants to better tailor future programs to their interests and needs. In addition, the information gathered from the questionnaire will enable citizens to compare their views with those of citizens in other countries.

Table 1 identifies the sixteen countries submitting questionnaires, the estimated number of participants in attendance at national viewing sites, and the number of questionnaires completed and returned. The countries submitting the most questionnaires were Nicaragua (470), El Salvador (212), Venezuela (162), and Peru (136). The least number of questionnaires were received from Panama (31), Trinidad and Tobago (29), and Argentina (20). Comparing number of participants per site to the number of questionnaires returned, the highest percentage of questionnaires was received from Ecuador (95%) and Costa Rica (90%). In total, approximately 36% of the estimated 4,000 RESPONDACON III participants returned questionnaires. To make maximum use of the information, all responses, including partial responses, were tabulated.

Those attending the conference and responding to the questionnaire represent a highly selective example of these countries' populations: namely, individuals who, for ethical and/or professional reasons, are concerned about the adverse consequences of fraud and corruption in government. The perceptions described in this report cannot be generalized beyond the selected audience that participated in RESPONDACON III and returned completed questionnaires. In total, 63% of the respondents are male, and 37% are female. Nineteen percent are under 30 years of age, 64% are between the ages of 30 and 50, and 17% are over 50. Ninety-two percent of the respondents are university graduates, and less than 1% have attended primary school only. The majority of the respondents (63%) are civil servants, while others are distributed by institutional affiliation/occupation as follows: educators (9%); self-employed (7%); business owners (6%); nongovernmental organization representatives (5%); elected officials (4%); private sector employees (4%); and the media (2%). National response patterns are highly sensitive to the socioeconomic and institutional affiliation/occupational composition of those attending the conference at any given site.

**Participating Countries, Approximate Number of Participants Gathered at Receive Sites, and Number of Questionnaires Returned**

The balance of this report provides an overview of how conference participants responded to the various questions regarding fraud and corruption in their countries. The percentage charts are based on number of respondents per country, although the actual number of responses by question varies because not all respondents answered all questions. "Don't know" answers are not identified, but, in most cases, represent the residual of the sum of the shown percentages.

The vast majority of respondents believe that fraud and corruption in government is widespread in their countries, affecting nearly all government spheres. Respondents also feel that effective measures such as modern financial management systems, strong legal sanctions, and public awareness campaigns could be implemented to fight corruption. Most respondents also believe international anti-corruption agreements have a role to play in reducing the incidence of fraud and corruption in government.

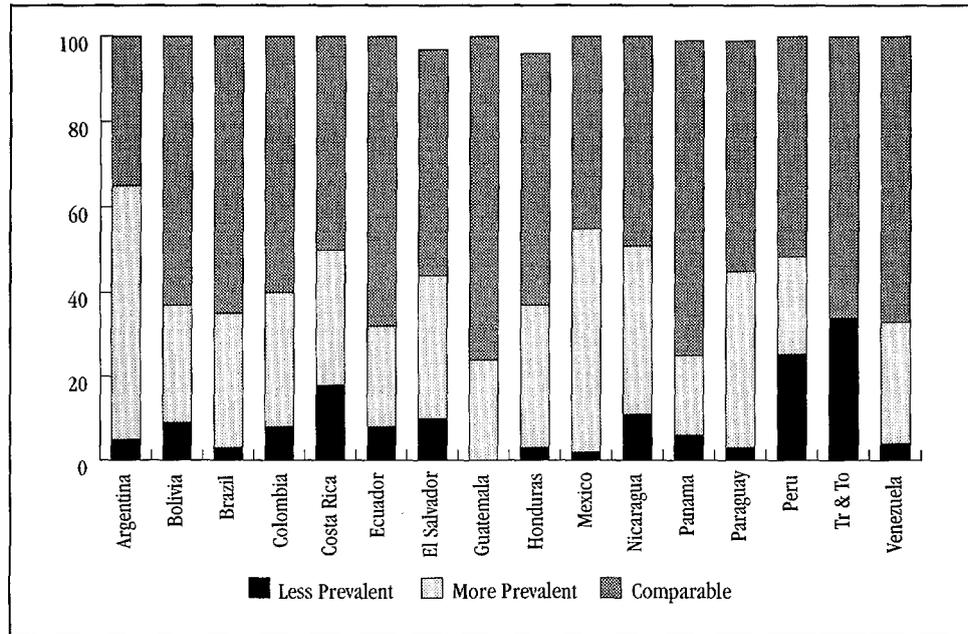
**TABLE 1**

<b>Participating Country</b>	<b>Approximate Number of Participants</b>	<b>Number of Questionnaires Returned</b>
Argentina	80	20
Bolivia	75	55
Brazil	125	37
Colombia	63	37
Costa Rica	69	62
Ecuador	39	37
El Salvador	309	212
Guatemala	280	46
Honduras	43	34
Mexico	85	40
Nicaragua	706	470
Panama	50	31
Paraguay	250	33
Peru	450	136
Trinidad and Tobago	39	29
Venezuela	894	162
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,557</b>	<b>1,441</b>

## SELECTED QUESTIONS

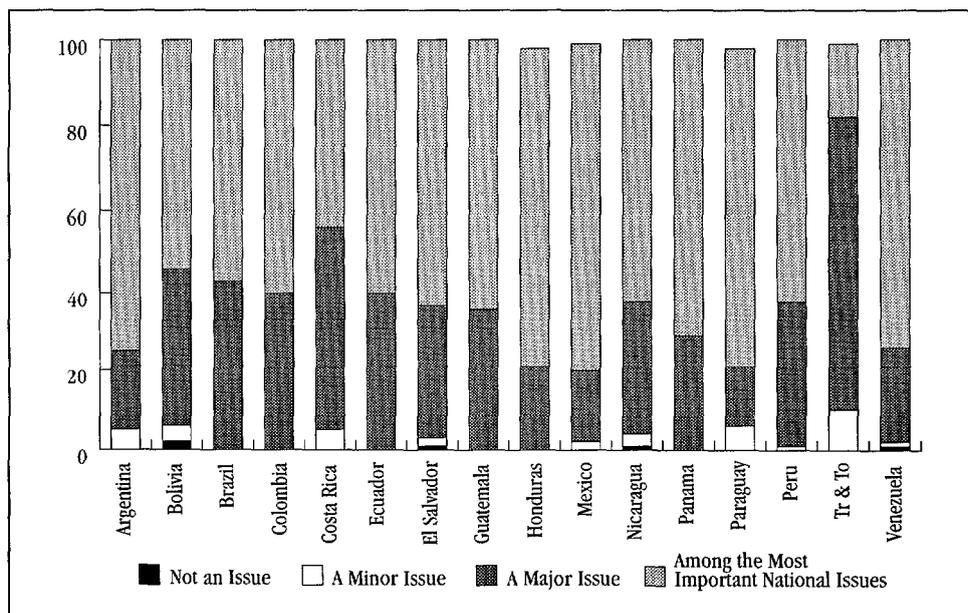
**Compared to the Situation in Other Countries, Do You Think the Level of Corruption in Your Country Is More Prevalent, Comparable, or Less Prevalent?**

In eight countries, 60% or more of the respondents affirm that the level of corruption in their country is "comparable" to that of other countries. The highest figures were reported in Guatemala (76%), Panama (74%), and Ecuador (68%). Corruption is viewed as "less prevalent" by 34% of respondents from Trinidad and Tobago, 25% from Peru, and 18% from Costa Rica, while in Argentina and Mexico, 60% and 52%, respectively, feel that the incidence of corruption is higher than in other countries.



**Identify the Phrase That Best Describes Your Perception of Corruption in Your Country.**

The percentage of those answering "among the most important national issues" is 60% or more in twelve countries. Conversely, the percentage viewing corruption as "not an issue" is



negligible in most countries. The greatest concern, as measured by 70% or more of respondents judging corruption as "among the most important national issues," is expressed in Mexico (80%), Honduras (79%), Paraguay (79%), Argentina (75%), Venezuela (74%), and Panama (71%). Between 60% and 70% of respondents in six other countries (Colombia, 60%; Ecuador, 60%; Nicaragua, 62%; Peru, 62%; El Salvador, 63%; and Guatemala, 64%) ranked corruption as one of the most important issues. About half of the respondents in three countries (Bolivia, 54%; Brazil, 57%; and Costa Rica, 44%) rate corruption as "among the most important national issues." Furthermore, when combining the percentages of those answering "among the most important national issues" and a "major issue," the total exceeds 80% in all countries.

**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Would You Rank Why it Occurs?**

In fourteen of the fifteen countries<sup>1</sup>, *legal sanctions against corruption are weak* is identified as the principal reason why corruption occurs. This reason ranks second in Trinidad and Tobago. *Citizens don't want to get involved* is ranked first in Trinidad and Tobago and second in five other countries (Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Guatemala). This reason ranks third in seven countries (Argentina, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, and Venezuela), fifth in Bolivia, and sixth in Peru.

REASON	RANKING (BY NUMBER OF COUNTRIES)						
	MOST IMPORTANT				LEAST IMPORTANT		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Legal sanctions against corruption are weak	14	1					
Citizens don't want to get involved	1	5	7		1	1	
It is tolerated as part of our cultural tradition		5	3	2	1	2	2
Civil servants must complement their low salaries		2	2	3	5	3	
International cooperation to limit corrupt acts (e.g., money laundering, narco trafficking) is ineffective		1	3	7	3	1	
The media fail to investigate or to report on allegations of corruption		1		1	2	5	6
Foreign firms corrupt our government officials				2	3	3	7

In another set of countries (Argentina, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, and Paraguay), *it is tolerated as part of our cultural tradition* is ranked second. This reason ranks third in Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Trinidad and Tobago; second to last in Bolivia and Guatemala; and last in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

<sup>1</sup> Brazil is excluded because of the omission of an item in the Portuguese language questionnaire distributed to participants.

In two countries (Bolivia and Venezuela), respondents rank *civil servants must complement their low salaries* as the second reason why corruption occurs. Peruvian respondents assign the second highest rank to *international cooperation to limit corrupt acts is ineffective*, while Bolivian, Salvadoran, and Colombian respondents assign the third rank to this reason. In seven other countries, *ineffective international cooperation* is ranked as the fourth most important reason behind corrupt acts.

The lowest rankings are assigned to the statements *the media fails to investigate or to report on allegations of corruption* and *foreign firms corrupt our government officials*. One exception is Nicaragua, where lack of media follow-up is ranked second.

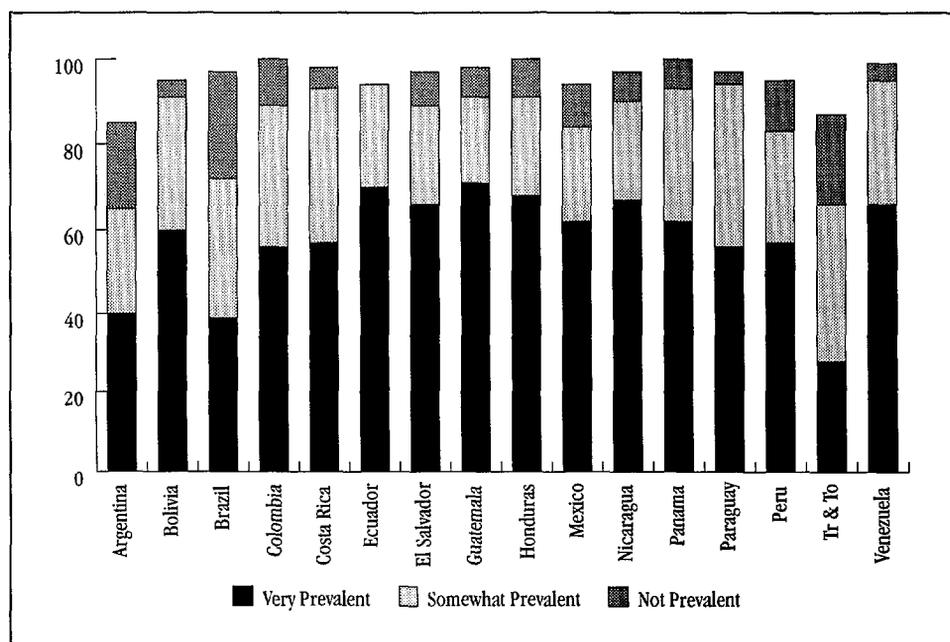
Other reasons for national corruption provided in response to an open question are:

- Lack of political will to fight corruption
- Inadequate moral values
- Widespread poverty
- Inept mechanisms to detect corruption
- Politicians are invested in widespread corruption and, therefore, see to it that it is perpetuated
- Fear of retribution, including physical violence, on the part of public officials and citizens if they denounce corrupt acts
- Individuals are unable to receive timely services unless they are willing to bribe officials
- Excessive government regulations
- Countries must endure corruption to ensure the peaceful transition to, and consolidation of, democratic rule

**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . .**

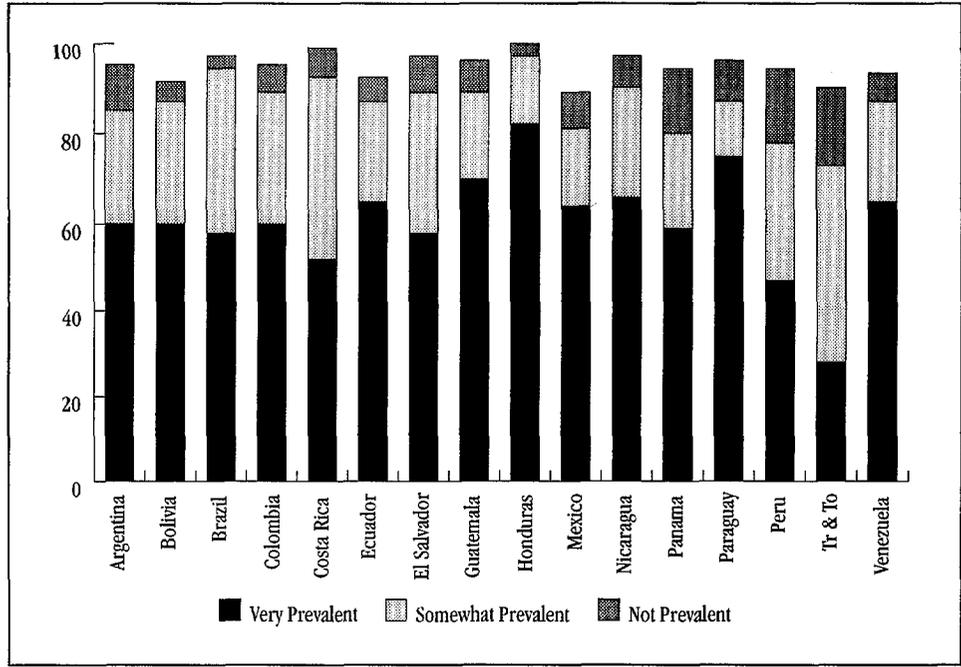
*National Government Officials on Personal Matters?*

More than 50% of respondents in thirteen countries indicate that this type of corruption is "very prevalent." In more than half of the countries (nine), 60% or more of the respondents indicate it is "very prevalent." Guatemala and Ecuador have the highest percentages (71% and 70%, respectively), and Trinidad and Tobago the lowest (28%).



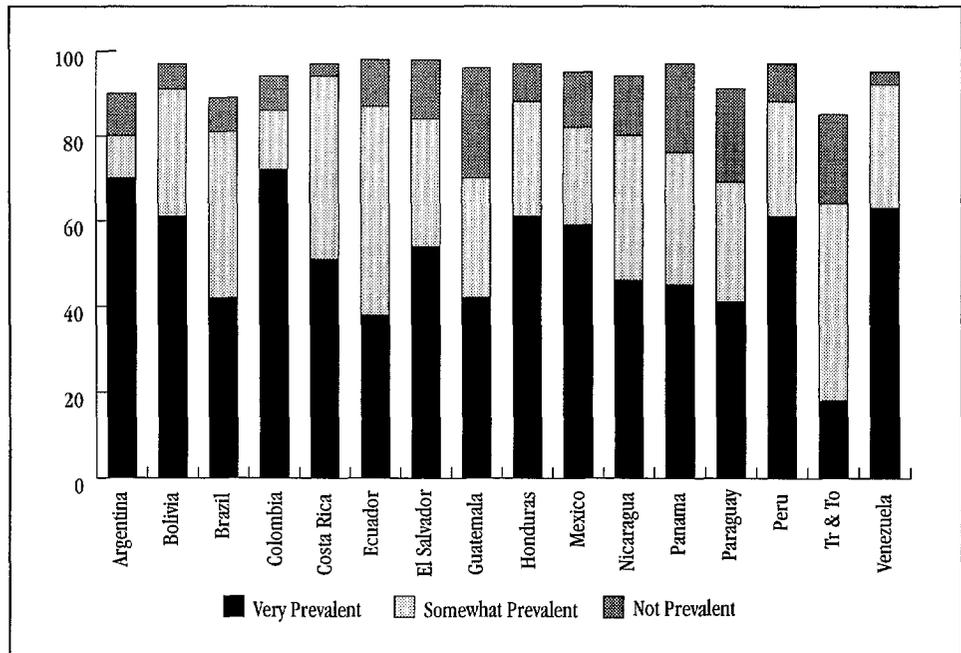
**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . . National Government Officials on Business Matters?**

In all countries except Trinidad and Tobago and Peru, more than half of the respondents indicate that this type of corruption is "very prevalent." The most extreme instances are Honduras and Paraguay, where 82% and 75% of the respondents, respectively, feel it is "very prevalent." In several other countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Venezuela), the number of those agreeing with this assessment reaches at least 60%.



**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . . Municipal Government Officials on Personal Matters?**

In only two countries (Ecuador and Trinidad and Tobago), a higher percentage of respondents judge corruption among municipal government officials on personal matters as "somewhat prevalent" rather than "very prevalent." More than 40% of respondents in the remaining

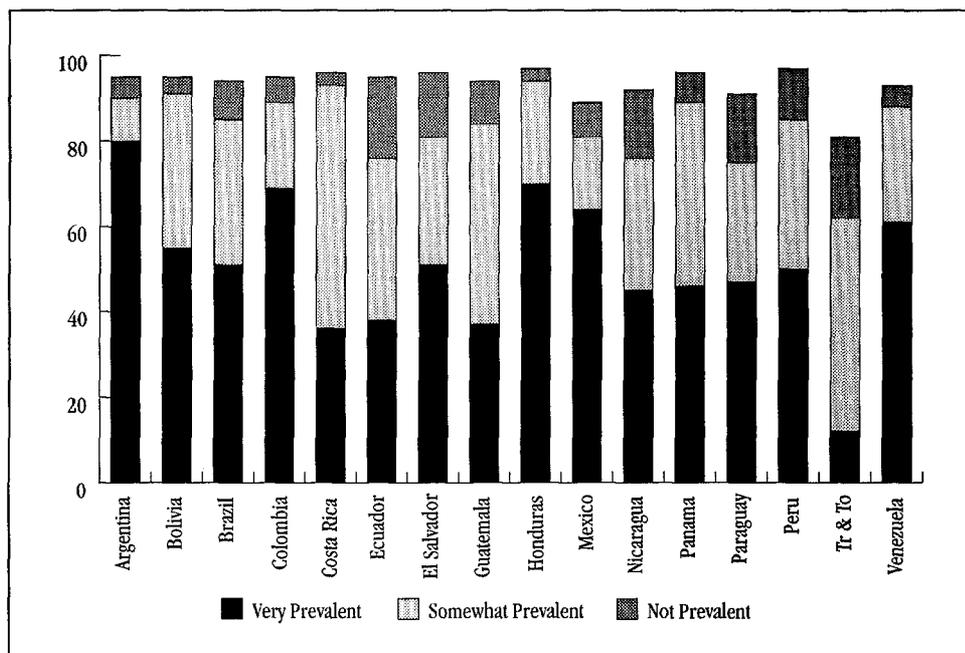


fourteen countries find corruption of this sort to be "very prevalent." Overall, more than half of the countries report lower levels of corruption for municipal government officials than for national government officials. These patterns may reflect differences in the functions performed by national and municipal public officials by country, including the more limited responsibilities of municipal employees in many countries. (This interpretation is suggested by a relatively high percentage of respondents answering "don't know" to this question.)

**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . .**

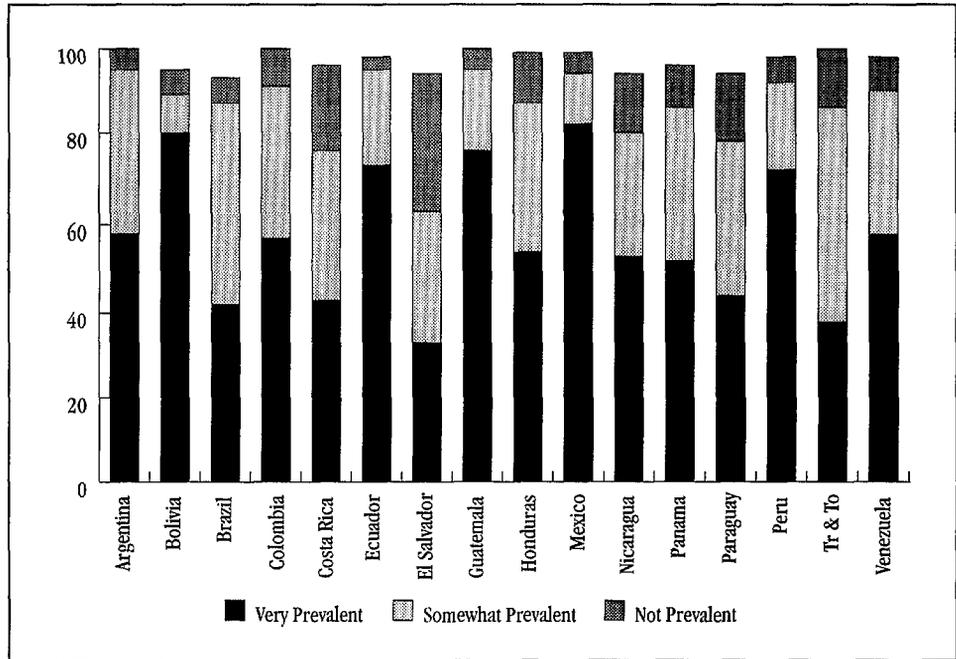
*Municipal Government Officials on Business Matters?*

The pattern of corruption of this nature is comparable to that noted when contrasting perceptions of corruption among national and municipal government officials in dealing with personal matters: the reported incidence of corruption tends to be lower among municipal officials. Caveats similar to those indicated when discussing municipal government officials on personal matters apply, given respondents' uncertainties regarding the duties performed by municipal officials or knowledge that their duties are limited.



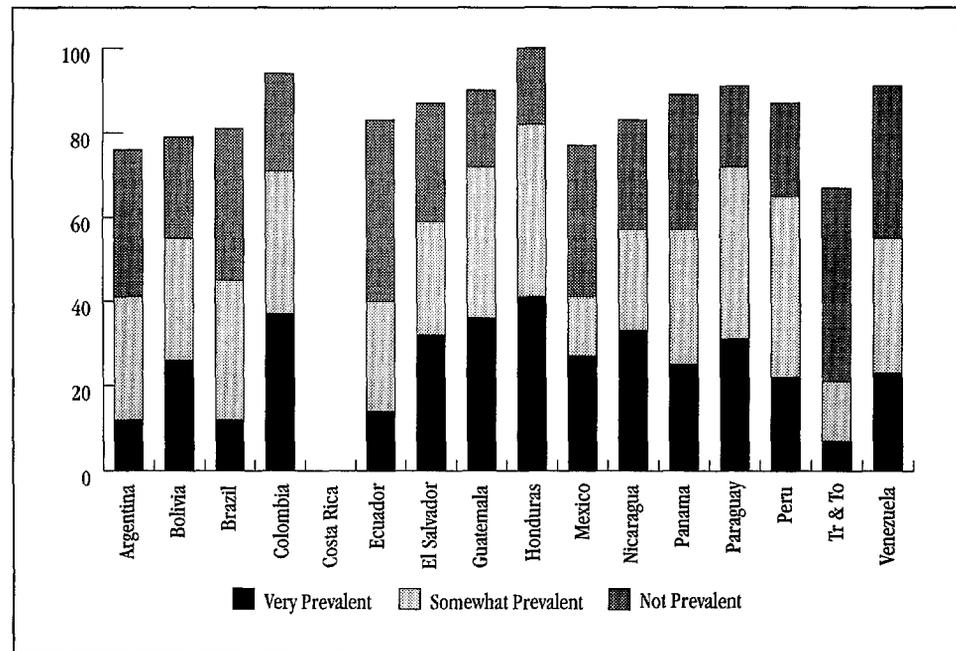
**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . . The Police?**

In eleven of the sixteen countries, police corruption is viewed as "very prevalent" by at least 50% of the respondents. Mexico has the highest perception of police corruption (82%), followed by Bolivia (80%), Guatemala (76%), Ecuador (73%), and Peru (72%). The perception that corruption is "not prevalent" is highest in El Salvador (31%) and in Costa Rica (20%).



**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . . The Military?**

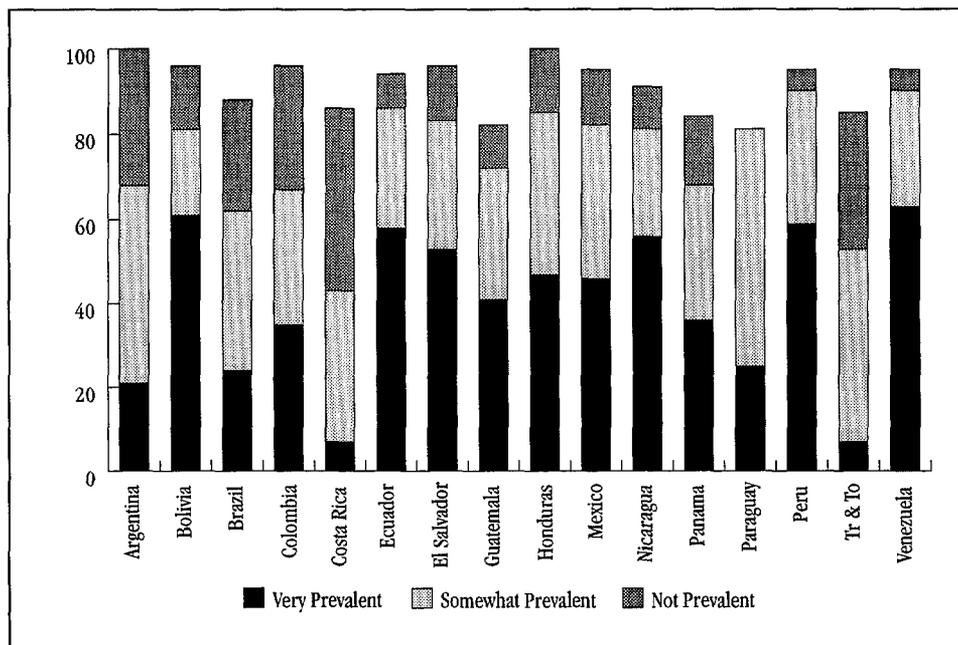
The respondents regard the military as an institution where the incidence of corruption is perceived as somewhat less prevalent than in the police. The average of the percentages for all countries that perceived police corruption as "very prevalent" is 57%; in this same category, the average for the military is only 25%. This conclusion is tempered by noting that a number of respondents (in many countries, between 20% and 30%) checked the "don't know" option.



The military receives higher percentages of corruption as “not prevalent.” The average response that perceived corruption is “not prevalent” in the military is 29%, while the average for the police is 10%. Among the countries receiving the highest “not prevalent” percents are Trinidad and Tobago (46%), Ecuador (43%), Brazil (36%), Venezuela (36%), Argentina (35%), Mexico (35%), Panama (31%), El Salvador (28%), and Bolivia (24%). In ten countries, however, the combined percentage of “somewhat prevalent” and “very prevalent” exceeds 50%. Some of these countries, curiously, are also found to have high percentages of “not prevalent” responses. When combining the percentages of those answering “very prevalent” and “somewhat prevalent,” the most extreme instance of perceived corruption in the military is Honduras (81%), followed by Guatemala and Paraguay (each 72%), and Colombia (71%). Note that Costa Rica does not have a military.

**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . .**  
*The Judiciary?*

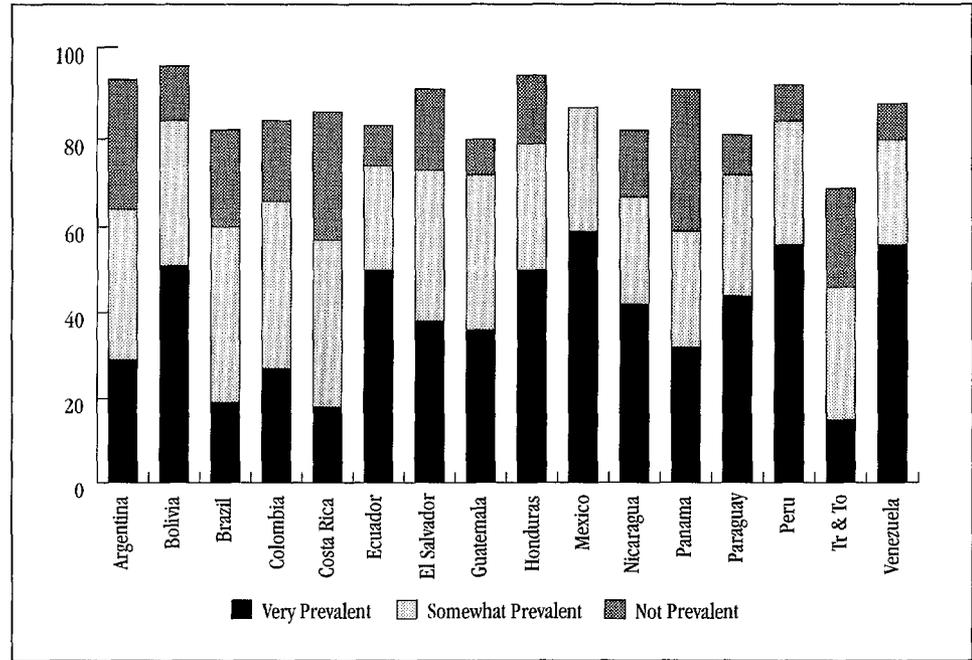
In six countries, more than half of the respondents believe that corruption is “very prevalent” in the judiciary. When combined with a response of “somewhat prevalent,” the total exceeds 60% in all countries, except in Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago. At 90%, Peru and Venezuela report the highest combined incidence but are closely trailed by Ecuador (86%), Honduras (85%), El Salvador (83%), Mexico (82%), and Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Paraguay, each with 81%. In a few countries, a considerable share of the respondents believe that corruption is “not prevalent” in the judiciary. These are, in descending order, Costa Rica (43%), Argentina (32%), Trinidad and Tobago (32%), Colombia (29%), and Brazil (26%).



**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . .**

*Other Parts of the Legal System?*

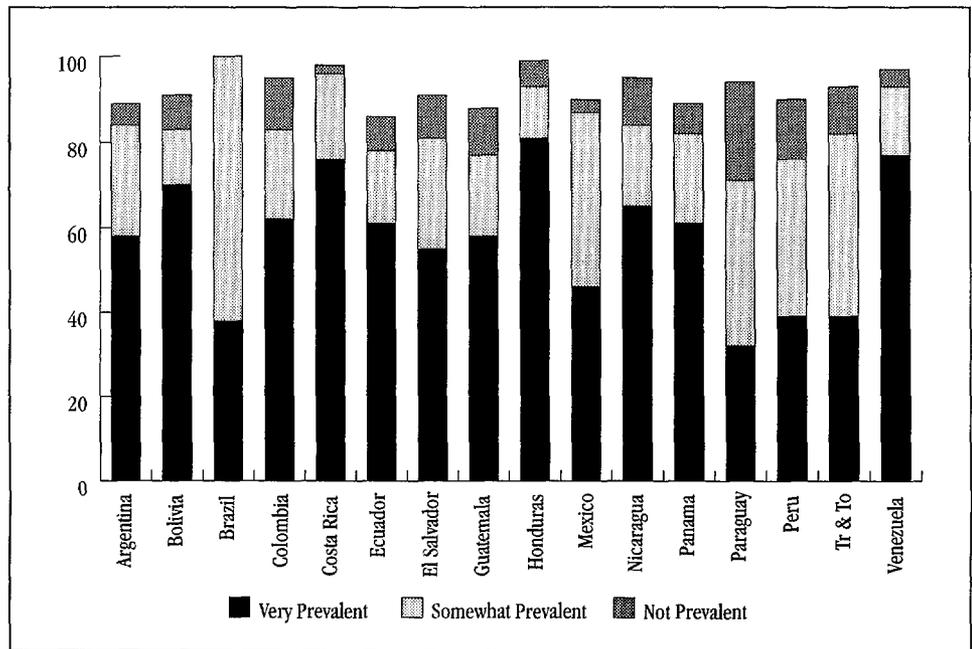
Participant responses to this item are generally consistent with other responses about the legal system. However, caution must be used in interpreting these figures, given the various possible meanings of *other parts of the legal system* and that many respondents answered "don't know." Nevertheless, more than 60% of those responding in fourteen countries judge that corruption in other parts of the legal system is "very prevalent" or "somewhat prevalent." In six countries, 50% or more of the respondents view this type of corruption as "very prevalent" (Mexico, 59%; Peru, 56%; Venezuela, 56%; Bolivia, 51%; and Ecuador and Honduras, each 50%).



**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . .**

*Political Parties?*

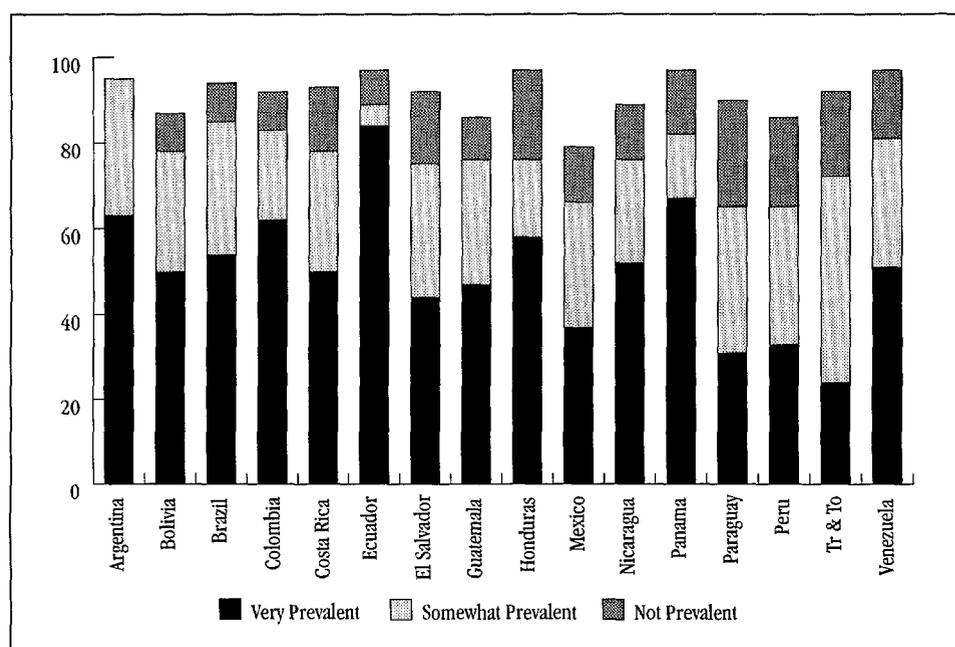
According to the respondents, political parties are perceived as the most corrupt institutions in the region. In each country, at least 70% of respondents believe that corruption within polit-



ical parties is "very prevalent" or "somewhat prevalent." These views are expressed by 100% of Brazilian respondents, 96% of Costa Ricans, and 93% of Hondurans and Venezuelans. The perception that corruption within political parties is "very prevalent" is highest in Honduras (81%), followed by Venezuela (77%), Costa Rica (76%), and Bolivia (70%). Some 50% to 69% of respondents believe that corruption is "very prevalent" in seven other countries. Relatively few claim this type of corruption is "not prevalent" in their countries, with the figure reaching 10% or slightly higher in only six countries and less than 10% in nine countries. Paraguay, where 23% of respondents feel that corruption is "not prevalent" in political parties, has the highest percentage.

**If Corruption Is an Issue in Your Country, How Do You View its Prevalence When Dealing with . . . Elected Officials?**

In all sixteen countries, more than 60% of respondents believe that corruption among elected officials is "very prevalent" and "somewhat prevalent." This view is expressed by nearly all Argentine respondents (95%), followed by Ecuador (89%), Brazil (85%), Colombia (83%), Panama (82%), and Venezuela (81%). A high share of Ecuadoran respondents (84%) express the view that corruption among elected officials is "very prevalent." Respondents from Panama (67%), Argentina (63%), and Colombia (62%) share this view. The number of respondents stating that corruption among elected officials is "not prevalent" is generally below 20%, except in Paraguay (25%) and Honduras (21%).



Respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments pertaining to the prevalence of corruption when dealing with different entities by responding to an "other" category. The following comments were provided:

- The private sector (national and foreign enterprises) is to be blamed for much of the corruption.
- Some private enterprises are fronts for corrupt activities.
- It is difficult to get anything accomplished unless bribes are paid.
- People have learned to rely on powerful figures to obtain results.
- Universities, owners of media outlets, and state-owned enterprises are corrupt.

**Which of the Following Do You Think Are (or Could Be) the Most Effective Measures to Combat Corruption in Your Country?**

Responses to this question were ranked from 1 to 8, with 1 being the most effective and 8 the least effective measure. The rankings for these choices were distributed by respondents in sixteen countries, as shown below. Table 2, on page 44, provides a breakdown by country.

In nine of the countries, *transparent financial management systems that minimize the opportunity for individuals to carry out corrupt acts* is identified as the potentially most effective measure to address the corruption issue. In four other countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, and Ecuador), this measure is ranked second, and in two others (Costa Rica and Peru), third. It is ranked sixth in Brazil.

Next in order of importance is *educational programs that instill ethical values and inform of the detrimental effects of corrupt acts*. Five countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Ecuador) rank this measure as the most significant, and four countries (Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru) rank it second. It is ranked third in Honduras, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela, and fourth in Argentina, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama.

MEASURE	RANKING (BY NUMBER OF COUNTRIES)							
	MOST EFFECTIVE				LEAST EFFECTIVE			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Transparent financial management systems that minimize the opportunity for individuals to carry out corrupt acts	9	4	2			1		
Educational programs that instill ethical values and inform of the detrimental effects of corruptions	5	4	3	4				
Mechanisms (e.g., whistle-blower legislation) that let people report corrupt acts without fear of retribution	1	5	2	4	2	2		
Prosecution of corrupt civil servants	1	3	6	2	3	1		
Special prosecutors		1	1	1	6	3	2	2
Public awareness campaigns to promote anti-corruption programs			1	5	3	5	1	1
Codes of ethics for civil servants and, separately, for business transactions					2	2	6	6
Citizen groups						2	7	7

*Mechanisms (e.g., whistle-blower legislation) that let people report corrupt acts without fear of retribution* is ranked first only in Peru. It is the second choice of respondents in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, and Trinidad and Tobago, and third in Argentina and Guatemala. Four countries rank it fourth, while two countries each rank it fifth and sixth.

*Prosecution of corrupt civil servants* is the first choice of respondents in Argentina, and second in Brazil, Honduras, and Venezuela. It is ranked third in six other countries and fourth in two more. In Colombia, Costa Rica, and Ecuador, it is ranked fifth, and is ranked sixth in Peru.

In Ecuador, the *special prosecutors* measure ties for second with *transparent financial management systems that minimize the opportunity for individuals to carry out corrupt acts*, while it is ranked third by Brazilians and fourth by Hondurans. Remaining countries rank *special prosecutors* fifth or sixth, except in Colombia and Peru, where it is seventh, and Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago, where it is eighth.

The highest ranking for *public awareness campaigns to promote anti-corruption programs* is given by Colombia, which ranks it third. It is ranked fourth in Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Peru, and next to last in Argentina. Three countries rank it as fifth and five as sixth. In Brazil it is ranked as the least effective measure.

*Codes of ethics for civil servants and, separately, for business transactions* receives low rankings, the highest being fifth in Brazil and Peru, followed by sixth in Argentina and Trinidad and Tobago. The remaining twelve countries rank this measure as last or next to last.

The lowest rankings are assigned to *citizen groups*. Only in Colombia and Costa Rica does this measure rank as high as sixth, with the remaining countries dividing it evenly between the last two ranks.

Respondents also were given the opportunity to describe “other” measures they believe to be potentially effective in the fight against corruption. The following responses were provided:

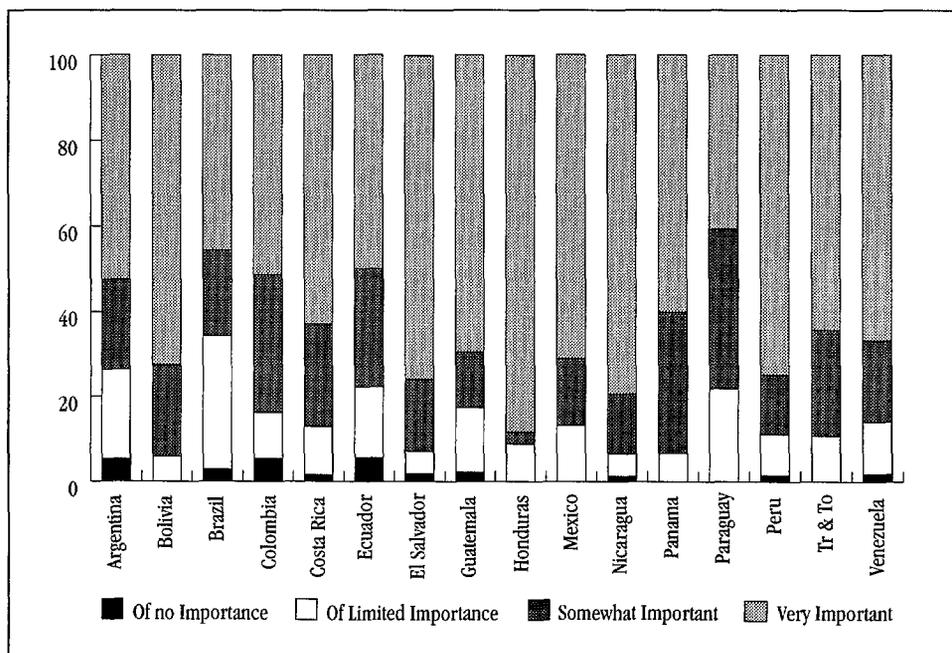
- Deny impunity to corrupt officials who have traditionally sought political asylum in other countries to avoid prosecution
- Streamline bureaucratic regulations
- Privatize as many government functions as possible
- Have government officials declare their personal assets before assuming and after leaving public office
- Promote stability and professionalism in public service management
- Take measures to ensure media responsibility

**Rankings of the Potential Effectiveness of Anti-Corruption Measures, by Country**

MEASURE	RANKING BY COUNTRY															
	Argentina	Bolivia	Brazil	Colombia	Costa Rica	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Mexico	Nicaragua	Panama	Paraguay	Peru	Tr & To	Venezuela
Transparent financial management systems that minimize the opportunity for individuals to carry out corrupt acts	2	2	6	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
Educational programs that instill ethical values and inform of the detrimental effects of corruption	4	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	3	2	4	4	2	2	3	3
Mechanisms (e.g., whistle-blower legislation) that let people report corrupt acts without fear of retribution	3	5	4	4	2	6	2	3	5	4	2	2	6	1	2	4
Prosecution of corrupt civil servants	1	3	2	5	5	5	3	4	2	3	3	3	3	6	4	2
Special prosecutors	5	6	3	7	8	2	5	5	4	6	5	5	5	7	8	6
Public awareness campaigns to promote anti-corruption programs	7	4	8	3	4	4	6	6	6	5	6	6	4	4	5	5
Codes of ethics for civil servants and, separately, for business transactions	6	7	5	8	7	7	8	8	7	8	7	8	8	5	6	7
Citizen groups	8	8	7	6	6	8	7	7	8	7	8	7	7	8	7	8

**How Important Will the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption or Other Similar International Agreements Be in the Fight Against Corruption in Your Country?**

The vast majority of respondents believe that the Inter-American Convention and other similar legal instruments will have a major impact in the fight against corruption in their countries. Percentages of respondents expressing the view that the impact will be "very important" range from 41% in Paraguay and 46% in Brazil to 88% in Honduras. The combined percentage for those answering "very important" and "somewhat important" ranges from 66% in Brazil to 94% in Bolivia, with El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama at 93% each.



**Why Do You Feel as You Do about the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption and Other Similar International Agreements?**

Most of those responding to this open question and who regard the convention as an important weapon in the anti-corruption arsenal (1,258 respondents) see it this way because they view corruption as having many transnational dimensions that can only be addressed through international cooperation. Related issues include money laundering, narco-trafficking, harmonizing anti-corruption measures, and the technical assistance and financial support wealthier nations are likely to provide to combat corruption. A perspective articulated in every country, however, is that countries must have the political will to complement international measures with correspondingly strong domestic measures to achieve results. This entails going beyond rhetorical statements to taking effective action (e.g., enacting and enforcing anti-corruption legislation, prosecuting corrupt officials).

Those more skeptical about what to expect from the convention (153 respondents) contend that its purpose is solely political—enacted for symbolic reasons—and that most governments in the region are either unwilling or incapable of implementing the needed reforms to comply with the spirit of the convention. They also believe that those in power (e.g., politicians, government officials, economic elites) who are entrenched are unlikely to support changes in administrative and judicial systems from which they benefit illicitly. Officials and citizens in many countries fear retaliation if they denounce acts of corruption. Some skeptics claim that the effects of the Convention will be limited because few citizens know about it or would lobby for its enforcement.

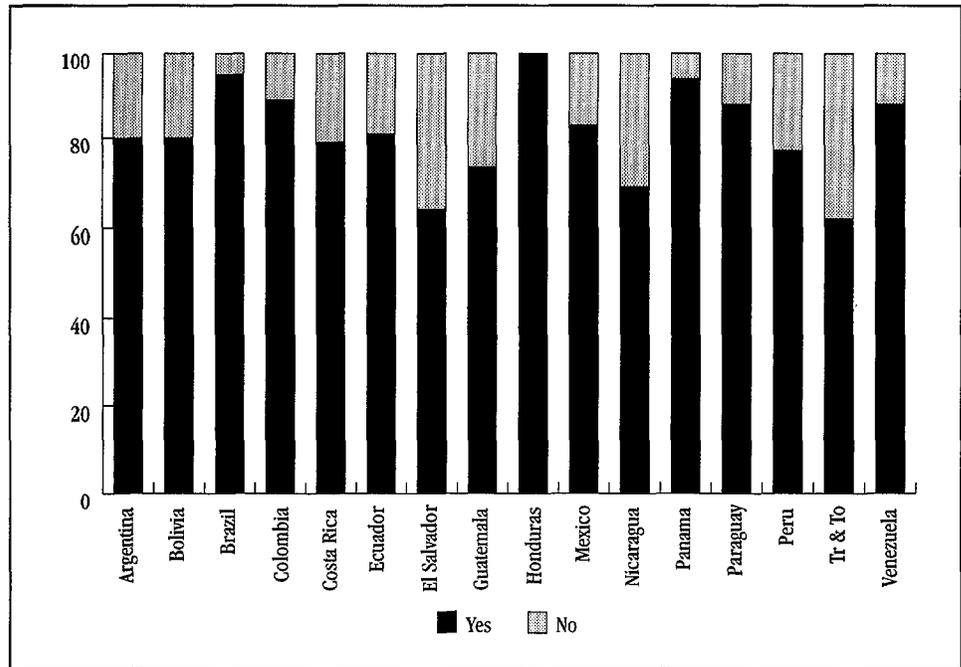
**Describe the Steps that, in Your View, Governments in Our Region Should Take (Collectively or Individually) to Achieve the Goals of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption.**

There is broad consensus in the responses offered to this open question. Respondents recommend that national governments

- Impose severe legal sanctions against corrupt individuals
- Promote ethical and moral values through the educational system and public awareness campaigns
- Work to achieve international coordination
- Depoliticize government service, particularly in financial management control institutions
- Develop efficient statistical reporting systems
- Reduce the size and functions of government
- Establish specialized national or international anti-corruption courts to ensure the swift and harsh prosecution of corrupt officials

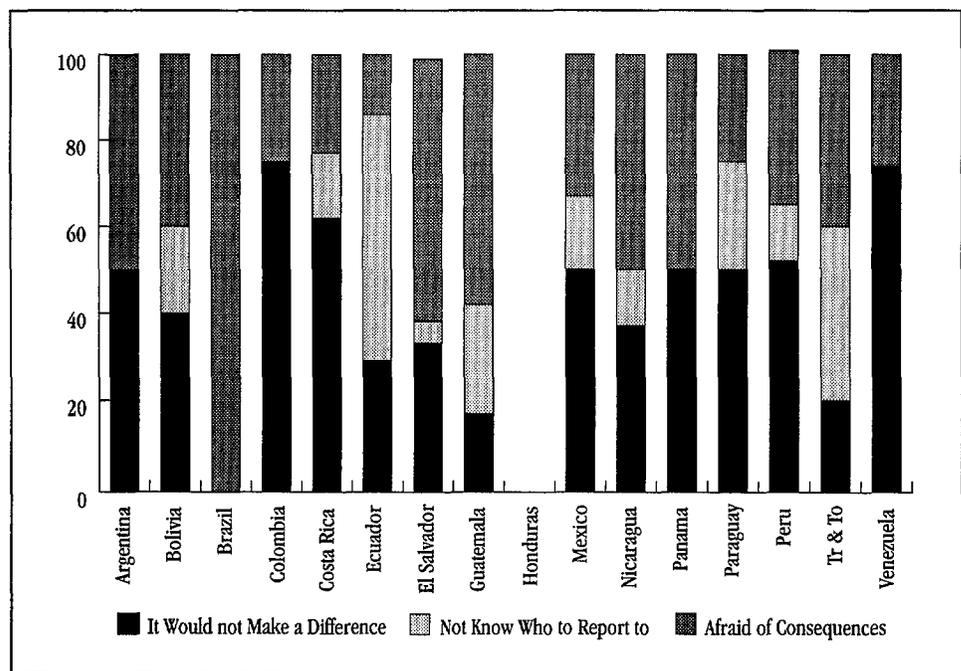
**If You Knew about Alleged Acts of Corruption, Would You Report Them?**

Close to 80% of the total number of respondents from all countries answered this question in the affirmative. Except for Honduras, where all answers are affirmative, negative responses range from only 5% in Brazil to 38% in Trinidad and Tobago.



**If No, Why Not?**

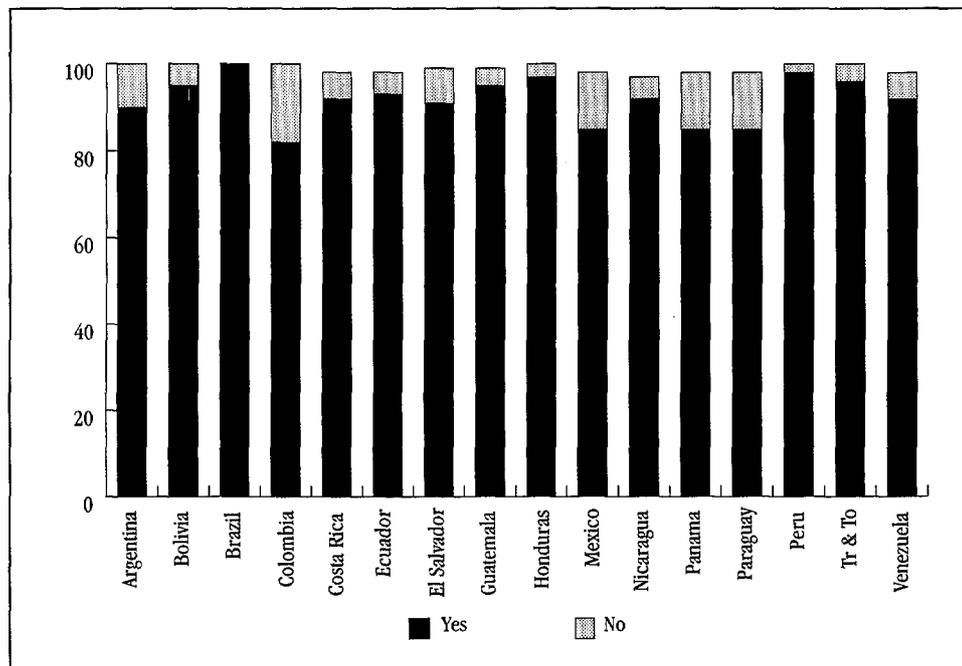
Responses to this follow-up question are divided primarily into two groups: those who are afraid of the consequences and those who would refuse to report corrupts acts because doing so would not make any difference. Remember, however, that in several countries only a few respondents (e.g., four in Argentina) answered "no." The total number of "no" answers is 344. The highest percentages of those not likely to report out of fear are in Brazil (100%), El



Salvador (61%), Guatemala (58%), Nicaragua (50%), and Panama (50%). The percentages of respondents not reporting corrupt acts because doing so would not make a difference are highest in Colombia (75%), followed by Venezuela (74%), and Costa Rica (62%). In a few countries, a significant percentage of the 344 respondents (Ecuador, 57%; Trinidad and Tobago, 40%; and Guatemala and Paraguay, each 25%) indicate they would not report acts of corruption because they do not know to whom they should be reported. No one in Honduras responded "no" to the previous question.

**In Your Opinion,  
Would More Acts of  
Corruption Be  
Reported if the  
Identity of  
Citizens and/or Public  
Officials Alerting  
Authorities Were  
Protected?**

An overwhelming number of responses to this question are positive, with percentages ranging from 82% in Colombia to a maximum of 100% in Brazil.



# RESPONDACON III