

## **Global Compact Road Map for a Principle-based Approach to the Fight Against Corruption**

From the inception of the Global Compact, questions were raised regarding the need for a principle-based approach to fighting corruption within the Global Compact framework. With the signing of the UN Convention against in Merida, Mexico on 9 December 2003, the issue has gained new relevance.

Against this background, the Global Compact Office has started consultations with participating companies, global business associations, labour associations and civil society to explore the options with respect to addressing the fight against corruption, including a potential principle-based approach.

On 19 November 2003, informal consultations started with a small meeting with several stakeholders where these issues were discussed. It was noted that the fight against corruption underlies the successful implementation of the nine Global Compact principles – in the areas of human rights, labour and environment. The Global Compact could provide a neutral platform that can help all stakeholders in society to generate practical solutions to tackle the problems of corruption. However, reservations were raised about the addition of a principle. It was pointed out that an extension of the original nine principles could threaten the credibility and solidity of the Global Compact.

Following a suggestion by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) the participants of this meeting considered the following points to be of importance:

- a) such a significant change to the initial agreement must be based on a full, transparent and inclusive consultation of Global Compact participants, and consultations should be given a sufficient timeframe;
- b) of particular importance will be the consultation with the participant companies whose CEOs have made a written commitment to the Secretary-General;
- c) the Secretary-General would need to provide assurance about the exceptional nature of this course; and
- d) based on the results of the general consultation further steps will be announced at the Global Compact Leaders Summit on 24 June, 2004.

In addition, it was recognized that the introduction of a principle-based approach would have to be closely linked to the political momentum of the UN Convention against Corruption.

Therefore, the Global Compact Office will undertake the following steps:

### **Consultation and awareness-raising with participants:**

**January 2004**            Initiation of a comprehensive process of consultation: a formal letter will be sent to all participants seeking their views and advice.

- 12 January 2004** Global Compact Advisory Council Meeting
- 26-27 January 2004** Policy Dialogue on Transparency and Corruption, Paris: This dialogue will be an opportunity for consultations with participants.
- Background information on corruption will be provided on the Global Compact website
  - Global Compact Newsletter will inform participants about consultation process, and provide background on corruption
  - Best practices in statement of policy, training, dealing with contractors and supply chain, and internal measures for enforcement will be collected and discussed.
- April/May 2004** Assess responses received from participants
- April – June 2004** Continuation of broad-based consultation
- 24 June 2004** Global Compact Leaders Summit, New York: Based on the outcome of the consultations, further steps would be announced at the Summit.