



Remarks for the Rt. Hon. Perry G. Christie, M.P.,  
Prime Minister and Minister of Finance  
The Commonwealth of The Bahamas

The 2014 UCCI/UWI Caribbean Conference 2014: "Toward a  
Corruption-Free Caribbean:  
Ethics, Values, Trust and Morality

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**"The Ethical Anti-Corruption Framework of the Bahamian  
Government: Lessons for the Caribbean"**

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other Ministers of Government; distinguished presenters and panelists; heads of various  
international organizations and institutions; students, ladies and gentlemen:*

First of all, let me express my gratitude for the very kind invitation extended to me to participate in this dialectic on the fight against corruption in Caribbean societies and the concomitant promotion of ethical values in all spheres of governance.

May I also congratulate Dr. Livingston Smith and his staff at UCCI, along with their academic and institutional partners, for once again convening this international conference to put the microscope on a vitally important area of development of post-colonial Caribbean societies, under the rubric "Towards a Corruption-Free Caribbean: Ethics, Values, Trust and Morality".

While there is room for differences of opinion over the root-causes of corruption and the prevalence of corrupt practices from country to country—and perhaps from region to region—there is, I would submit, virtually universal agreement that corruption in its various forms poses a formidable challenge to governments everywhere, and that international, regional and national anti-corruption initiatives need to be strengthened to combat this scourge.

Although corruption is a menace for developed and developing countries alike, it is particularly relevant for small island developing states where corruption is not infrequently linked with national development. However that may be, there is no denying that systemic corruption—whether it be high-level political corruption, lack of financial transparency, or petty bribery among public officials and law enforcement personnel—undermines good governance and the rule of law; accelerates moral decay; fosters negative international perceptions of the country; stymies foreign investment; impedes the delivery of public services; exacerbates poverty; and, in the final analysis, retards social and economic development.

This may be an appropriate juncture to lay stress on an overarching truism that is central to my topic, namely, that there is a moral centre that undergirds anti-corruption initiatives. Thus, the best anti-corruption systems are not necessarily achieved by legislative frameworks and administrative machinery to enforce rules governing the behavior of those in public positions. Whilst such things are of great importance and utility, probity in public life tends to be more rigorously observed in societies in which both government and the community have a shared responsibility in inculcating and observing ethical values and integrity in public and private life.

Against that backdrop, what I hope to accomplish in my remarks is to spark a frank dialogue about transparency, accountability and trust as a model of good governance. I will do so, of course, from the perspective of The Bahamas whose

government I have the honour to lead in this my second non-consecutive term as Prime Minister.

Perhaps a good place to start this discourse is to draw reference to the international perception of the levels of corruption in the Bahamas, as memorialized in the most recent global Corruption Perception Index (CPI), published annually since 1995 by Transparency International. As we all know, Transparency International is an organization which has done much to focus international attention on the fight against global corruption. Its annual index has become an important tool to measure the perceived levels of public sector corruption around the world. (I believe the organization may be represented here at this conference by its President.)

In Transparency International's 2013 Corruption Perception Index, The Bahamas is ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> on a list of the 177 countries that were evaluated, with a score of 71 (out of 100). This puts The Bahamas just two points behind the United States of America, and second only to Barbados in the Caribbean region (which ranks number 15 with a score of 75). In fact, in the years in which The Bahamas has been ranked by TI, it has been consistently ranked in the 70 percentile—ranking 7.3 in 2010 (when the measurements were still on the 10-point scale) and 71 for both 2012 and 2013.

These statistics are impressive if only because of the broader historical context out of which The Bahamas developed. As is well known, The Bahamas and its various forms of government over the centuries, have a long history of fighting corrupt influences, going back to the "Pirates' Republic" of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century in what is referred to by scholars as the Proprietary Period of constitutional development.

Indeed it was the prevalence of piracy and the associated corruption of the body politic in this period that precipitated the transition of The Bahamas to rulership by the British Crown in 1717 with the appointment of Woodes Rodgers as the first of the royal

governors who would preside over The Bahamas as viceroys of the British monarch until the attainment of Bahamian Independence in 1973.

Such a morally ambiguous heritage has naturally provided an abundance of what are now popularly referred to as “teachable moments”.

One such moment occurred in the aftermath of the Commission of Inquiry into Casino Gambling in 1967 in which it was revealed that virtually the entire former cabinet of The Bahamas – this was in the era of white minority rule – had been systematically corrupted, along with a range of other important persons of influence in the society.

Similarly, again in the aftermath of another commission of inquiry – this time the 1984 Commission of Inquiry into drug trafficking - there was a great deal of national introspection and soul-searching in the wake of powerful suggestions, if not concrete findings, that high-ranking persons in politics and in law enforcement, and indeed many persons of less exalted station, had been contaminated by the drug culture, much to the detriment of the country’s reputational standing abroad and, indeed, much to the detriment of the self-image of Bahamians generally.

But the Bahamas of that yesteryear is a far cry from what exists now. Today there is a panoply of international and domestic frameworks, political and civil institutions, NGOs and civil society, which combine to achieve transparency and accountability in the Bahamas and in the Bahamian government as part of what might compendiously be termed the Bahamas’ anti-corruption framework.

The reason I say that these initiatives comprise the anti-corruption framework is because the Bahamas does not have an comprehensive written policy on corruption, or a unified anti-corruption framework with a single watchdog agency or oversight body such as an integrity commission or anti-corruption commission. Instead, anti-

corruption has been addressed through a range of measures and devices, including strong democratic traditions, good governance policies, legislative initiatives, vibrant political and civil institutions, a free and vigourously investigative media (including internet media) most of which is under private ownership and control, and a raft of anti-corruption initiatives that are to be found at many levels of the public service and the public at large.

While I do not wish to downplay the added value that formal bodies such as those established by treaties bring to the fight against corruption—and it is accepted that these institutions will inevitably have to become an integral part of our domestic framework—it must be appreciated that none of them represents a magic wand.

For example, a recent constitutional commission established by my government to consider constitutional reform, reported that after studying the office of ombudsman in the region, there was “little evidence in the literature to suggest that this office has lived up to its billing”, citing issues such as the lack of coercive powers.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, it bears noting that the Bahamas’ CPI score outranks many countries that have formal anti-corruption oversight bodies and specific anti-corruption laws. Social scientists and academics might see this as an irony or perhaps even an anomaly, worthy in either case of further investigation and study.

I will return to this idea later in my remarks but let me now provide a conspectus of some of the components of our national anti-corruption framework.

### *Legal Framework*

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission did recommend, however, the establishment of an Ombudsman.

Despite the lack of a single or primary anti-corruption legislation, the Bahamas has a robust international and domestic legal framework for combating corruption. Of particular note, The Bahamas is a party to the major anti-drug and anti-corruption conventions. In fact, The Bahamas has the distinction of being the very first country in the world to ratify the 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (the 1988 Convention). We have also ratified the major anti-corruption convention including the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (IACAC). As you would know, both these Conventions contain comprehensive anti-corruption provisions and require states to assume jurisdiction over a wide range of corruption offences, including domestic and foreign bribery, even (in the case of the UNCAC) extending to the prevention and criminalization of private sector bribery, and to establish national oversight bodies.

The Bahamas is also a party to the mechanism for follow-up on the implementation of the Inter-American Convention, and participates in the implementation review mechanism for the UNCAC.

### *Regulation of financial services sector*

Although not contained in any formal treaty regime, one of the international initiatives in the area of promoting transparency and accountability for the regulation of the financial services sector has been the work of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), through which the Bahamas energetically participates as a member of the regional sub-group Caribbean (FATF). I should also mention that the Attorney-General of the Bahamas, Senator the Hon. Allyson Maynard-Gibson, is the current chair of CFAFT, and under her leadership the organization has embarked on an 11-point plan which aims to establish a strong culture of compliance with FATF AML/CFT standards to ensure financial strength and stability in the region and the world.

The Bahamas is also slated to undergo a comprehensive peer review of its AML/CT financing systems this year by the CFATF, and we look forward to working with our regional partners in this regard.

The importance of a strong anti-money laundering regime in a national framework to combat corruption cannot be over-stated. Money laundering and the presence of large quantities of illicit money in a financial system not only promotes criminal activities and other social ills, but it feeds corruption.

It is no secret that the large amounts of money from narcotics that flooded the Bahamas during the late 70's and early 80's contributed significantly to widely perceived, if not actually proven, levels of corruption. However, once stringent legislation and law enforcement activities were put in place to deal with the substantive drug trafficking offences, as well as to cut off the flow of money and to seize and confiscate the proceeds of drug trafficking, assets, this greatly reduced the "opportunistic" corruption that sprang up around the use of the Bahamas as a transshipment point for drugs. Certainly the anecdotal evidence points to that result.

#### *Domestic framework*

It is also important to note that while the emergence of new forms of transnational crime and transnational bribery have driven the development of multilateral treaty regimes for fighting corruption, there have always existed a variety of legal and administrative measures in our domestic arsenals to fight corruption, many of which were a part of our inherited legal systems.

In fact, part of the delayed reaction to effectively implementing anti-corruption conventions regimes in this region has been the need to first identify what provisions are already covered in the mosaic of existing laws and regulations.

For example, there are in the Bahamas (as in virtually most Caribbean states) laws ranging from constitutional provisions requiring members of parliament to disclose interests in Government contracts; constitutional provisions which establish and empower the Office of the Auditor General as the supreme audit institution; various parliamentary oversight bodies and investigatory committees with vast powers to investigate and call for papers, including, of particular note, a standing Public Accounts Committee which has an Opposition-controlled majority of members; criminal sanctions under legislation ranging from the Penal Code to specific legislation dealing with the prevention and criminalization of corruption offences<sup>2</sup>; legislation providing for the disclosure of the financial affairs of members of parliament and senior public officials (which admittedly, however, has not proven to be a model of scrupulous observance);<sup>3</sup> financial rules and regulations dealing with public procurement and tendering; specific oversight bodies and tribunals to deal with matters arising among the disciplined forces and uniformed branches (Defence force, Police, Prisons, etc.); and various codes of conducts for public servants found in documents such as *Public Service Regulations* and general orders, which lay down a code for the performance of their duties in a way that is designed to thwart conflicts of interest and attendant abuses.

All of these legislative provisions and mechanisms have been used and pressed into service in some way or another as part of the national fight against corruption in The Bahamas.

I should now like to briefly look at some of the key public institutions and national integrity systems as well as some of the non-state actors in the ongoing effort to promote transparent, accountable and honest government in The Bahamas.

I begin by looking at the legislature.

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<sup>2</sup> E.g., Prevention of Bribery Act, Proceeds of Crime Act, etc.

<sup>3</sup> The Public Disclosure Act (Ch. ).

### *Legislature*

The legislature of the Bahamas can be traced back to 1729, making it the third oldest legislative Assembly in the western hemisphere. I highlight this to illustrate the fact that the Bahamas enjoys a long, unbroken tradition of lawmaking revolving, in the main, around a popularly elected Assembly. Although the party system has been the dominant feature of Bahamian parliamentary life for the past nearly 60 years, the spirit of independent thought has continued to resonate. In fact, it is not unusual for MPs from the governing party (or for that matter, the Opposition) to espouse views during legislative debates that are contrary to the policy line of their party. The tolerance of this 'backbencher' spirit is a healthy safety-valve that aids in the promotion of vigorous public discourse and accountability.

### *Elections*

The strong democratic traditions of the legislature have long been bolstered by our long history of free, fair and non-violent elections.

At the invitation of the Bahamas Government, the 2012 General Election in the Bahamas (2012) was observed by an OAS electoral observation mission (EOM) which reported that the elections were free and fair. Indeed the mission even congratulated the Bahamas for the way in which voters exercised their franchise.

The right to elect a government and to keep it accountable through the ballot box is very jealously guarded by Bahamians. Voter statistics for general elections in the Bahamas since 1972 indicate that the lowest voter turnout has been around 88 percent, and that the average turnout has been in the 90 percentile range over nine election cycles. It is this kind of participatory democracy that fosters public oversight and sanction of political leaders and helps, in the longer run, to maintain integrity in the democratic process.

There are some areas, however, which are admittedly in need of reform and there have been recommendations from both the OAS observer mission and the constitutional commission to address the issue of the financing of political parties and campaigns, and to enhance the accountability of members to constituents once elected. Again these are issues that have been the subject of specific recommendations from the Constitutional Commission whose Report was submitted in July of last year and which, incidentally, is available online on the Bahamas Government's website.

### *Executive*

Fidelity to the performance of their legal and public duties by elected public officials is also aided by a code of ethics promulgated during my first term in office. Indeed in 2002, I tabled a code of ethics for Ministers (which also extended to parliamentary secretaries) in the House of Assembly at the opening of Parliament.

Like many codes, it was primarily intended to be (and has been) a moral signpost and guide for the conduct of political decision-makers in our country. In introducing the code, I said that:

*"If public confidence in the integrity of the political directorate of The Bahamas is to become a hallmark of our political culture, it is of the first importance that the Prime Minister and other Ministers of Government observe—and be seen to observe—the highest standards of probity in public life."*

I believe in leading by example, and it is clear that one of the necessary ingredients for the success of any national initiative to fight corruption is sustained political will and the power of personal example.

Indeed, if I may be permitted a brief burst of boastful pride, there is nothing in the whole of my more than 40 consecutive years in frontline politics of which I am more proud than the fact that there has never been any serious allegation of corruption levelled against me. And in a place of intense scrutiny and frequently malicious partisanship like The Bahamas, that is really saying something, I assure you!

But I'm really proud of that record because say what they like about me – and I've been called a great many unkind things - it is, I think, generally accepted that for Perry Gladstone Christie integrity in the conduct of the people's affairs is absolutely central to his personal ethos and to his personal philosophy of governance. And as long as I have any breath in my body, that's the way it's always going to be.

As for the code of ethics itself, it stresses the point that transparency and probity in public life can only be maintained if Ministers:

- hold their positions and powers in trust for the benefit of the Bahamian people;
- devote themselves to ministerial service as a full-time occupation
- avoid any material conflict between their private interest and their public duties
- avoid using their ministerial status or influence for the enrichment of themselves or their families
- avoid all forms of ethically improper behavior including the solicitation or acceptance of personal gifts or loans from organizations or individuals who are seeking to obtain or retain the patronage or favour of the Government.

### *Judiciary*

An independent, impartial and incorruptible judiciary with administrative capacity to support its functions, and the ability to check abuses by the other branches is important to accountable government. In this regard, there are few, if any, institutions in the Bahamas, which have remained as unimpeachable as the judiciary, so much so

that even whispers of corruption have only been very rarely heard over the years. The Bahamian judiciary has indeed been like Caesar's wife for virtually all of its modern life. It really has a record of integrity of which we are all very proud.

It is often bandied about in regional and international circles (especially in those countries with highly developed financial services or technology sectors) that one of the reasons for the retention of the Privy Council is to inspire investor confidence in the judiciary. There is a kernel of truth in this, but it really does a disservice to local courts. The fact is that only a miniscule number of cases and litigants ever make it to the Privy Council. Instead the high court (or "Supreme Court" as it is called in our jurisdiction) and lower levels of the judiciary are the fount of justice for the vast majority of persons.

The position of the courts in the Bahamas was perhaps best articulated by a judge in a case involving an alleged lack of independence stemming from the Government's failure to conduct a statutorily-required biennial review of judge's salaries, coupled with public comments from the then-Attorney-General arguing for the accountability of judges to the public for dereliction of duty. This is what the court said in answer:

*"[T]he fair-minded informed observer would be aware of the centuries-long tradition of judicial independence of the courts of The Bahamas, [and] he would be aware that judges discharge their judicial functions 'without fear or favour, affection or ill-will', and he will be aware that despite the failure of government to review salaries and to adequately compensate judges, they continue to perform their judicial functions in accordance with their oaths." [...]*

*"That observer would also discover that judges are accountable only to the Constitution and to the law for their decisions and that there are no*

*performance appraisals of judges by anyone within or outside the judiciary.”<sup>4</sup>*

*An independent DPP*

Many of you would also be aware that the Bahamas remains one of the few countries in the region – indeed in the Commonwealth for that matter - with an Attorney General who is also a necessary member of the Cabinet, and who remains constitutionally responsible for public prosecutions. Nearly all other countries, as you know, have long since transitioned to a model under which a political Attorney General has either no or very limited powers in relation to criminal prosecutions, with a constitutionally independent Director of Public Prosecutions having these powers instead. (It should be noted that in the Bahamas we have a Director of Public Prosecutions but this is not - at least not yet - a constitutional office with security of tenure).

Be that as it may, successive Attorneys General in the Bahamian context have functioned impartially and free from any party or political influences, a reality that I attribute not only to the constitutional prescription which insulates the office of Attorney General from any interference by other bodies but also because of what has emerged as the norm for most of the post Independence experience, namely, that the Attorney General should be an appointed senator, and not an elected politician accountable to constituents.

However, the Constitutional Commission has recommended that the establishment of an independent office of DPP is one of the reforms that should be fast-tracked.

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<sup>4</sup> *R v Jones* 72 WIR 1.

On this point, I should also mention, if only parenthetically, that in 2001 the Bahamas held a constitutional referendum which attempted (among other reforms) to create a constitutional office of DPP, but the bill failed at referendum. In a lecture I delivered last year in Nassau - "Contemporary Constitutionalism and the Consent of the Governed" -, I highlighted the unpredictable nature of the referendum process, and pointed out that while the referendum was an important instrument of participatory democracy, it can sometimes present an obstacle to implementing changes in constitutions with entrenched provisions. Other recent experiences of a similar nature in certain CARICOM states lend credence to this concern.

One of the areas of concern we are addressing aggressively is the reduction of the large backlog of mainly criminal cases in our system and the implementation of speedier judicial procedures. While inefficient systems have no direct correlation to corruption, the fact is that such systems are more susceptible to abuse and are generally perceived to be less transparent. In this regard, the current Attorney General has spearheaded an ambitious project called "Swift Justice" which seeks, with the aid of international agencies, to make use of integrated technology and management systems to expedite and generally improve efficiency levels in the delivery of judicial services. We also intend to shortly commission three additional criminal courts to deal specifically with the backlog of cases.

#### *Civil Service/Public Administration*

The Bahamas has a public administrative system (or civil service) that is largely free from corruption. However, there are agencies which because of the very nature of the work are perhaps more susceptible to bribes and corruption than others. Indeed the anecdotal evidence supports the point of view that agencies and government department such as Immigration, Customs and the disciplined forces (Police Force, Defence Force, Prison Service), and various licensing and town planning authorities are especially vulnerable to corrupting forces. The record is clear, however, that when

serious allegations of corrupt dealings are made, they are scrupulously investigated, and where the evidence justifies it, alleged offenders are interdicted and held accountable either criminally or in accordance with the appropriate disciplinary protocols in such matters.

In the case of the Disciplined Forces, for example, they have their own internal tribunals which deal quickly and severely with cases of corruption. In addition, the Police Force has a civilian Police Complaints Inspectorate (composed of eminent persons from civil society, including a retired judge), to investigate complaints (not only of corruption but brutality as well) involving members of the Police Force.

### *Civil Society*

Civil society has a very important role to play in fighting corruption as citizens are often the direct or immediate victims of corruption. Their cooperation in reporting and exposing corruption is therefore vital to the detection, investigation trial and punishment of the wrongdoers. Active partnership with civil society institutions and NGOs is an indispensable tool in enhancing public awareness of corruption and its consequences, and in promoting accountability.

I have made consultative government an important plank of my government's philosophy of governance. There are regular meetings with various civil society groups and institutions. There is also consultation with civil society stakeholders on draft laws (bills). Moreover town meetings to obtain feedback on proposed laws or changes to government policies (such as tax reform to take one very current example) have become an integral part of the consultative process to which I am firmly committed.

Two of the institutions that are central to the interplay between government and civil society are the church and the media. In relation to the former, the Constitution of The Bahamas itself affirms in its preamble that the nation is founded on Christian

and spiritual values. Organized religion has long enjoyed an active role in advising Government on important matters touching the moral and social development of the Bahamian people.

### *Media*

The Bahamas has a lively and free-spirited media that makes the most of the constitutionally prescribed freedom of expression. In comparatively recent times, there has been an explosive increase in the number of media entities, including not only print newspapers but electronic news and social commentary outlets as well, including private radio and television facilities and a veritable host of internet blogs.

The independence of the local media has roots of enduring historical interest. In a famous 1892 case—which eventually was referred to the Privy Council<sup>5</sup>—the editor of the major daily – then as now the Nassau Guardian - called into question the integrity of no less a personage than the Chief Justice. The Chief Justice had the editor imprisoned for contempt for failing to reveal his sources (though he was later released at the instance of the Governor and on the advice of the Privy Council). However, the incident nearly caused a constitutional crisis and resulted in the eventual removal of the Chief Justice.

True to this historical precedent, the media has continued to play an important role in holding both government and public officials accountable. It has done so over the years by exposing corruption through investigative journalism.

### *The way forward*

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<sup>5</sup> *In the matter of a Special Reference from the Bahama Islands*, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1892.

Notwithstanding the relatively good marks the Bahamas has obtained in the CPI, we readily confess that there is still a great deal of work to be done and much ground to cover. The Bahamas is slated to undergo on-site reviews pursuant to three anti-corruption regimes—two related specifically to preventing, detecting and punishing corrupt acts (the international anti-corruption conventions) and the other relating to the regulation of the financial system (CFATF), with emphasis on preventing money laundering and combating terrorist financing.

In addition, amending our laws to fill the legal gaps, and to complement existing anti-corruption legislation continues to be a matter of high priority. In this regard, The Bahamas will likely introduce before year's end specific legislation dealing with anti-corruption in the form of either a new *Prevention of Corruption Act* or *Integrity in Public Life Act*. This new Act will specifically implement the provisions of both the UN and Inter-American anti-corruption conventions, and create an Integrity Commission to supervise the administration of the Act and oversee the process of public financial declarations.

Renewed consideration will also be given to the draft Freedom of Information Act to allow citizens greater access to government information and to provide them with the tools to keep public administration transparent and accountable.

Additionally, the Government is working on a national anti-corruption action plan which will build on existing initiatives, and include the following key pillars:

- A renewed focus on quality leadership and in inculcating a sustained political commitment to fight corruption
- Continuing review of our legislative framework to modernize it and keep pace with international developments and standards
- The introduction of new specific anti-corruption legislation creating an anti-corruption body

- The strengthening of institutional capacity in all the arms and institutions of government, especially improving the judicial procedures to fight corruption
- Improving public management systems and accountability service-wide, but with particular focus on strengthening the public procurement system, the office of the Auditor General and enforcing a code of conduct and ethics for all levels of the public service and public administration
- Deepening cooperation with international and regional partners under existing treaty regimes and explore opportunities for capacity building in relation to the implementation and enforcement of international anti-corruption standards
- Promoting partnerships with civil society stakeholders and increasing opportunities for public education and information.
- Establishment of an inter-ministerial committee to monitor the implementation of the action plan.

### *Conclusion*

Notwithstanding the corruption that has been so endemic to our historical development, plagued as we have been over the years by piracy, then wrecking , then blockade running, then rum running, then drug running, it is to our credit that we have nonetheless managed – in the borrowed words of Lincoln – to let the “better angels of our nature” triumph over evil. Indeed we have managed to restore the reputation of The Bahamas such that we rank very respectably indeed in the international corruption perception index to which I referred in the early part of these remarks. That the Bahamas has managed to achieve this positive turn in its international reputation is especially significant as it has come about without any elaborate, purposeful array of formal anti-corruption mechanisms. This, in turn, begs the question I raised earlier and upon which I will now end.

Even though it is self-evidently advisable for The Bahamas (and other countries in the region) to ensure that formal anti-corruption systems and bodies are established and functioning, I am firmly convinced that at the end of the day the viability and efficacy of such systems and bodies will depend on the values of the persons who operate them and the society they are meant to serve.

In this regard, I believe that there are two central lessons emerging out of the history of the Bahamas that may be of wider value for the Caribbean. The first is that you should not be afraid to learn from past mistakes, nor should you be afraid to radiate issues of public corruption through formal investigative mechanisms such as commissions of inquiry of the kind to which I referred earlier. The lessons learned from such painful but oft-times necessary experiences can be invaluable not only for governments, but for the society as a whole.

The second lesson is this: values such as morality, trust and ethics in government cannot be legislated or precisely prescribed like medicine. They do not reside in some commission set up by government to monitor the probity and integrity of politicians and public officials, nor do they reside in any law or code of ethics. Instead, the attainment of these values involves the integrated effort of the entire society and its constituent elements and institutions—legislative, executive, political, judicial, religious, civil—all engaging with each other to ensure transparency and accountability and plain good governance.

In the final analysis, however, the values of which I speak take root – as every plant must take root if it is to endure and flourish - from the ground up, at the individual and personal level, where each and every one of us who holds himself or herself out as worthy of the public trust must solemnly resolve within his heart of hearts and in the most inviolable precincts of his soul that he will be an exemplar of integrity and of probity in his conduct both as an official and as a member of the citizenry. Let us thereby constantly remind ourselves of a simple but immutable truth: that now, as

always, personal example is still the most powerful and credible influence upon others and the most persuasive of teachers.

Imperfect though we are, let us therefore resolve, each within his own sphere, to lead not only by words and by laws and by codes but by personal example.

Thank you.

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