

Police corruption carries high costs. First, a corrupt act is a crime. Second, police corruption detracts from the integrity of the police and tarnishes the public image of law enforcement. Third, corruption protects other criminal activity such as drug dealing and prostitution. Protected criminal activities are often lucrative sources of income for organized crime.

According to the rotten apple theory, corruption is the work of a few, dishonest, immoral police officers. Experts dismiss this theory because it fails to explain why so many corrupt officers become concentrated in some police organizations but not others. Narcotic corruption, for example, is an inevitable consequence of drug enforcement. Providers of these illegal goods and service use part of their profits to bribe the police in order to ensure the continuation of criminal enterprises.

Since corruption involves criminal behavior, prosecution of corrupt police officers is possible. Since prosecutors depend on the police to gather evidence and develop cases, they often don't want to "bite the hand that feeds them."

Legislators could reevaluate laws that create the potential for corruption. Such a reassessment would be based on the recognition that a major portion of police corruption is an outgrowth of laws that criminalize drug use, prostitution, and gambling. Any serious attempt to fight police corruption must wrestle with the decriminalization issue. Decriminalization involves removing the criminal label from victimless crimes by legalizing and regulating them. Decriminalization would contribute significantly to improving the police corruption problem. It is doubtful, however, that any state legislature will seriously consider legalizing drugs or any other prohibited goods and services in the near future.

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## **Combating Corruption in the Police**

Corruption undermines the effectiveness of law enforcement, the efficiency and legitimacy of police forces/services in the performance of their functions and erodes the public confidence in law enforcement and justice. Effective policing requires the combating of all forms of corruption in the performance of policing functions and the promotion of high standards of honesty, integrity and ethical behavior for police officers and other employees of police forces/services. Since 1998, the Interpol Group of

Experts on Corruption (IGEC) has been supporting Anti-Corruption Program with its expertise and advice. The IGEC includes distinguished members from law enforcement, as well as senior representatives from the international community dedicated to combating corruption. Using the Interpol General Assembly, the IGEC provide the Interpol Member States with a framework for combating corruption, by formulating an Anti-Corruption strategy. This strategy culminated in the proposal of the “Global Standards to Combat Corruption in Police Forces/Services”.

These “Standards” have been well received by the international law enforcement community and mark the beginning of a pro-active approach to combating this crime. Around the world, honest police officers find themselves discredited by the actions of corrupt fellow colleagues. Their ability to properly serve their citizens is degraded by corrupted policing systems. In countries where democratic principles and the rule of law are weak, corrupt practices such as racketeering, bribes and collusion between the police and organized crime are far more prolific. Even in countries that have a strong rule of law, the reality is that corruption continues to occur in the police services. There are debates as to what lies at the root of corruption, but whatever the cause, corruption is utterly unacceptable in the police, an institution that exists to protect its public and is the enforcer of the rule of law.

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### **Global Anti-Corruption Activities in Business**

Corruption as an abuse of public or private office for personal gain is one of the biggest obstacles to sustainable economic, political and social development. The cost of corruption, which includes bribery, embezzlement, nepotism or state capture, equals more than five per cent of global GDP – \$2.6tn. Public sector corruption alone siphons \$1.5–2tn annually from the global economy in bribes, and costs even more in terms of stunted economic growth, lost tax revenues and sustained poverty.

According to the OECD’s (Organisation of Economic Cooperation Development) Foreign Bribery Report (2014), which analyses all the cases concluded, the extractive industry, construction and telecoms are sectors most affected by corruption. The effects are huge: from the refusal of