

## **Business Action Against Corruption (BAAC)**

Business Action Against Corruption (BAAC), the flagship governance programme for Business Action for Africa, was launched in Johannesburg on 10th October 2005 with the support of the Southern African Forum Against Corruption (SAFAC), which includes the region's anticorruption commissions, and the African Corporate Sustainability Forum (ACSF). Implementation is led by the Commonwealth Business Council and the Human Rights Trust of Southern African (SAHRIT), and already involves joint working groups of business and the anticorruption commissions in Botswana, Malawi and Zambia.

BAAC was extended into West Africa with its launch in Nigeria at a meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> June attended by 100 business and government leaders. Endorsing BAAC, President Obasanjo said that "Business Action Against Corruption (BAAC) is innovative because it stresses the importance of African leadership in getting results. It also assists national actors to work together by building new partnerships between government and business to remove the opportunities for corruption"

The Nigeria meeting mapped out priorities for action on investment climate, rule of law and financial markets. Implementation is led by The Convention on Business Integrity (CBI), a Nigerian initiative set up in 1996 to promote a peer-based accreditation system within the private sector.

The Programme is founded on the view that change requires the African private sector and its international partners to find practical ways to collaborate with governments to tackle corruption. Priority areas include disclosure of interests (Codes of Conduct), the issuing of licences and permits, procurement, customs, and political party financing, plus improving corporate governance within the private sector itself.

BAAC is now active in Cameroon, Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia and the SADC region, with country interest to participate from Namibia, Lesotho, Mauritius, Madagascar, Egypt and Tanzania. Examples of activities include codes of conduct in Malawi, guidelines for disclosure in Botswana, a new integrity code in Nigeria, and areas for action identified in Cameroon.