

**NATIONAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC ETHICS**  
**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATION**  
**ARGENTINA**

**NATIONAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC ETHICS**

The Government of Argentina, with the aim of developing systematic and efficient action to prevent corruption and according to measures taken at the Inter-American Convention against Corruption that took place in Caracas, Venezuela in 1996, created the NATIONAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC ETHICS of the Executive Branch through Decree Law 152 dated February 14<sup>th</sup> 1997.

**ADVISORY COUNCIL OF PUBLIC ETHICS**

This Council was nominated to count on the participation of the civil society in the fight against corruption through Decree Law 878 of September 1997, formed by personalities of the more representative sectors of our country. The twenty-three members of the Council are judges, philosophers, academics, labour union representatives, members of industrial and agricultural associations, non-governmental organisations representatives, press and media communicators, religious communities and major political parties members. Their main mission has been the elaboration of the CODE OF ETHICS FOR PUBLIC OFFICE, a mission that has been already accomplished and serves as permanent consultants to the NATIONAL OF OFFICE OF PUBLIC ETHICS.

**CODE OF ETHICS FOR PUBLIC OFFICE**

The Code was approved through Decree Law 41 dated January 27<sup>th</sup> 1999 and governs all public officials of the Executive Branch. This Code has the following Structure:

**General Title**

Aim of Public Office

Definitions and Scope

General Principles (Ethical Values)

Special Principles (Obligations)

Special Title

Benefits from outside sources (Prohibited Benefits)

Functional Prohibitions

Conflicts of Interest

Nepotism

Multiple Positions

Waiting Period

Estate and Financial Disclosure Reports

## **MISSIONS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC ETHICS**

The National Office of Public Ethics has the mission of taking actions on public officials of the National Executive Branch in the enforcement of the Code of Ethics for public Office. It also develops adequate tools to prevent non-ethical situations and provides training and personal assistance. Therefore, the Office counts with the following structure:

### **1) Direction of Control and Follow up of Patrimonial and Financial Situation of Public Officials:**

In charge of receiving, analysing and filing financial disclosures of public officials. A chronogram has been designed for the presentation of financial disclosures that starts in the month of July and ends in the month of December of every year. Until the last month of September 1999, 7900 financial disclosures have been filed. Before the end of this year, thirty six thousand financial disclosures will be filed.

The Office provides information to every citizen that requires it.

### **2) Direction of Control of Conflicts of Interest:**

This office is in charge of controlling situations where conflicts of interest may arise. It also receives claims about transgressions to the CODE OF ETHICS and acts requiring the corresponding information in this regard. If other government agencies require so, the Office issues reports about the infringement of the Code.

### **3) Direction of Prevention, Ethical Education, Training and Promotion:**

Is in charge of educational issues working on the tools of training about the matters covered by the CODE OF ETHICS for employees and public officials of the Executive Branch. In this regard the Office has organised more than seventy meetings for different government agencies of the Executive Branch (Ministries, Secretaries, Customs, Army, etc.) It also provides training for Ethics Officials nominated by each agency that act as connection with the NATIONAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC ETHICS. Until today, the Executive Branch Agencies designated voluntarily seventy-two Ethics Officials.

The International Conference "Strengthening of Ethics under the Rule of Law" held last April 1999 in Buenos Aires is one of the promotion tasks accomplished. Five hundred participants and representatives from 12 countries attended the Conference.

## **PARTICIPATION OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC ETHICS IN SUMMITS, SEMINARS AND CONGRESSES:**

- Seminar "**Fight against Transnational Bribery**" organised by OECD, OAS and Argentine Government, September 1998 — Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Presentation at the **Council of the Americas**. Meeting organised with members of the Office of Government Ethics of the United States, the IDB, the Secretary general of QAS,

9<sup>th</sup> International Anti-Corruption Conference, 10-15 October 1999, Durban, South Africa

Transparency International and the International Monetary Fund, September 1998, Washington, USA.

- **III Congress of CLAD about the State Reform and the Public Administration.** Representatives of 23 countries of Latin America, the Caribbean and Spain attended this meeting. October 1988, Madrid, Spain.
- **”Symposium for Strengthening of Probity in the Hemisphere”**, organised by OAS, November 1998, Santiago de Chile, Chile.
- **International Conference on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity among Justice and Security Officials** organised by Vice-president Al Gore, February 1999, Washington, USA.
- Meeting of the **Experts of the Commission of the United Nations for the Prevention of Crime and Crime Justice**, organised by the United Nations and OECD, March 1999, Paris, France.
- Presentation at **the Annual Conference of Ethics Officials of Government Agencies of the United States**, September 1999, Williamsburg, USA.
- Presentation at the **World Bank: ”The Argentine Experience in the Fight against Corruption”** , September 1999, Washington, USA.

#### **AGREEMENTS OF COOPERATION SIGNED BY THE NATIONAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC ETHICS**

- Memorandum of Understanding and Co-operation among ONEP and the Office of Government Ethics of the United States, May 1998, Washington, USA.
- Agreement among ONEP and Transparency International — Argentine Chapter, to achieve tasks in co-operation, June 1999, Buenos Aires, Argentina.