

Speech at the 12th Conference of Asian Ombudsman Association

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Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, the 12th Conference of the Asian Ombudsman Association is successfully held in the beautiful city of Tokyo. On behalf of the Ministry of Supervision of the People's Republic of China, I would like to express my sincere greetings to all delegates. The conference has provided a sound platform and opportunity for various Ombudsman institutions to enhance cooperation and cement friendship by learning and communicating with each other. I hereby convey my heartfelt thanks to the host of the conference, the Administrative Evaluation Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

The Chinese government has been resolutely combating corruption and building a clean government. China adheres to the principles of addressing both the symptoms and the root causes of corruption, taking comprehensive measures to readdress both, and combining punishment with prevention while focusing on the latter. It has set up a system for corruption punishment and prevention and attached special importance to the root causes, the prevention of corruption and the institutional improvement in combating corruption. Efforts have been made to broaden the working area to prevent corruption at the source and gradually build a long-term mechanism of education for corruption prevention, a system of combating corruption and upholding integrity, and a monitoring mechanism over the exercise of power. China has explored a new way of combating corruption and building a clean government that conforms to China's national conditions and displays Chinese characteristics. In the practice of combating corruption and upholding integrity, we have paid much attention to public support and participation. We have built the whistle-blowing system and placed emphasis on the collection and analysis of

information concerned so as to promote the institutional improvement in combating corruption and building a clean government as well as the innovative reform.

I. Handling Complaints by China's Supervisory Organs

1. Special organs for handling letters and calls of complaints have been established. The Constitution endows the citizens with the rights to criticize, suggest, appeal, complain or accuse State organs and functionaries. The procuratorial organs, supervisory organs and audit organs have all established departments to handle complaints as well as suggestions and accusations from the people. So are with China's supervisory organs at all levels. In 2010, 1,427,186 cases of complaints were handled.

2. Channels for making complaints have been expanded. On the basis of keeping the existing channels unimpeded as letters and calls, China's supervisory organs have managed to provide more information and offer more convenient and unimpeded approaches for the public. There are nationwide reporting hotlines and websites, leading officials regularly receive visitors, government functionaries may visit grassroots, groups are dispatched for collecting information, and the information network at grass-root levels are set up. Therefore, the channels have been expanded and the information concerned can be collected in a proactive manner.

3. Complaints handling system has been perfected. China's supervisory bodies have built the mechanism of information analysis on complaints, and conducted regular researches on the dynamics of complaints as well as the outstanding concerns of the public. The integrated information with the characteristics of generality and regularity summarized from the less valuable, independent and raw data has been forwarded to relevant officials and departments. These efforts have provided important basis for correct extrapolation of anti-corruption situation and scientific decision-making, furnished substantial clues for investigating into and dealing with all the breaches of laws and disciplines, and most significantly, promoted anti-corruption work from the source and the deepening of reforms.

II. Mechanism and Systemic Reform of Anti-Corruption Work

1. Law and regulations for combating corruption and building a clean government have been promulgated. China adheres to the rule of law as a fundamental principle, attaches importance to the regulating and safeguarding role of law and regulations, and continuously promotes legalization and standardization in the fight against corruption. In order to ensure that leading officials work in a clean and honest way, a series of codes of conduct and ethical rules have been issued, including the *Guidelines for Leading Officials on Government Integrity*, the *Regulations on Strict Prohibition of Seeking Illegitimate Gains by Misuse of Official Power*, the *Regulations on Reporting of Relevant Personal Matters by Leading Officials*, and the *Interim Regulations on Strengthening Management of State Functionaries Whose Spouses and Children Have Emigrated Abroad*. China has also enacted a series of law and regulations to ensure the proper exercise of public power and prevent corruption, thus gradually establishing a legal framework for combating corruption and upholding integrity with scientific contents, rigorous procedures, well-matched regulations and effective enforcement, and strengthened supervision on the implementation of the regulations.

2. Power restraint and supervisory system are being perfected. A power without supervision will definitely lead to corruption, and an absolute power will corrupt absolutely, which is fully proved by complaints from the masses. Therefore, we have strengthened the restraint and supervision of power exercise, advocating procedures and transparency, making government affairs public, strengthening supervision of chief officers, and streamlining the accountability system for decision-making. On the principles of reasonable structure, scientific distribution, rigorous procedures and effective restraint, we are gradually establishing a sound power structure and enforcement mechanism where decision-making power, executive power and supervisory power can check balance and coordinate at the same time.

3. Institutional reform and innovation have been promoted. China has adhered to the principle of

punishing and preventing corruption by way of development and reform. In view of the main areas and key steps vulnerable to corruption, vigorous efforts have been made to promote institutional reform. Firstly, China has deepened the reform of administrative examination and approval system, reducing or adjusting the items requiring administrative examination and approval. As of January this year, various departments of the State Council had canceled or adjusted for five times 2,183 items which used to come under this heading, accounting for 60.6% of the former total. Secondly, China has promoted the reform of fiscal and tax management system. The State has improved the public finance system, and enhanced supervision and disclosure of financial budget. It has intensified the trial operation of public announcement and post-project appraisal of major government investment projects, and streamlined the supervision of government investment projects and livelihood-related public funds. It has also standardized the exchange market of State-owned property rights, and upgraded the risk prevention and control for monetary system reform. Thirdly, China has promoted the reform of personnel system. It has established a scientific mechanism for selecting and appointing officials as well as a management and monitoring mechanism in this regard. Fourthly, China has deepened the reform of judicial system and working mechanism. It has established a fair, efficient and authoritative judicial system to safeguard judicial justice. Through institutional reform and innovation, the State has established new regimes and mechanisms that accord with the demands of the times and managed to punish and prevent corruption at the very source.

4. Special campaigns for handling problems of strong public concerns have been launched. A special campaign has been targeted to the outstanding problems in the field of engineering and construction. Readdressing efforts are made in project decision-making, bid invitation and submission, land leasing, project planning and management, and construction supervision. The State has propelled the development of law and regulations on engineering and construction, as well as information disclosure and the building of credibility system. Another campaign is focused on the “little coffers”, misuse of government cars and excessive celebrations, workshops, and

forums. China has spared no efforts to resolve the problems of strong public concerns and readdress the malpractices that harm the interests of the people. It has initiated the readdressing of arbitrary charges in highway toll offices and schools, and tried to alleviate the burdens of farmers. It has also redressed the malpractices in purchases and sales of drugs and medical services, and started the special campaign for food safety. Through these campaigns, China is in a position to identify the existing problems and draw on the experience, improve the institutions and build the long-term mechanism which may prevent repeated occurrences of similar cases and ensure the addressing from the source.

What is more, based on the complaints from the masses, we have strictly investigated into and dealt with cases of corruption. We are serious in handling the cases of power abuse and embezzlement involving leading officials, the cases in which they take advantage of their power over personnel affairs, judicial powers, and the right of examination and approval to seek personal gains, the cases in which they provide protective shield for underworld and evil forces, and the cases of severe loss of State-owned assets. We have strengthened the efforts to deal with the cases in such key areas as engineering and construction, real estate, land leasing and mineral exploitation. We have laid stress on the cases of commercial bribery in the fields of purchasing and marketing of drugs, government procurement and deals in resources. We are also working on the cases of negligence and infringement that cause mass disturbances and major accidents in terms of food and drug safety and environmental pollution. As a result, a number of corrupt officials have been punished, which sounds alarming to corrupt officials and manifests the stand and resolution of Chinese government in combating corruption.

It is the mutual aspiration of all humanity and the common task faced by all governments to combat corruption and uphold integrity. With complicated causes, corruption may be occasioned by multiple subjective and objective factors, and the fight against corruption is to be a long-term process. China's supervisory bodies are willing to endeavor, together with their Asian counterparts, to build a clean, just, harmonious and fine world.