Chairman Odinga [Hon. Raila Odinga, Minister for Roads, Public Works, and Housing], Mr. President [H.E. President Kibaki of Kenya], my friend Peter Eigen [Chairman, Transparency International], Mr. Speaker [Hon. Francis Ole Kaparo], Distinguished Ministers and Friends, let me pay tribute to Peter [Eigen, Chairman, Transparency International], and his colleagues for the work that they have done. In fact, their findings led, just a few months ago, to a three-day seminar between the World Bank and Transparency International where we reviewed matters on which we agreed and matters on which we disagreed and came to enormously agreed conclusions of the common ground that existed between us.

On one occasion when I made my first speech in a country that I shall not name, but which was at that time ranked number two on the Transparency International index, the president of that country called across, as I was about to speak, to the leader of another country which had just been placed number one on the index and said how disappointed he was that he had dropped in the rankings and said to this other gentleman: "I think we should give this young president a lesson in what he is going to talk about."

And I said, "What is that Mr. President?"

"Well, you come out here from Washington with these high ideas to tell us about corruption. But what you call 'corruption,' I call 'family values.'"

That was my first lesson and one that did not deter me from breaching, in my very first speech at the Annual Meetings of the Bank and Fund (October 10, 1995), an admonition that had been given to me by the general counsel of the Bank. This was that no one in the Bank mentioned the "c" word.

And he took me quietly to a corner to explain to me that the "c" word he had whispered to me was "corruption" and that you did not mention the word "corruption" because the Bank is not a political organization.

Corruption, he said, dug deep into politics and we should stay out of it.

It was very clear to me then, as it is transparently clear to me now, that corruption may involve politics but it is a deep social and economic problem that confronts us all from the most mighty down to the poorest...
person. In fact, corruption affects poor people perhaps more than it affects rich people.

And the statistics show this.

For us at our institution, the World Bank, which is committed to fighting corruption, the attempts to avoid tackling corruption, as an issue was just not acceptable.

What is extraordinarily interesting to me is that six months after that first meeting when the word corruption had not been mentioned in previous World Bank meetings, the central item on the agenda for the finance ministers (Spring Meetings of the Bank and IMF in April 1996) was corruption and every minister spoke on that subject.

I don't know if you remember that, Peter (Eigen [Chairman, Transparency International]), But it was absolutely clear that, at that moment, the dam was breaking. And the dam did break to the extent that we were able, I believe, to create an environment not just for politicians, but more significantly, to allow the debate to take place with the people of countries, with voters, with civil society and the Press. The voice of people within countries could be expressed against corruption which is not theoretical but which is in fact the number-one inhibitor to foreign investment and the number-one issue affecting the question of equity and social justice within a country.

Dealing with corruption is not just any other subject. This is something which has enormous material effect, and I am extremely grateful that the representatives of the Parliamentary Network (Parliamentary Network on the World Bank-PNoWB) who are here today and the group that is forming itself in Eastern Africa takes such a strong interest in this subject.

But being in Kenya after the elections is appropriate given that one of the greatest spokespersons of this new move has been you, Mr. President.

Of my colleagues I had asked for all the statements and speeches made by President Kibaki (President of Kenya) about corruption.

And here they are, Mr. President. If you like I can read eight pages of comments from you about corruption.

It is abundantly clear from the very first speech that you gave in the Kenyan Parliament, to the speeches that you gave before then and since, that you are committed, as you have put it, to lend the weight of your government to fight corruption. You established a department for that effect, and you have said that you have zero tolerance for corruption in Kenya.

This is not because it is an attractive slogan but because we know and your voters know that there can be no progress in this country towards equality and social justice without combating this scourge.
And I may make a personal comment on this because in recent years I have had a tremendous interest in this country, and an interest in seeing as others, the Kenya that was.

I was much moved yesterday when I spent three hours in a meeting with leaders in the AIDS fight at the headquarters of the Girl Guide movement here. Several speakers-Kenyan women of distinction-said, "We want the Kenya that was, the Kenya that stood for integrity, the leadership, the Kenyan values which were values of hard work and were values of education and commitment to equity."

And they wanted that back. And your President is giving you that lead because the voice of the people is saying it.

As Peter (Eigen [Chairman, Transparency International]), said, there is an alignment at the moment; an alignment between the people, the government, and-as I found this morning in meetings with the private sector-with the private sector, with the civil society to reestablish the Kenya that was.

But not in the form of the Kenya that was, but in terms of a modern Kenya, a Kenya that is adjusting to new technology, to a new society through innovation.

And it had been my hope that may be we at the Bank (World Bank) could help in this effort in recent years. 

But the thing that stopped us was corruption.

I came many times (to Kenya). I talked many times (with the leadership), but when you are trying to work in partnership, you need to have confidence on either side and you need to have performance on either side, just as you can demand performance of my institution and other multilateral and bilateral donors.

And so today with this new government, we have a chance for reestablishing that sense of confidence and that sense of partnership. Because again, as Peter (Eigen [Chairman, Transparency International]), said, the success of Kenya is not just a success for Kenya but it is a success for the continent of Africa.

And there, too, I took the opportunity of reading from NEPAD (the New Partnership for Africa's Development), the new program for Africa. I don't know how many of you have read that document recently. Last night I looked at it and it starts interestingly and, I think, movingly: "Africans must not be the wards of benevolent guardians; rather, they must be architects of their own sustained upliftment".

This is written by African leaders. It says throughout the document that fighting corruption and dealing with governance is not something that the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund or benevolent donors mandate. It is something that is essential for Africans, as it is essential for Kenyans.
And it goes on to say that African leaders take joint responsibility for many things, but among them:

· Protecting and promoting democracy
· Developing clear standards of accountability, transparency and participatory governments
· Restoring and maintaining standards, transparent legal and regulatory frameworks
· Building capacity in the State to enforce the legal framework as well as maintaining law and order

It points out that the way to do this is through the principles of democracy, transparency, accountability and integrity, and then goes on to talk of fighting corruption.

These are not words that I have invented. These words have been created in Africa. These are African words. The NEPAD document is Africa's statement for the future.

NEPAD is not just any other document. It is a unique statement by African leadership that Africa belongs to Africans, and that Africans want to run their continent in a way that deals with the questions of social justice and equity and allows hope for people.

Now, why is that relevant? Why am I saying it?

Speaking from the point of view of someone who is involved in the international community, looking at the demands for development assistance around the world, and looking at the results of the conference in Monterrey and Johannesburg where developing countries stated their case as Africans did with NEPAD...the developed world, the other side of the world, the billion people who at the moment have 80 percent of the world's resources, took that contract at face value and they said they could be held accountable for increased development assistance, for openness of markets for trade, and for building capacity.

Now there have been some but not complete steps forward in terms of that side of the bargain. But we have already raised an additional US$ 16 billion for development assistance and we are fighting the fight in the trade round which is now going on.

If there is to be assistance, if there is to be partnership, if the children in the Olympic School that I saw yesterday are to get resources so that one can fulfill the dream of Kenyans to have education for all in primary school—which soon leads to pressure for secondary school and for universities, if you were to confront the scourge of AIDS—with 2.5 million people diagnosed HIV positive and 7,000 only receiving retroviral treatment and 1.2 million orphans, of which 200,000 only have arrangements made for their care and sustenance...If one is to deal with these human issues of education and health, I say to my friends in Kenya, you have to grasp this opportunity now because it is not going to come again.
There are 30 million people in this country. There are 5 billion in the developing world. There are 3 billion people that live under $2 a day. There are 1.2 billion people that live under $1 a day.

And you have that moment in which you can act. You have that moment in the spotlight.

You have that moment of hope for your people and for your country. And what I have learned in eight years in this job is that moments don't last long.

This is the moment for Kenya to act.

I am very proud that I had the chance this morning to talk to the President, who has this resolve. But it cannot be done by the President alone. It is a moment for everybody in the country to take responsibility.

There is no Kenya that exists without Kenyans. There is no government that can do things without Kenyans. The laws can change but if the practice does not change you will not meet the challenges of NEPAD. And you will not meet the challenge that the people have given the government.

This is an alignment between government, civil society, private sector and the ordinary Kenyan. And you have a short time in which you can meet that challenge.

I can promise you on behalf of my institution, as I think I can on behalf of other multilateral and bilateral donors, that if you move towards that test you will find that my organization is not only willing but is enthusiastic to work with you to achieve your goals.

We know that there are bumps in the road but we know that Kenya is a place of culture, of history, of human and material resources and we know today that it is a place with ideals.

I urge you to take this moment because it will be a long time coming again and it is certainly worth grasping now.

Thank you very much.