Remarks by UNDP Country Director at Closing Ceremony

Anti-Corruption Training for Media Practitioners

Wednesday, May 12th, 2010

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice and Police, Mr. Sharma Lakhisharan, staff of the Ministry of J & P, Director of the Projekta Foundation, Ms. Ganga, Project Manager, Ms. Chandrikasingh, Media Practitioners, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Ministry of Justice and Police and UNDP are jointly implementing the Human Rights, Legal Access and Anti-Corruption project and the Ministry of Justice selected media practitioners as the first group to be trained under the Anti-Corruption component. Corruption is often seen as a very sensitive issue and training media practitioners to recognize, report on and to bring more awareness in society on the effects of corruption is often seen as a first step in addressing corruption and its damaging effects.

During the training, you had the opportunity to learn more and discuss the most pertinent aspects of anti corruption - the basics: the definitions and forms of anti corruption, the OAS and UN Conventions on Anti Corruption and their reporting mechanisms. But you also ventured more into the heart of the matter and looked at your own role as media practitioners in reporting on anti corruption and you researched a topic suitable to be aired on radio or television or printed in the newspapers.

In your research you undoubtedly found evidence of the fact that corruption erodes the rule of law, weakens the performance of governments and public institutions, destroys public trust in governance institutions, diminishes the practice of democracy, and is the enemy of good governance. Corruption impacts the poor disproportionally, since this group does not have the means to pay for services which they should be receiving at no cost. A corrupt society and corrupt institutions can hinder access of the poor to education, health and other public services, access to justice and the protection of the law; and can lead to social instability and reduce citizen security.

At the conclusion of this training, media practitioners should be better equipped to recognize and report on corruption. With your daily contributions, you should be able to stimulate dialogue on corruption and transparency issues and to educate the public and decision makers on this very sensitive and important issue.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been involved in accountability, transparency and integrity programmes since the early 90s through the activities of our Country Offices as a necessary complement and instrument of the Organization’s mandate on poverty reduction, realization of the MDGs and promoting sustainable development.
UNDP is committed to support the Government and people of Suriname to address corruption through various programmes which are being implemented all over the world. Assistance is available through the provision of technical support for the training of key anti-corruption officials; the development of awareness strategies for Parliamentarians, Government Officials and the general public; and support for ratifying and operationalizing the UN Convention Against Corruption.

In closing I would like to congratulate the Ministry and the participants with this first step and express UNDP’s sincere commitment to provide continued support for the successful implementation of the activities under this project.

I thank you for your attention.