

EUROSAI Conference

**Remarks by David M. Walker
Comptroller General of the United States
EUROSAI Conference**

**MOSCOW, RUSSIA
MAY 31, 2002**

Mr. Chairman, distinguished heads of SAI's, delegates, fellow observers, friends and colleagues, I am pleased and honored to be here at the 5th Triennial Congress of EUROSAI in Moscow. I would like to thank my friend and colleague Sergei Stephasin for his invitation, as well as his hospitality and excellent organization of this conference. I would also like to congratulate him on his election to the position of President of EUROSAI. Congratulations also to Dr. Engles on his election as Vice-President, to the two new Board members and the two new auditors of EUROSAI on their elections. I would also like to recognize Mr. Logerot for his efforts as the immediate past Chairman of EUROSAI.

While this conference is the primary reason for my trip to Moscow, I met this morning with Mr. Stephasin to discuss our plans for a joint audit in connection with the destruction of chemical weapons in Russia. In addition, this afternoon, I will attend a meeting of the SAI's from the G-8 countries to discuss what rules SAI's can play in combating money laundering. Clearly, the world, Russia, East/West relations and U.S./Russia relations have changed dramatically since my first visit to Moscow in 1979.

INTOSAI JOURNAL

I'd first like to touch on two INTOSAI issues of great interest and then provide a few thoughts on some common challenges we as SAI's face. As Chairman of the INTOSAI Journal, I want to express my appreciation to each of you for supporting the Journal over the years. The April issue of the Journal includes two articles that illustrate EUROSAI's contributions to the Journal. As SAI's, we can share our knowledge and experiences through contributing articles to the Journal. I encourage all of you to take advantage of the opportunity to share your expertise with others in the future.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your responses to the recent Journal survey. I will be reporting on the survey results to the Governing Board in October, but for now would like to mention a few of the preliminary results. I was pleased to see that there is broad support and general satisfaction with the Journal. At the same time, we received suggestions on how we can improve the Journal, and I assure you that we will take your suggestions seriously. Our preliminary analysis also shows that many SAIs would like to receive the Journal electronically, and we will be exploring that option in the coming months. We are also considering how the Journal can be used to enhance the sharing of best practices, benchmarking and other studies of multi-lateral interest.

INTOSAI STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE

As many of you know, I am currently chairing a board level strategic planning task force for INTOSAI. I would also like to take advantage of being here with you to give you a brief update on the Task Force's efforts. The Task Force was created in Seoul with a mandate to draft a strategic planning framework that would help guide INTOSAI in the 21st century. As our organization approaches its 50th Anniversary next year, the Congress felt that the time had come to develop a strategic plan for INTOSAI. /P> EUROSAI is ably represented on the Task Force by Sir John of the UK and I thank him and his staff for their contributions. Our first meeting was held in Washington in April and I'm pleased to report that all 10 countries on the Task Force attended. It was a very productive meeting that resulted in preliminary agreement on the basic elements of a draft strategic planning framework, including proposed statements of INTOSAI's vision, mission, strategic goals, operational objectives and core values

As you know, a critical part of strategic planning is involving key stakeholders, and in that spirit we will be circulating the draft to all INTOSAI members after we report to the Board in October. I look forward to hearing from each of you on the proposed plan in the future.

SELECTED SAI CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Communication, cooperation, knowledge sharing, and continuous improvement have been hallmarks of INTOSAI, and this Congress is yet another example of this in action. GAO has a long tradition of friendship and cooperation with our accountability partners throughout the INTOSAI community. The relationships we have developed have proven to be mutually beneficial. These relationships are even more important in our increasingly interdependent world in which we face a range of borderless and shared challenges.

In today's world, no nation is an island. As September 11 showed us all, vast oceans that separate the U.S. and others from much of the rest of the world are of little consequence in today's high-tech and inter-connected world with asymmetric security threats. As a result, no nation can or should go it alone! The U.S. and every nation has inter-dependencies and shares certain common challenges with other nations. Combating terrorism, money laundering, corruption and infectious diseases; protecting the environment, and promoting peace, prosperity and freedom around the world required the concerted effort and the cooperation of many nations. Many also require the cooperation between the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

As SAI's, we must work together including conducting joint or parallel audits, when appropriate, to help address these shared challenges in order to better serve our clients, our countries and our accountability profession. We should help to combat corruption, improve performance, enhance transparency and assure accountability in government by engaging in a range of oversight, insight and foresight activities in a professional and constructive manner. However, to be credible in our work as SAI's, we must be professionals not politicians, and we must have a judicial temperament. In addition, we should seek to lead by example in what we do and how we do business in the 21st century. As Auditors General, we must do our best to be rocks of integrity and model public servants. We must say what we mean, mean what we say, and tell it like it is even if some would prefer not to hear the facts and the truth. We must also have the courage of our convictions to do what is right even when it may not be popular or easy to do so. This is part of what the words independence and integrity are all about. Finally, as SAI's we have an opportunity to lead the transformation of the accountability profession by expanding our audit scope and reporting to include additional work relating to internal controls, performance reporting and long-range fiscal projections. I look forward to sharing knowledge and experiences with all of you on these and other important issues in the years ahead.

In closing, I would like to again thank Mr. Stephasin and his staff for their organization and hospitality during this conference, and for giving us the opportunity to strengthen both our professional and personal relationships.

Thank you.

[Inspector General
Restricted Reports](#)

[Accessibility
Sitemap](#)

No FEAR Act Data