



## *International Newsletter – March 2008*

### **From the Trustees...**

It has been a great pleasure over the past few months to contact leaders of IGI in various countries across Africa. Members are working hard to establish IGI under difficult conditions in many countries – Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Mozambique, Somalia, Swaziland – apart from those countries where IGI is already well established. Let us pray for them in their work, and encourage one another as we move forward. Members in Kenya are also facing special challenges in the unrest following the December election.

Please also continue to send your views to the Trustees ([paul@igi-integrity.com](mailto:paul@igi-integrity.com)) or secretariat ([info@igi-integrity.com](mailto:info@igi-integrity.com)).

### **Al Yamamah – more disclosures**

The United Kingdom prides itself on being a free and honest society, under the rule of law. This self-image has just received a nasty shock.

There have always been suspicions of corruption around the massive deal in the 1980s to sell military aircraft to Saudi Arabia. Following accusations in the *Guardian* newspaper of a £60 million slush fund, judicial investigations started in 2004. Astonishingly, the investigation was then halted in 2006 on account of “national interest”.

Last month, corruption campaigners succeeded in getting a judicial review into the decision to halt the investigation. Previously secret files now show that the probe was called off under massive pressure from the Saudi government and the then UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair, against the wishes of the investigators. Apparently, the Saudis threatened to stop cooperating on anti-terrorist intelligence and to pull out of the recent lucrative deal for British-built Typhoon aircraft.

It is a timely reminder of the need for the work of IGI in Europe as well as Africa. Corruption is not just a problem of poorer countries.



### **IGI Registered in UK ...at last**

After two years of legal discussions, the IGI has finally gained registration as a United Kingdom Charity.

Unlike some countries, UK does not automatically require registration of civil societies. While this has advantages in freedom of association, it means that to gain official recognition such an organization has to be registered as a “charity”. Registration has strict conditions for demonstrating that the organization provides “public benefit” and is not for private or political purposes.

Once registered, however, a charity is eligible for other benefits, including recovery of income tax paid by donors on the money they give to the charity.

This is a major milestone in the recognition of IGI as a growing organization dedicated to improving civil society worldwide.

### **Zimbabwe elections**

There is excitement in Zimbabwe this month, as they face momentous presidential elections. For the first time since 1980, there seems to be a real possibility of unseating Mugabe (shown here). As well as the usual opposition – MDC’s Morgan Tsvangirai – a leading member of Mugabe’s party, Simba Makoni is also standing, and latest reports suggest he is gaining support in Mugabe’s own party Zanu-PF.



**Pray to God for our friends in Zimbabwe, for wisdom in what they do, and for a peaceful and just election.**

***“...he who walks righteously and speaks what is right, who rejects gain from extortion and keeps his hand from accepting bribes...” – Isaiah 33:15***