

Global Center to Battle Corruption

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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ST. PETERSBURG — A group of leading companies announced Thursday that they would form a center by year's end aimed at assisting them in combating corruption in Russia and other Group of 20 countries.

The center, called the Collective Action Hub on Anti-Corruption, will be developed and managed by the Basel Institute on Governance in Switzerland in partnership with the UN Global Compact in New York, according to the Task Force on Transparency and Anti-Corruption, a group comprised of more than 50 companies, many from emerging markets like Russia.

"In my opinion, this issue is not going to come close to being resolved at the global level unless we have the full participation of the emerging markets," said task force chairman Andrei Bugrov, vice president of Interros and Norilsk Nickel.

The new center will identify, analyze and exchange best practices and experience in collaborative efforts by companies, government and civil society in opposing corruption,

the task force said in a statement distributed at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, where the initiative was unveiled.

"We view the Collective Action Hub as a significant groundbreaking initiative that will become a formidable force in the fight against global corruption," said Peter Solmssen, a member of the managing board and general counsel at German's Siemens.

The anti-corruption task force eventually hopes to open anti-corruption centers in every G20 country to promote awareness among investors, provide training in compliance techniques, and act as a neutral platform where company and government officials can tackle issues related to corruption.

The task force also will present the G20 heads of state with a list of recommendations on how to combat corruption at a G20 summit in St. Petersburg in September. The recommendations will include "more regular and in-depth exchanges between business and government on practical ways to create a level playing field and a more attractive environment for investment — for example, how to incentivize business to self report, how to clean up public procurement, and how to raise the standards of compliance in companies' supply chains," the task force statement said.

In its preparations of its recommendations on fighting corruption, the task force took a close look at Russia, where corruption is so epidemic that President Vladimir Putin called it the biggest threat to the national economy at last year's St. Petersburg forum. The task force produced a publication titled, "Implementing and sharing best practices in anti-corruption in Russia," with special recommendations for the Russian government.

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