

About the U.S. Department of Commerce

The U.S. Department of Commerce (USDoC) seeks to increase trade opportunities for U.S. companies and promote U.S. exports and investment. Weak rule of law, lack of adequate intellectual property rights protection, and corruption create barriers to trade, investment, and overall economic development, particularly in emerging markets. To address these concerns and establish a level playing field for U.S. companies, USDoC created a Good Governance Program. Currently, the Program is engaged in activities in 11 countries in the Caucasus, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Russia. The Program works with the private and public sectors in promoting sustainable reform in the following four program areas:

- Business Ethics/Anti-Corruption;
- Commercial Dispute Resolution;
- Corporate Governance; and
- Intellectual Property Rights.

The Good Governance Program encourages fairness, transparency, and accountability in corporate governance practices in emerging market economies by engaging in cooperative programs with private sector organizations and by establishing a private-public sector dialogue. In Russia, the Program supported efforts of several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to develop an *Independent Director Code* and a *Declaration of Principles of the Professional Community of Corporate Directors*. The Program conducts intensive “train-the-trainer” programs that provide select professionals the skills and expertise to implement good business and corporate governance practices at all levels, including companies, business associations, NGOs, stock exchanges, and educational institutions.

About the International Finance Corporation

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is a member of the World Bank Group. IFC was established in 1956 to encourage private sector activity in developing countries. It does this primarily through three types of activities: financing private sector projects, helping companies in the developing world to mobilize financing in international financial markets, and providing advisory services and technical assistance to companies and governments.

IFC is a leader among multilateral financial institutions in integrating corporate governance considerations into all phases of the investment process. IFC’s long history of and practical experience in structuring investments, appraising investment opportunities, and nominating board members has allowed it to put corporate governance principles into action. A focus on good corporate governance practices in client companies allows IFC to manage risks and add value to its clients. In addition to the benefits to individual client companies, working to improve corporate governance,

The Russia Corporate Governance Manual

contributes more broadly to IFC's mission to promote sustainable private sector investment and strengthen capital markets in developing countries.

The IFC Russia Corporate Governance Project (RCGP) is a technical assistance project within the framework of the IFC Private Enterprise Partnership that aims to improve corporate governance practices in Russia. Its four main objectives are to:

- Assist Russian companies in implementing corporate governance through corporate trainings, consultations, and assessments, and thus facilitate their access to outside capital;
- Advise public sector officials on legislative and regulatory reform in corporate governance;
- Develop curricula for universities and other educational institutions to help train the next generation of managers, investors, and policy makers; and
- Support key institutions and change agents, including the press and NGOs to help build sustainable practices and raise awareness.

About the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs

The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco) is the Swiss government's department in charge of economic policy. In terms of foreign trade policy, seco is active in shaping efficient, fair, and transparent rules for the world economy.

Seco represents Switzerland in the large multilateral trade organizations as well as in international negotiations. Seco is also involved in efforts to reduce poverty in the form of economic development assistance. Its development cooperation division is the competence center for sustainable economic development and the integration of developing and transition countries and their companies into the global economy.

Seco included corporate governance in its economic development assistance programs in 2000. Its overall support for the IFC Private Enterprise Partnership and its RCGP is one such example of development assistance.

About the EVD, the Agency for International Business and Cooperation of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs

The Agency for International Business and Cooperation (EVD) is part of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs. Its mission is to promote and encourage international business and international cooperation. As a state agency and a partner to businesses and public-sector organizations, the EVD aims to help them achieve success in their international operations. A growing network of organizations, government institutions, and companies have come to rely on the EVD for information about foreign markets, governments, and trade and industry. Many of them do benefit from the financial programs, previously run by Senter Internationaal and now administered by the EVD.