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SYMPOSIUM ON ECONOMIC CRIME

The Sixteenth International Symposium on Economic Crime took place at Jesus College, Cambridge from 13 to 19 September 1998, under the auspices of a number of academic and research institutions from around the world, including the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.

As in previous years, the symposium attracted delegates from over 80 different countries and during the week well over 800 participants were involved in the programme. The symposium has become an important and probably unique vehicle for those concerned with protecting their economies and institutions from the effects of serious economic crime and other forms of illicit destabilisation, to meet in a relatively informal setting and explore issues of mutual concern and facilitate co-operation. The significance of the event is attested to by the fact that some 27 Ambassadors and High Commissioners took the trouble to participate in the symposium, as did a number of senior officials, judges, practitioners and academics.

The symposium focused on two main themes:

- (1) prevention and control of frauds and other abuses against governments; and
- (2) abuses in the financial markets.

These themes were addressed, after the introductory key note addresses, in alternative programmes, each supported by a series of workshops. On Saturday 19 September, the symposium broke into four regional conferences covering Latin America, the Far East, Central and Eastern Europe and Southern Africa.

Among a great many excellent and even profound presentations, four that particularly stood out were those by:

- Mrs Rosalind Wright, the present Director of the Serious Fraud Office;
- Mr Jonathan Winer, a senior official of the US State Department;
- Mr Raymond Kendall, the Secretary General of Interpol; and
- HE Ms Cheryl Carolus, the High Commissioner of South Africa.

Mrs Wright expressed the view that the criminal justice system, in dealing with fraud, had still to answer the criticisms voiced by Lord Roskill's 1986 report, whereas both Mr Winer and Mr Kendall expressed profound doubts whether the traditional weapons of the criminal justice system, used in the current manner, could satisfactorily address the challenges of the future, and in particular the impact of global electronic communications systems. Ms Carolus, referring to the fundamental changes that have taken place in her own country in recent years, emphasised the need for the law to be supported by not only an effective infrastructure, but by commitment, based on acceptance and all that this entails.

While the IALS will publish a selection of the papers presented at the symposium in a special volume and in the *Journal of Financial Crime*, the real value of the annual symposium is the opportunity that it affords such a diversity of people to meet, exchange views and hopefully thereby be better equipped to play their respective roles, whether as a police officer, judge or scholar, in their own environment. The promotion of such exchanges of ideas is at the very heart of the Society for Advanced Legal Studies.