

by Siemens, WU Vienna University of Economics and Business and the African Tax Institute

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WU joins forces with Siemens Integrity Initiative

- **Cooperation in conjunction with the global Siemens Integrity Initiative, which supports organizations and projects that are fighting corruption**
- **Project to identify links between corruption and the lack of integrity in business and political systems throughout focus countries in Africa**

The WU Global Tax Policy Center (GTPC) at the Institute for Austrian and International Tax Law at Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU) has been awarded US\$1.7 million by the Siemens Integrity Initiative to launch the Tax and Good Governance Project 2015-2018. Together with WU GTPC, the African Tax Institute (ATI) at the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences will play a key role in the fight against tax crimes and illicit activities in Africa.

The project aims to identify links between corruption, the lack of business and political integrity, tax crimes, corrupt tax administrations and multinationals. It will also promote concepts of good tax governance and the importance of an honest, transparent tax system for economic development. To accomplish these goals, the project will bring together academia, business and government.

University experts will review legislation and tax treaties and develop proposals for improving laws in order to build a more transparent legal framework. In addition,

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multinationals and companies operating in African countries will contribute insights based on their experience and understanding of practicalities and solutions.

Finally, tax administrations will implement and enforce sound public governance and efficient tax systems to lay a better foundation for future investments and build investor confidence in a corruption-free environment. The project will support these measures by showing how law enforcement agencies and tax authorities can cooperate to counter corruption and bribery.

“Since Siemens installed South Africa’s first telegraph line between Cape Town and Simon’s Town back in 1860, we have continued to support all African countries in their journey to growth and prosperity. But oftentimes, uncertainties and inconsistencies in tax law and tax practice have set barriers to cross-border trade and investment. This is why we truly believe that this project can make a difference: bringing world-class academia, business and government together to work for a better future – for Africa and for all of us,” said Dr. Christian Kaeser, Global Head of Tax and Corporate Vice President, Siemens AG.

“This project has the potential to help achieve a fair and more transparent business environment in Africa and to assist African governments to counter the billions of dollars of illicit outflows to tax havens,” said Jeffrey Owens, Director of WU Global Tax Policy Center.

WU Global Tax Policy Center strives to deliver excellence by achieving a balance between tax systems, which protect the revenue base of countries, while providing an environment that encourages sustainable growth. “We are a solid and competent team, and this project will build better and more efficient tax systems and practices – which is essential for the economies of African countries. The project events will be held in both Vienna and Pretoria, linking the heart of Europe with the traditional center of commerce in sub-Saharan Africa.”

Joint Press Release
**by Siemens, WU Vienna University of Economics and Business
and the African Tax Institute**

The project will focus on Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa, but its outcomes could be replicated in other African countries and in other regions. Implementing and enforcing sound public governance and efficient tax systems and practices is essential for enabling African countries to mobilize their domestic revenue resources.

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More information on the Siemens Integrity Initiative is available at:

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WU Vienna University of Economics and Business is the largest business school in Europe dedicated to research, training and policy development. **The Institute for Austrian and International Tax Law**, located at the WU campus, is one of the global leaders in international taxation, and its **WU Global Tax Policy Center (GTPC)** plays a key role in the global policy debate on tax.

The African Tax Institute (ATI) is located in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, University of Pretoria, South Africa. The ATI's goal is to develop independent capacity within African countries to address internal tax policy and tax administration issues, while also recognizing the dramatic increase in cross-border activity that requires greater cooperation and coordination in the design and implementation of tax systems.

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