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**Office of the Comptroller General
of the United States**

**United States Government Accountability Office
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PRESS RELEASE

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**Independent Peer Review Teams Give
GAO a “Clean Opinion,” Cite Best Practices**

WASHINGTON, DC (June 30, 2008) – Two separate independent peer reviews, one conducted by a team of international auditors, the other by one of the nation’s leading accounting firms, today gave the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) “clean opinions” on the quality assurance systems the agency uses to produce its reports and testimony to Congress.

“I am pleased by this vote of confidence in GAO’s quality assurance practices. GAO is known for providing lawmakers and agency heads with timely, reliable information on government operations. The two peer reviews confirm that this reputation is well deserved,” said Gene L. Dodaro, acting Comptroller General.

An international peer review team, lead by the office of the Auditor General of Canada, examined GAO’s performance audit work. In addition to Canada, other nations represented on the international peer review team included Australia, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. The accounting firm KPMG LLP focused on GAO’s financial audit work and attestation engagements.

Reports from both teams concluded that policymakers and the public can be confident of the facts and analyses presented in GAO studies. In addition, the international peer review team cited several exemplary practices at GAO that national audit offices in other countries may wish to emulate.

The international peer review and the KPMG LLP reviews, which respectively took about seven and four months to complete, examined all aspects of GAO’s quality assurance framework—from the initial acceptance of new work to the issuance of the final product. The teams made frequent visits to GAO to interview staff and study a sample of GAO audit products.

GAO is required to undergo an independent external assessment of its quality assurance systems every three years. The 2004 assessments of GAO’s quality

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assurance system also provided a “clean opinion.” Those reviews were also led by KPMG and the Office of the Auditor General of Canada—with assistance from counterpart audit institutions in Australia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, and Sweden.

Known as the investigative arm of Congress, GAO seeks to improve the performance of the federal government and hold it accountable to Congress and, ultimately, the American people. GAO examines the use of public funds; evaluates how well programs and policies are meeting their objectives; and provides analyses, recommendations, and other assistance to help Congress make sound oversight, policy, and funding decisions.

The reports from the international peer review and KPMG LLP are posted on the internet at <http://www.gao.gov/about/review.html>.

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