

High-level event at the 14th United Nations Congress  
on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

# THE NATURE OF CORRUPTION

## CORRUPTION LINKED TO WILDLIFE, FOREST AND FISHERIES CRIME

Tuesday, 8 March 2021 | 14:00–15:30  
Conference Room RoomA

*Organized by UNODC [DO/DTA/DPA joint event]*

There is an increasing recognition that to curb the global surge in wildlife trafficking, the international community must increase its efforts to fight the pervasive corruption that enables it. The facilitating role played by corruption in wildlife trafficking is amply documented in literature, including in UNODC's World Wildlife Crime Report, and sustained by a large body of empirical evidence related to past and ongoing criminal investigations. Corruption fuels and abets transnational organized crime and is particularly rife in higher-value wildlife trafficking. It is multifaceted and can occur at every stage of the wildlife, forest and fisheries value chain. Corruption can include bribes to access information on the movement of animals or patrols, obtain permits and quotas, or ensure that shipments are not inspected or seized.

In its Resolution 73/343<sup>1</sup>, entitled "Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife," the United Nations General Assembly recognized the facilitating role corruption plays in wildlife crime, and encouraged Member States to make use, to the greatest extent possible, of legal instruments to tackle illicit trafficking in wildlife, including through legislation related to money-laundering, corruption, fraud, racketeering and financial crime. It also called upon Member States to prohibit, prevent and counter any form of corruption that facilitates illicit trafficking in wildlife and wildlife products; and encouraged Member States to take measures making permit systems more resilient to corruption. In December 2019, the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference of the States Parties to

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/73/343, 20 September 2019

UNCAC adopted a Resolution on “Preventing and combating corruption as it relates to crimes that have an impact on the environment” reaffirmed the relevance of UNCAC in this respect and urged Member States to investigate and prosecute those offences. Also the Conference to the Parties to CITES, the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and many other high-profile events in recent years have given growing attention to this issue and attracted significant political attention, resulting in commitments for action to combat corruption that facilitates wildlife crime. The adoption of these resolutions and the major international events held on the issue of wildlife crime demonstrate growing international momentum for recognizing that wildlife crime is serious crime, and that corruption is one of the most serious challenges to stopping it.

UNODC, as guardian of the UN Conventions against Corruption and Transnational Organized Crime, is working with partners from other international organizations, civil society and the private sector to build understanding and ensure that wildlife, forest and fisheries agencies are working together to prevent and address corruption. Various initiatives, tools and collaborative partnerships have been created since the last Crime Congress in 2015, and this high-profile event will highlight the challenges and showcase some of the promising approaches to address corruption linked to wildlife crime.

The organizers hope and expect that this high-level event will be a dialogue that will provide Member States with valuable information that may be used for negotiations during the Plenary discussion on Agenda item 6 (date tbc), and push the international community forward, together, towards the desired objectives. Urgent action and political commitment are more than ever required if we are serious about protecting our planet’s ecosystems and curbing biodiversity loss and deforestation. UNODC and its partners aim to build collective momentum and embed the issue of corruption linked to wildlife, forest and fisheries crime into the global crime prevention and criminal justice agenda for the next five years. Our distinguished panellists, hailing from different continents and contexts, will drive the discussion to inspire Member States to proactively address and mitigate corruption across their wildlife, forest and fisheries sectors.

In summary, the high-level event has the following objectives:

- 1) Create space and influence participating Member States and relevant agencies to discuss the links between corruption and wildlife, forest and fisheries crime and voice their commitment to the pledges proposed in the 2020 draft Kyoto Declaration;
- 2) Accelerate the political momentum behind recognizing the importance of preventing and mitigating corruption throughout the wildlife, forest and fisheries value chains;

- 3) Promote the use of UNODC tools and other international mechanisms to combat corruption in the wildlife, forest, and fisheries sectors and highlight success stories from their use; and
- 4) Embed the awareness of corruption linked to wildlife crime on the global crime prevention and criminal justice agenda for the next five years.

## **SCENARIO**

Potential format: Moderated dialogue, with guests discussing challenges and areas for possible collaboration (mix of prepared answers and Q&A).

1. Welcome/Introduction by the UNODC Executive Director
2. Panel discussion
3. Multimedia: videos on the impact of UNODC's work on addressing corruption with wildlife management authorities in Kenya, Botswana and Tanzania
4. Q&A session with the audience (the moderator will pick questions sent by the audience to the panellists through Sli.do, an online tool for managing interaction with audiences)

**Opening remarks:** Ms. Ghada Fathi Waly, UNODC Executive Director

**Moderator:** Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands

### **Panellists:**

- Ms. Paola Francisco de Coelho (Minister of Environment, Angola)
- Mr. Najib Balala (Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife, Kenya)
- Ms. Zoraida Ávalos Rivera (Attorney General, Peru)
- Ms. Ernestine Rengiil (Attorney General, Palau)
- Lord William Hague (Former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, TBC)
- EU Commissioner (TBC)