Implementation Review Group of the
United Nations Convention against Corruption
Third session
Vienna, 18-22 June 2012


Note by the Secretariat

I. Implementation of resolution 4/6

In resolution 4/6 adopted at its fourth session, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption decided that briefings for non-governmental organizations would be conducted on the outcomes of the review process, including technical assistance needs identified. These briefings would be convened on the margins of the sessions of the Group and conducted by the secretariat in cooperation with a member of the bureau. The briefings are to be based on the reports of the Group, and thematic implementation reports and regional supplementary addenda.

The Conference encouraged non-governmental organizations to report to it or the Group on their activities and contributions to the implementation of the recommendations of the Group approved by the Conference, including those related to meeting technical assistance needs and advancing capacity to effectively implement the Convention. A summary of the briefing will be prepared and submitted to the Group.

In the same resolution, the Conference further requested States parties and signatories to use the briefings and to draw on the discussions and proposals of the fourth session of the Conference of the States Parties to continue constructive dialogue on the contribution of non-governmental organizations to the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention. In order to facilitate this
work, the Secretariat undertook to compile examples of contributions and involvement of non-governmental organizations in the review process and proposals on how the dialogue and collaboration with non-governmental organizations (also in regard to technical assistance needs identified and their follow-up), could be further strengthened, bearing in mind the confidential nature of the review process and in accordance with resolution 4/6 of the Conference.

In order to provide guidance to the Secretariat in this endeavour and to provide information on their own experiences, States parties and signatories were invited to provide pertinent information on their relevant initiatives, practices and proposals to the Secretariat in relation to this topic. Responses were received from the following States and are summarized in this paper: Australia, Chile, China, Finland, Israel, Kuwait, Mexico, Philippines, Singapore and Switzerland.

II. Contributions and proposals by States parties and signatories on the implementation of resolution 4/6

A. General observations on the implementation of resolution 4/6

States reiterated the terms of resolution 4/6, noting it would provide an opportunity for contributions of non-governmental organizations to the work of the Mechanism. It was highlighted that the Mechanism was an intergovernmental process and that the participation of non-governmental organizations should take into account the diversity of States parties. States pointed out that civil society could play a valuable role within the context of the Mechanism and more broadly in the implementation of the Convention at the national level.

Reference was made to the experiences of other review mechanisms, namely the OECD Working Group on Bribery and the Mechanism for Follow-up on the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (MESICIC). One State also referred to activities undertaken in the context of the G20 working group and the Open Government Partnership. For the OECD Working Group on Bribery, participation of civil society was foreseen in the context of the on-site visit in the Phase 2 reviews in accordance with the guidelines. In the context of MESICIC, the different provisions for participation of civil society in the rules of procedure of the review system for the Inter-American Convention against Corruption were highlighted.

B. National experiences and the country review process

States provided information on the participation of non-governmental organizations in national anti-corruption efforts. It was noted in particular that cooperation between national authorities and civil society as well as citizen participation could contribute to the effectiveness of the fight against corruption, as well as enhance transparency and integrity. Civil society could serve as an implementing partner for anti-corruption policies and strategies at the national and local levels. Reference was also made to specific projects aiming to strengthen the role of civil society in the fight against corruption, and to regular briefings held at the national level.
through national networks or standing bodies to provide information on the implementation of the Convention.

Several States reported on the participation of non-governmental organizations in the conduct of their own review process, noting that this involvement could take place at the self-assessment as well as the dialogue stage. For instance, meetings were held with non-governmental organizations in order to brief them about the review process and to report on progress and the different steps undertaken. In some cases, the responses to the comprehensive self-assessment checklist were provided and the input of non-governmental organizations sought. States underscored the involvement of non-governmental organizations during the country visits they had conducted. Meetings with representatives of non-governmental organizations had been organized by States under review, and these had provided the reviewing experts with insight into local institutions and implementation of the Convention. Some States reported about their efforts to extend consultations further to also include meetings with the private sector in particular, and academia.

C. Proposals for the furtherance of constructive dialogue

Several proposals were forwarded on how to implement resolution 4/6 and more broadly on how to involve non-governmental organizations in the work on anti-corruption at the national and international levels.

In the individual country review processes, it was suggested that States under review consider publishing the details of their focal point nominated under paragraph 17 of the terms of reference. Implementation of paragraph 28 of the terms of reference could be achieved by soliciting input on the responses to the comprehensive self-assessment checklist, for instance by posting them online or requesting submissions to be made on the implementation of the two chapters under review in the relevant cycle. In the context of direct dialogue between the State under review and reviewing experts, meetings with representatives of non-governmental organizations could be facilitated by the State under review.

Specific proposals on how to strengthen the capacity of non-governmental organizations to provide useful contributions to the review process were made. These include for instance awareness-raising and training courses for representatives of non-governmental organizations, as well as funding for participation in sessions of the Conference and briefings on the margins of the Group. Further suggestions were the production of information materials, for instance a collection of good practices on country visits in the context of the Mechanism with a recommendation on meetings with non-governmental organizations, and regular reporting by States at the national level on progress made in the review process and in the implementation of the Convention.