



UNITED NATIONS  
*Office on Drugs and Crime*

**Report on the Fifth Meeting  
of the  
International Group on Anti-Corruption Coordination  
(IGAC)**

**Meridá, 11 December 2003**

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## **A. BACKGROUND**

1. The 5th Meeting of the International Group for Anti-Corruption Coordination (IGAC) was held in Mérida, Mexico on 11 December 2003, in conjunction with the High-Level Political Conference for the Signing of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Originally the interagency coordination initiative was launched by Ms. Louise Fréchette, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, who convened two meetings in New York on coordination of anti-corruption activities on 2 and 26 November 2001 – respectively.

## **B. OBJECTIVES**

2. The objective of the 5th meeting of the International Group on Anti-Corruption Coordination was to explore the role of the IGAC in promoting ratification and implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption. More specifically:

- to discuss the effectiveness of the Group in providing a platform for inter-agency coordination and cooperation and to review the database and its practical applications, including the analysis of anti-corruption initiatives worldwide;
- to discuss multi-agency collaboration, integrity initiatives and enforcement systems in international and regional organizations; and
- to review existing monitoring mechanisms for international legal instruments.

The agenda of the meeting is contained in Annex 1.

## **C. PARTICIPATION**

3. Several organizations participated in the meeting. The list of participants is contained in Annex 2. For the first time the meeting was attended by the World Bank Institute, the Asian Development Bank and the Association of Inspector's General.

## D. DISCUSSION

4. The participants were welcomed by Under-Secretary-General Mr. Dileep Nair (OIOS) who also chaired the meeting.

### I. The Importance of Partnerships and International Coordination

5. Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)* highlighted the importance of the effective coordination and active collaboration among all the stakeholders involved in the fight against corruption and described the role and objectives of the International Group for Anti-Corruption Coordination (IGAC) in this context. He emphasized that, in order to be successful, coordination had to be based on the comparative advantages of each organization, hence organizations should rather deepen than broaden their initiatives. He reaffirmed the commitment of his organization to cooperation in the area of anti-corruption and good governance. “Inter-agency collaboration can provide huge benefits in terms of quality of international actions and thus improving not only the quantity of results but also the quality of the work.”

6. Mr. Paul Lachal Roberts of the *European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)*, delivered an intervention on behalf of the Director of OLAF, Mr. Franz-Hermann Brüner. He emphasized the importance of cooperation and coordination in view of the implementation of the Convention, calling upon the participants to work together in the spirit of the Convention as though it was already adopted and in force, by developing cooperation strategies, by investigating together matters of common interest, by sharing information and experiences. He further underlined the importance of effectively protecting the investments made in the field of development aid in order to maintain the goodwill of donors and taxpayers likewise. Only if all shared this view the donors, the recipients and the oversight institutions, the common goal of curbing corruption could be achieved.

7. Mrs Maud De Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the *Council of Europe*, highlighted the importance of a regional approach in combating corruption and other forms of serious crime, since it allowed for tailor-made measures addressing the specificities of the respective region, faster and easier agreements on principles, objectives and methodology, further-reaching commitment and a greater acceptance of monitoring mechanisms. She underlined the added value of a concerted regional effort and the advantages of bringing together varying working methods and managerial cultures to provide a multidisciplinary approach. She reconfirmed her Organization’s commitment to IGAC as a platform to coordinate the considerable number of actors involved in the fight against corruption and facilitating synergies between the different approaches, while making use of each organization’s area of specialization. With regard to the monitoring and follow-up of international anti-corruption instruments, she recalled that the experience of the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) had shown that on-site visits and face-to-face discussions are an important

element in the effective monitoring of the implementation of anti-corruption standards. She also drew attention to the possible multiplication of monitoring mechanisms and the ensuing issues which would need to be considered, namely the increased workload for state institutions, the possibility of contradictions and inconsistencies, the need for increased coordination between the various organizations, the need for highly specialized evaluation teams and the cost of the monitoring activities. She concluded by welcoming the establishment of IGAC and reiterating the Council of Europe's readiness to share its experience.

8. Mr. Daniel Kaufmann of the *World Bank Institute* highlighted the importance of interagency coordination and cooperation in the context of data collection and analysis. There is an increasing number of global data available which can be used for a large variety of purposes including the monitoring of the implementation of international instruments against corruption. He further briefed the participants on some of the main lessons learned from a systematic analysis of past anti-corruption work, which that the anti-corruption agenda needed to be significantly broadened to encompass all areas of governance allowing for an analysis of the incentives for corruption and the formulation of preventive policies and systemic reforms.

## II. The IGAC role in promoting the UN Convention against Corruption

9. Mr. Oliver Stolpe, *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*, presented the IGAC database of ongoing anti-corruption projects and current levels of coordination. At the outset of the database project, UNODC estimated that there were 50-60 agencies handling around 2000 projects targeted at assisting Member States in curbing corruption. A preliminary analysis of the data provided by a dozen of donor organizations suggested that there was a lack of information sharing and coordination, a duplication of efforts, gaps in coverage and often competition instead of complementarity. Hence, there was a need for an inventory of anti-corruption efforts, the analysis of anti-corruption project patterns, the sharing of information across agencies and the development of a platform for building partnerships. The database, which was created in order to address some of these needs, allows for desegregating the data according to time, the geographical dimension, the implementing agencies, the donor, nature of the assistance and project name and number. So far the project database includes 881 anti-corruption projects and activities. However, in many areas sufficient data is still scarce. Mr. Stolpe concluded by underlining important next steps, including broadening the IGAC membership, data verification, entry of additional data and the bulk import of data from other existing databases.

10. Participants recommended equipping the IGAC web page with a feedback mechanism in order to allow for the assessment of the practical value and actual use of the database. Further, it was suggested to focus more on a country level data collection.

### III. Multi-agency Coordination and cooperation in support of the UN Convention against Corruption

11. Mr. Paul Lachal Roberts, *European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)*, focused in his presentation on the conduct of joint investigations and the challenges involved herein. The need for joint investigations arises from a significant number of aid projects funded from multiple sources and staffed by two or more agencies. Rather than conduct what is often parallel investigations with inevitable overlap and points of common interest, the objective is to share the work while allowing for each agency involved to maintain its focus and independence. Particular challenges emerge however when it comes to information sharing. Confidentiality requirements may often not be compatible with the interests of cooperation. On the long run this calls for formalized interagency agreements, however this does not stand in the way of ongoing cooperation efforts.

12. Mr. John McCormick, *World Bank*, elaborated on the opportunities and challenges posed by the UN Convention against Corruption to departments responsible for maintaining the institutional integrity and protecting the financial interests of their respective organization. In particular, he envisaged that, much like after the entering into force of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, a change of thought would be triggered by this new Convention causing companies and individuals to come forward and provide information on fraud and corruption. This raises a series of questions, such as how to deal with the request of such an informants for confidentiality, if and how to recognize cooperation as a mitigating factor and, at the same time, how to balance the interest to give incentives for cooperation with the goal of appropriately sanctioning wrongdoers. In view of interagency cooperation, concerns arise with regard to the sharing of information across organizations without breaching confidentiality or how to obtain cooperation in cases when the conduct is not sanctionable by one of the organizations.

13. Mr. Mark Gough, *United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)*, elaborated on the approach of OIOS. During the last years OIOS has received more and more serious and complex cases where the allegations, if substantiated, would require the matter to be resolved via a national jurisdiction. This rise of cases involving allegations of criminal wrongdoing has required a new strategy applying a risk management approach. This approach equates to a strategy whereby recurring problems are tackled as opposed to simply attending to matters one case at a time. He highlighted that without preventative measures the number of cases coming to OIOS will simply continue to escalate. A case in point is a current inquiry being undertaken by OIOS. OLAF and the Italian financial crime experts, the Guardia de Finanza, in Kosovo. Collaboration between international actors require a major allocation of time and resources and pose procedural difficulties, but is necessary due to the magnitude of the allegations and the cross cutting impact of corrupt practices.

14. Mr. Rainer Bührer, *Interpol*, briefed participants on the ongoing services and technical cooperation activities of Interpol, including the development of an encompassing Code of Ethics and a Code of Conduct for law enforcement, the creation

of an international system of national contact points for corruption investigations, a Library of Best practices and the formulation of Global Standards to Combat Corruption in Police Forces/ Services". The technical cooperation activities of Interpol focus in particular on the latter aspect and include the design and delivery of a ethics and skill based training and providing policy advice and technical expertise for the implementation and monitoring of the Standards. However, the organization suffers a serious set-back due to the lack of funding of law enforcement related technical assistance activities by donors.

15. Mrs. Vera Devine, **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, (OECD)**, presented the OECD's experience with monitoring the implementation of its Anti-Bribery Convention in 35 countries. Monitoring consists of self- and mutual evaluation. The examiners are selected, ensuring that the examining team will be composed of examiners with various professional backgrounds and legal systems. In the first phase the monitoring focuses on the compliance of the national laws with the Convention which is assessed through questionnaires. The report is first reviewed and commented on by the examined country and then submitted to the OECD Working Group on Bribery, which adopts it by consensus. The examined country has no right of vote. In case the report contains recommendations for the amendment of the laws, *Phase 1* is followed by *Phase 1 plus* aimed at verifying that the country indeed complied with the recommendations. *Phase 2* tries to identify eventual problems in the effective prevention, detection and prosecution of bribery cases. For this purpose an on-site visit is conducted. According to the OECD's experience several issues have proven key for the successful monitoring of the Convention. Firstly, monitoring is essential in order to create and maintain political momentum, since signatory states are aware that their progress will be subject to international scrutiny. Peer pressure ensures that this progress review is taken seriously. Public reports additionally increase this pressure and create public awareness. The active engagement of signatory states in the examination process encourages the sharing of best practices and provides access to expert advice. Most importantly monitoring provides a clear picture of how successful the Convention has been.

## **E. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

16. Several topics were proposed for further discussions at the next meeting of IGAC. These included:

- Anti-Corruption Agencies and National Anti-Corruption Programmes. Why is it that the majority of these institutions and programmes fail, what are the critical success factors and what general lessons can be drawn (OIOS/WBI).
- Law enforcement. Are there examples of successful programmes to strengthen integrity and capacity of law enforcement agencies (Interpol).
- Listing of companies found to use corrupt practices, voluntary disclosure programmes, information exchange and confidentiality, debarment and other sanctions. Legal (jurisdiction and due process) and practical

challenges of these instruments and policies (World Bank, OECD, OLAF, Association of Inspector's General, Asian Development Bank).

- How can IGAC and its members add value to the UN Convention against Corruption in more practical terms. Priorities and joint programmes and activities.

Participants concurred that the decision on the thematic discussion would be taken by the IGAC Steering Committee.

17. OIOS envisaged that it would brief the IGAC members at the next meeting on the findings of the Organizational Integrity Survey.

18. The next meeting of IGAC will be held in June/July possibly back to back with another event. It was agreed that it should not be held in Vienna. The 6th Meeting of IGAC will include the election of a new chair of the group and members of the steering committee.

## F. ANNEX 1 - AGENDA

**Thursday, 11 December 2003, 14:00-18:00**

### **Fifth Meeting of the International Group for Anti-Corruption Coordination (IGAC) – IGAC’s role in promoting the UN Convention against Corruption**

*Chair: Under Secretary General Mr. Dileep Nair*

#### **14.00 - 14.30 The Importance of Partnerships and International Coordination**

*(Each speaker 5 minutes)*

Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of UNODC;

Mr. Franz-Hermann Brüner, Director General, European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF);

Mrs. Maud De Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe;

Mr. Daniel Kaufmann, Director of the Department of Global Governance, World Bank Institute

#### **14.30 - 15.00 The IGAC role in promoting the UN Convention against Corruption**

Presentation of the database of ongoing projects (PACMAN)

Current level of Coordination and Cooperation

Mr. Oliver Stolpe, Anti-Corruption Unit, UNODC;

#### **15.00 - 16.30 Multi-agency Coordination and Cooperation in Support of the UN**

**Convention against Corruption** *(Each speaker 7 minutes)*

1. **OLAF – Multi-Agency collaboration – Investigation initiatives**, Mr. Paul Lachal Roberts, Adviser, Multi-Agency Investigations, European Anti-Fraud Office, OLAF;

2. **World Bank – Activities in support of the UN Convention against Corruption**, Mr. John McCormick, Senior Quality Assurance Officer, Department of Institutional Integrity, World Bank;

3. **OIOS – Institutional Integrity Initiatives – Anti-Corruption Investigations**, Mr. Henri Fourcault, Office of the USG, OIOS and Mr. Mark Gough, Investigations Division, UN Office for Internal Oversight Services, OIOS;

4. **Interpol – Law enforcement activities in support of the UN Convention against Corruption**, Mr. Rainer Bühler, Technical Advisor, Management Planning and Policy Office, Interpol;

5. **OECD’s Experience with Compliance Monitoring of a Convention** Mrs. Vera Devine, Administrator, Anti-Corruption Network for Transition Economies, Anti-Corruption Division, OECD;

6. **The Group of States against Corruption – GRECO, anti-corruption monitoring in the Council of Europe**, Mr. Rafael A. Benitez, Deputy Head of the Public Law Department, Directorate General for Legal Affairs, Council of Europe;

#### **16.30 - 17.50 The Future Role of IGAC: Promoting a Coordinated Approach**

*(Towards an international ombudsman; blacklisting; other issues)*

#### **17:50- 18:00 Conclusions**

## **G. ANNEX 2 – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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