

Global Expert Group Meeting - Corruption Involving Vast Quantities of Assets
Reception, the Grand Hotel, 12 June 2019
Welcome remarks by Ms Marianne Hagen, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Dear friends,

I am delighted to welcome you all to this reception at the end of what I understand has been a long, intense and interesting day.

Corruption is a global scourge of massive proportions. It is negatively affecting people's lives, the planet, and our efforts towards prosperity and peace.

But it does not have to be this way. Working together, we *can* succeed in preventing and combating corruption. Both small-scale and large-scale corruption.

To make this happen, every country must have in place independent, professional bodies with adequate resources to:

- prevent corruption occurring in the first place,
- make it safe and easy to report any suspicion of corruption,
- investigate these cases,
- prosecute those involved,
- pass judgment, and
- apply sanctions to individuals and companies found guilty of corruption.

Effective anti-corruption also depends on vigilant media and a vibrant civil society. They play essential roles in bringing corruption cases to the public attention and the legal system. They too need independence, access to information and resources, and protection.

Moreover, the chain of financial and legal enablers, facilitators and service providers that are making corruption possible must be identified and held accountable.

Governance characterised by integrity, inclusion, transparency and accountability pays off in terms of public services, investments, trust and peace.

Substantial anti-corruption won't happen overnight. You know better than most how challenging this is. But every country has a responsibility to play its part.

Corruption, tax evasion, illicit financial flows and other forms of financial crimes divert resources away from sustainable development. If we are to reach the Sustainable Development Goals, we need to plug these holes.

We *must* use international processes constructively to speed up the fight against corruption in all its forms.

Norway is ready to cooperate with countries across traditional dividing lines, such as Peru, Colombia and others, in joint efforts to address this complex challenge.

I look forward to receiving the outcome of your deliberations here in Oslo. I am confident that this will prove useful in our anti-corruption efforts both nationally and

internationally. It will be particularly beneficial for the upcoming UNCAC meetings and the UN special session on anti-corruption in 2021.

Let me express my gratitude to UNODC for its excellent organisation of the two expert meetings on large-scale corruption. Norway is happy to be associated with the important anti-corruption work that UNODC is doing.

I am also grateful to Peru for hosting the first meeting in Lima in December 2018, which I was happy and proud to open.

I hope all these efforts will give rise to a global commitment to integrity.

Together, I believe we can prevent and combat corruption, stop financial crime and plug illicit financial flows.

Thank you.