

UN Convention Against Corruption
10th Conference of States Parties
Atlanta, United States, 11-15 December 2023



Statement by Pierre Bertels, Head of Delegation,
First Secretary, Permanent Representation of Belgium

Chair,

I warmly congratulate you on your appointment, and thank the United States and the UNODC for organizing this conference and for leading us in the elaboration of the Atlanta Declaration.

Chair,

Belgium aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the UNCAC, and we would like to commend the Secretariat of the UNCAC, and of its Working Groups for the tremendous work done since then. The progress and the achievements are there. Giving a clear signal to all those fighting corruption.

Since 2008, when it signed this Convention, my country has intensified its fight against corruption and sought increasingly closer international cooperation. This Convention is a crucial tool in our daily fight against this crime. The UNGASS political declaration adopted in June 2021, the Atlanta declaration and the resolutions prepared for this conference, widen and strengthen its scope.

But to be efficient we need even closer cooperation, and synergies, between international institutions. My country works closely with the UN, the EU, OECD, GRECO and the Council of Europe, to reinforce our policies and actions which must be comprehensive and integrated.

I am also happy to announce that Belgium joined the GlobE network. The *Cellule de Traitement des Informations Financières* (CTIF) and the *Office Centrale pour la Répression de la Corruption* (OCRC) will start exchanging information with other frontline anti-corruption law enforcement practitioners through this dedicated channel.

Chair,

Dear colleagues,

Corruption severely affects the functioning of our countries and institutions. It undermines the basic principles of integrity, fairness, equal opportunity, good governance and human rights. It poses a major security threat, harms innocent people and causes human rights abuse. Criminal networks thrive on corruption. Practices such as human trafficking, money laundering, smuggling of contraband, tax evasion, wildlife crime, and other corruption-related activities, are severe, complex, unacceptable forms of transnational crime.

Faced with the widening scope and aggravating impact of these crimes, our multilateral efforts are of the utmost importance. When they are supplemented by measures at the national level, we can attain the greatest efficiency. For that, we need the conjoined involvement of public authorities, legislators, the judiciary and civil society. We need meticulous evidence gathering, focused legislative work and thorough judicial procedures. We also need democratic accountability, regulatory transparency, pluralistic media, good investigative journalism and an active civil society. Above all, we need citizens committed to these principles and supportive of our policies.

Chair,

To conclude, my country contributes actively to the High Level session on Nature Crimes, and will provide insight on managing corruption risks relating to deforestation and illegal logging. I am looking forward to seeing you at this occasion, tomorrow morning at 9am, in the Seattle room, room A302.

Thank you Mister Chair.