

Distinguished President, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The Netherlands is a strong trading nation, thanks in part to our geographical location and our infrastructure.

But criminals take advantage of these benefits too.

We must not ignore that large-scale crime almost always relies on help from insiders.

Criminals will always try to put pressure on people in useful positions, such as customs officials and police officers, bringing the underworld and the legitimate world into contact with one another.

This is the reality we face in the Netherlands on a daily basis.

Corruption is a transnational phenomenon, and no country is immune to it.

We can only fight corruption by working together.

And every country must take its share of the responsibility.

That's exactly why the United Nations Convention Against Corruption was adopted 20 years ago.

I would like to thank the United States for hosting this conference and for putting the key theme of accountability on the agenda.

It's good to see this conference is also focusing on the role of young people and civil society.

After all, the future belongs to our children.

It's never too early for them to learn how important it is that our democracies function fairly and that the rule of law is strong.

We also need to involve civil society in our efforts, like

academics and journalists.

They expose wrongdoings and propose necessary changes.

The Netherlands believes that these parties play a very valuable role in the fight against corruption.

For instance, since 2022 the Ministry of Justice and Security has been holding fruitful discussions with academics and civil society organisations. They come with different perspectives on how to strengthen the Netherlands' anti-corruption policies.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Netherlands is convinced that the Convention has enabled a stronger collective approach to tackling corruption. Transparency regarding the implementation of the Convention is crucial in this respect.

Therefore, the Netherlands supports initiatives like the UNCAC Coalition's Transparency Pledge and the United Kingdom initiative for a Joint Statement on the Implementation Review Mechanism.

I hope that as many States Parties as possible will support these initiatives.

Finally, I'd like to advocate ensuring the maximum possible synergy between the good work being done by the United Nations and that of other international anti-corruption bodies.

Corruption goes beyond borders.

So we must reach beyond our own borders too.

Thank you.