

Statement by the BAK regarding Note Verbale ref. no. CU 2023/247/(A)DTA/CEB/CSS

In the present opinion, the Austrian Federal Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bundesamt zur Korruptionsprävention und Korruptionsbekämpfung – BAK) would like to express its point of view concerning good practices, experiences and relevant measures taken after the completion of the Austria country review report in respect of the challenges arising in connection with Article 36 of the UNCAC, focussing on developments since the BAK's last statement in this regard (CU 2021/280(A)/DTA/CEB/CSS).

In order to strengthen cooperation between the BAK and the Central Public Prosecutor's Office for Combating Economic Crimes and Corruption (Wirtschafts- und Korruptionsstaatsanwaltschaft – WKStA) and to ensure feedback on the effectiveness of the BAK's work, joint retreats of the two institutions are held annually. After the end of the pandemic, these annual meetings will be resumed. In addition, case-related meetings are held regularly.

With regard to the staffing of the BAK's law enforcement capacities (operational department and IT unit), the implementation of the BAK's "2020 human resources concept" and the associated recruitment measures have had a positive effect.

With the entry into force of the Whistleblower Protection Act (Hinweisgeberschutzgesetz (HSchG) – promulgation in the Federal Law Gazette on 24 February 2023) as well as the implementation of the future "Investigation and Complaints Office for Police Conduct" (BAK Act – promulgation in the Federal Law Gazette on 21 July 2023) as a result of the evaluation, the BAK will be additionally strengthened as an anti-corruption authority, which will also result in an improvement of its financial and personnel resources.