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Human Rights and the Fight against Corruption

Oliveraie room, 28 October 2011

Organizer: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in cooperation with UNODC

Objective and Expected Outcome of the Event

The purpose of this event is to:

- discuss the value of using a human rights approach to enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts at domestic, regional and international levels, including with regard to prevention, mechanisms for redress and access to justice for victims of corruption, and human rights protection of persons implicated in corruption cases;
- discuss possible concrete measures to integrate human rights considerations into the UN anti-corruption agenda, with particular focus on supporting Member States and other relevant stakeholders in their efforts to implement the UN Convention against Corruption in a way that incorporates human rights and good governance principles;
- update participants on the work of the UN Human Rights Council, its subsidiary bodies and various other UN human rights mechanisms in the area of human rights and the fight against corruption;
- exchange views and ideas aimed at promoting policy coherence in the implementation of human rights and anti-corruption conventions and treaties; and
- share examples, case studies and best practices in implementing anti-corruption activities, programmes and strategies fully in line with international human rights standards;

Theme of the Side-Event

Recognizing that effective anti-corruption measures and the protection of human rights are mutually reinforcing and that the promotion and protection of human rights are essential to the fulfilment of all aspects of an anti-corruption strategy, the Human Rights Council requested OHCHR to prepare a publication on anti-corruption, good governance and human rights, drawing on the results of the Conference on anti-corruption measures, good governance and human rights, held in Warsaw, Poland, on 8 and 9 November 2006, and the seminar on good governance practices for the promotion and protection of human rights held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, in September 2004. Practices such as bribery, extortion and money laundering frequently aid and abet not only other criminal activities, such as those relating to the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and terrorism, but they can directly harm the enjoyment of the right to development, right to education, political rights, empowerment of women, right to work, right to fair trial, and many other human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to self-determination. Another issue of concern is the misuse of anti-corruption campaigns to subject unfairly individuals to allegations of corruption. The publication being developed by OHCHR aims to assist all those

concerned with developing and implementing anti-corruption projects, programmes and strategies with clear guidance to ensure that their efforts do not work at cross purposes with human rights promotion and protection, but rather build upon and mutually strengthen good governance, rule of law and human rights best practices.

Lead Discussants

Ms. Jo Dedeyne-Amann, Chief of the Implementation Support Section of UNODC, will open the event. Mr. Ayuush Bat-Erdene, Chief of the Right to Development Section, OHCHR, will update participants on the work of the UN Human Rights Council, its subsidiary bodies and various other UN human rights mechanisms in the area of human rights and the fight against corruption. Mr. Lyal S. Sunga, OHCHR Consultant, will present a preliminary outline of the OHCHR publication, together with some key points and examples, to illustrate the impact of corruption on the enjoyment of specific human rights. He will then discuss considerations for integrating human rights principles into anti-corruption strategies and highlight possible key actors and policy approaches pivotal to developing and implementing effective anti-corruption efforts that conform fully with international human rights standards. Other experts from key anti-corruption bodies will be invited to join the panel as discussants.