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Asset recovery

Progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery: selected highlights from two years of asset recovery work under the Convention

Background paper prepared by the Secretariat**

I. Introduction

1. At its first session, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption adopted resolution 1/4, by which it established the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery to advise and assist the Conference in the implementation of its mandate on the return of proceeds of corruption. The Working Group was set up in accordance with article 63, paragraph 4, of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The mandate of the Working Group includes assisting the Conference in developing cumulative knowledge in the area of asset recovery, identifying capacity-building needs, encouraging cooperation among relevant existing bilateral and multilateral initiatives and contributing to the implementation of the related provisions of the Convention; facilitating the exchange of information, good practices and ideas among States; and building confidence and encouraging cooperation between requesting and requested States. At its second and third sessions, the Conference adopted resolutions 2/3 and 3/3 in which it, inter alia, decided that the Working Group should continue its work.

* CAC/COSP/2013/1.

** This document has been submitted late to reflect the outcome of the meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery held on 29 and 30 August 2013.



2. The Working Group held its first meeting in Vienna on 27 and 28 August 2007,¹ its second meeting on 25 and 26 September 2008,² its third meeting on 14 and 15 May 2009,³ its fourth meeting on 16 and 17 December 2010,⁴ its fifth meeting on 25 and 26 August 2011,⁵ its sixth meeting on 30 and 31 August 2012⁶ and its seventh meeting on 29 and 30 August 2013.⁷

3. Since the fourth session of the Conference, held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 24 to 28 October 2011, two reports on progress made in the implementation of asset recovery mandates have been submitted to the Working Group.⁸ The reports are available to the Conference and provide a comprehensive overview of the work undertaken to implement the mandates. The present background paper is intended to complement the two aforementioned progress reports and the reports of the meetings of the Working Group held in 2012 and 2013.⁹

4. In order to avoid duplication, the present paper presents to the Conference selected highlights from two years of asset recovery work under the Convention, including the outcomes of the thematic discussions that took place in the Working Group, based on the workplan adopted by the Group at its sixth meeting, on the preparation for the review of chapter V of the Convention, examples of technical assistance delivered, and background on relevant knowledge products and initiatives. In order to assist the Conference in its deliberations and its determination of further course of action on asset recovery, the paper concludes with recommendations for possible action by the Conference.

II. Thematic discussions

5. Based on the workplan adopted at its sixth meeting, the Working Group has held three thematic discussions, one in 2012 and two in 2013. The first thematic discussion was on the sharing of experience and good practices in the field of confiscation, the second was on cooperation in freezing, the provision of information without prior request and the role of financial intelligence units, and the third was devoted to cooperation in freezing and seizure.

A. Thematic discussion on cooperation in confiscation: article 54 (Mechanisms for recovery of property through international cooperation in confiscation) and article 55 (International cooperation for purposes of confiscation)

6. At the sixth meeting of the Working Group, the Group held its first thematic discussion on cooperation in confiscation, in relation to article 54 (Mechanisms for

¹ CAC/COSP/2008/4.

² CAC/COSP/WG.2/2008/3.

³ CAC/COSP/WG.2/2009/3.

⁴ CAC/COSP/WG.2/2010/4.

⁵ CAC/COSP/WG.2/2011/5.

⁶ CAC/COSP/WG.2/2012/4.

⁷ CAC/COSP/WG.2/2013/4.

⁸ CAC/COSP/WG.2/2012/3 and CAC/COSP/WG.2/2013/3.

⁹ CAC/COSP/WG.2/2012/4 and CAC/COSP/WG.2/2013/4.

recovery of property through international cooperation in confiscation) and article 55 (International cooperation for purposes of confiscation).

7. Panellists from Brazil, France, Indonesia and the United States of America presented the legal framework of their respective countries with regard to the provisions of the Convention relevant to confiscation, and related experiences and challenges encountered.¹⁰ It was highlighted that requested countries depended to a great extent on the information provided by requesting countries, thereby underlining the need for efficient asset tracing and swift information exchange. Dual criminality was considered a challenge, in particular with regard to the offences of false financial disclosure statements, malfeasance and illicit enrichment.

8. It was highlighted that differences in legal systems continued to present challenges. Based on experiences of various agencies being involved in the asset recovery process, the value of inter-agency coordination was stressed. The establishment of multidisciplinary teams and asset recovery task forces, both in requesting and requested countries, were regarded as effective. It was noted that most corruption offences had a fairly short limitation period under the statute of limitations, but that a possibility for overcoming that problem was to calculate the starting point of the limitation period as the day when public action on the offence could reasonably begin, that is, when elements of the offence had been discovered. Further, the importance of civil proceedings for asset recovery and a strategic approach towards different avenues for asset recovery were highlighted.

B. Thematic discussions on article 56 (Special cooperation), article 58 (Financial intelligence unit) and other relevant articles of the Convention

9. At the seventh meeting of the Working Group, a thematic discussion on article 56 (Special cooperation), article 58 (Financial intelligence unit) and other relevant articles of the Convention was held.

10. Representatives from Liechtenstein, Kyrgyzstan and the Egmont Group presented their experiences of special cooperation and the role of financial intelligence units. They presented positive experiences of spontaneous transmission of information in accordance with article 56 of the Convention at the financial intelligence unit level. The participation of financial intelligence units in networks such as the Egmont Group was reported to considerably facilitate information exchange. The importance of cooperation and synergies between financial intelligence units and anti-corruption agencies, direct contact between financial intelligence units, in line with articles 58 and 59 of the Convention, and effective coordination between financial intelligence units as a source of information and between financial intelligence units and law enforcement bodies (art. 38) were highlighted. It was also considered important that financial intelligence units were granted the power to obtain information, to suspend transactions and to freeze bank accounts. Open lines of communication throughout the process were seen as

¹⁰ A comprehensive summary of the discussion can be found in the report on the meeting of the Working Group (CAC/COSP/WG.2/2012/4).

essential. The challenges that some financial intelligence units faced in international cooperation were noted, including bank secrecy and the use of offshore companies.

C. Thematic discussion on cooperation in freezing and seizure: article 54 (Mechanisms for recovery of property through international cooperation in confiscation), article 55 (International cooperation for purposes of confiscation) and other relevant articles of the Convention

11. At the seventh meeting of the Working Group, a second thematic discussion was held, on cooperation in freezing and seizure in relation to article 54 (Mechanisms for recovery of property through international cooperation in confiscation), article 55 (International cooperation for purposes of confiscation) and other relevant articles of the Convention.

12. Representatives of Lebanon, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland presented their experiences, good practices and challenges encountered. Freezing regimes should be flexible, simple and of long duration. Positive experience was reported with systems that allowed for the direct enforcement of foreign freezing orders. Regular dialogue between the officials of the two States using all means of communication and, if possible, personal meetings was important for the success of mutual legal assistance requests. The sharing of information before the mutual legal assistance stage was considered instrumental for successful asset recovery procedures. Also, task forces for inter-agency coordination had proved to be helpful for efficient freezing.

13. Challenges encountered with regard to requests for freezing were reported, such as problems in finding up-to-date information on legislation and requirements for mutual legal assistance, challenges with the swift localization of real estate through registries, delays due to a long duration of judicial proceedings prior to a firm and enforceable sentence, and problems with statutes of limitations. The development of good practice procedures for mutual legal assistance was seen as desirable. That could create harmonized standards for the implementation of article 46 and chapter V of the Convention, in particular at the initial investigation stages of the procedure.

14. The important role played and the useful work done by asset recovery networks was noted. Direct and early contacts between central authorities for mutual legal assistance, as well as through networks such as the Global Focal Point Initiative (established by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative), the Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network, the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network of Southern Africa and the Asset Recovery Network (RRAG) of the South American Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (GAFISUD), were instrumental. Apart from their role in establishing trust, providing a platform for operational information exchange and the creation of a peer-learning environment between the various agencies, some of these networks also had an important role in capacity-building.

15. The thematic discussions proved to constitute a forum for information exchange and substantive practical discussions on good practices and challenges in implementing the asset recovery chapter of the Convention. By allowing the most prevalent challenges in the field to be identified, they have facilitated the work of the Secretariat in the preparation of the revised checklist for chapter V, whose implementation is to be reviewed during the second cycle of the implementation review process, starting in 2015.

III. New ways of providing capacity-building and technical assistance

16. The StAR Initiative was launched by the World Bank and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2007 to support international efforts to deny safe havens for corrupt funds and to facilitate more systematic and timely return of stolen assets. The StAR Initiative has gradually shifted the focus of its work from the development of cumulative knowledge towards country-specific capacity-building. The Initiative has worked on country-specific capacity-building with over 20 countries, at their request. The demand has increased rapidly, with 11 new requests for assistance received by the Initiative in 2012 alone. Under the Initiative, tailor-made activities are designed and delivered, through both basic and advanced capacity-building on technical aspects of asset recovery and case-related training seminars. Further, the Initiative has strived to develop more hands-on assistance to respond to specific country requests, such as the facilitation of case coordination meetings, the placement of asset recovery advisors and the support of inter-agency groups. Links are currently being explored between regional capacity-building and national case assistance.

17. The StAR Initiative has facilitated more than 130 case coordination meetings between countries pursuing the recovery of stolen assets and countries where such assets are suspected to be located, mostly financial centres. For example, meetings were facilitated between Egyptian officials and their counterparts in the United Kingdom, in the wider context of the Arab Forum on Asset Recovery (see section V below), which resulted in an agreement between the two countries on practical measures to address asset recovery. The Initiative also played a similar role in establishing relations between Egypt and Jersey and arranging bilateral contacts between Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. This case-specific coordination complemented more traditional capacity-building assistance. A training programme was organized by the UNODC Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa in cooperation with the European Union and the International Centre for Asset Recovery, and two training workshops were organized by the Initiative on the challenges associated with obtaining beneficial ownership information from foreign jurisdictions and international financial centres. The facilitation of case coordination meetings has been carried out in a number of countries across all regions. Being one of the most effective methods for supporting progress in asset recovery cases, case coordination meetings are particularly useful in cases in which investigations are advancing but have not reached the point at which a formal mutual assistance request is expected to be successful.

18. The StAR Initiative has also placed short- and medium-term asset recovery advisers in country institutions. For example, the authorities in Senegal requested

preparatory assistance on cases handled by the relevant Senegalese courts. Case-specific capacity-building had already been provided by the StAR Initiative, including assistance in the development of a case strategy, delivery of a training workshop for judges and investigators and the facilitation of contacts in foreign jurisdictions. Building on that, and following a specific request, an adviser was placed in the Ministry of Justice in Dakar in July 2013 with a mandate to, inter alia, provide asset recovery practitioners with the strategic advice, technical skills and tools that would enable the host country to pursue financial investigations more effectively, engage in informal international cooperation and draft mutual legal assistance requests. An adviser has also been placed in Tunisia. The placement of an adviser is an opportunity to provide continued, hands-on assistance at all stages of asset recovery cases. Compared with traditional capacity-building assistance, the placement of an adviser is more resource intensive, but provides more continuity and immediate availability of capacity-building assistance during asset recovery case work. It can therefore not only contribute to successful asset recovery cases but also facilitate a better understanding of the challenges in the host country and enhance sustainability in the medium term.

19. Support for inter-agency teams is not a new aspect of the work of the StAR Initiative, but it has recently found strong support in the Asset Recovery Action Plan of the Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition. An example is the support for an inter-agency team in Tunisia. In February 2011, the StAR Initiative assisted in the establishment of a national committee for the recovery of stolen assets in foreign jurisdictions. Several training workshops for the committee were held between February 2011 and August 2012. Since then, the Initiative has worked with the Tunisian authorities to design a comprehensive strategy combining domestic criminal prosecution, mutual legal assistance, civil actions, and criminal proceedings initiated in foreign jurisdictions. The Initiative has also promoted and facilitated bilateral and multilateral contacts with foreign counterparts (including the Egmont Group, Eurojust and INTERPOL), and, on several occasions, has brought together representatives from the Asset Recovery Committee and Tunisian police agencies, investigative judges and prosecutors with key international counterparts engaged in recovery efforts regarding Tunisian assets in key target jurisdictions. Such inter-agency work, together with the facilitation of foreign contacts, was instrumental to the successful conclusion of several cases. Furthermore, the return to Tunisia of \$28.8 million from Lebanon in April 2013 was made possible through a concerted effort by the two Governments and the UNODC Regional Special Advocate for Stolen Asset Recovery.

20. Another possible way of providing technical assistance delivery is facilitating the exchange of officials from requesting jurisdictions with authorities of financial centres. The investigating official could become familiar with the mutual legal assistance requirements and the investigative opportunities in the requested country. After return to the country of origin, the official would be in a position to use his or her acquired knowledge for advancing pending asset recovery cases or initiating new ones, and to act as a trainer within national institutions.

21. The link between regional and national capacity-building has recently received more attention. A positive example is a regional training-of-trainers programme organized by the StAR Initiative in partnership with the East African Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities. As a direct result, the programme led to the first ever

freezing of assets pending a corruption case in one of the participating countries. In response to an ensuing country request, assistance was provided by the StAR Initiative in that case, which involved assets worth \$62 million. The regional training of trainers continues to have an impact through the contributions of the trained resource persons to other training engagements in the region.

IV. Development of knowledge products

22. The basic tool for collecting information on measures taken to implement the Convention is the comprehensive self-assessment checklist. Legal data submitted through the checklist and validated by States parties, including judicial decisions rendered in asset recovery cases, will also be included in the UNODC legal library. The self-assessment checklist on chapter V is currently being updated on the basis of comments received from States parties. A draft will be made available to the Conference at its fifth session.

23. Currently, the legal library contains legislation, jurisprudence, anti-corruption strategies and institutional data from 178 States. Developed and administered by UNODC and supported by the StAR Initiative and partner organizations, the legal library allows for the collection and dissemination of indexed and searchable legal information according to each provision of the Convention, and thus can provide a detailed analytical breakdown of how States have implemented the Convention, including with regard to its provisions on asset recovery.

24. The legal library is part of a broader project known as Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge (TRACK), which was launched in September 2011.¹¹ TRACK is a web-based portal and collaborative forum for anti-corruption and asset recovery practitioners and partner institutions that allows for the collection and dissemination of knowledge on anti-corruption and asset recovery, including case studies, good practices and policy analyses. TRACK includes a special section on asset recovery that links directly to the legislation of 178 countries that is relevant to chapter V of the Convention.¹²

25. In addition to the legal library and TRACK, the following databases and tools have been developed by UNODC and the StAR Initiative:

(a) Asset Recovery Watch is a database developed as part of the StAR Initiative.¹³ It contains information about completed and active asset recovery efforts around the world and aims to help further active recovery cases and to foster policy and legal reforms in the area of international asset recovery. Users can search for specific cases, countries and individuals. Therefore, it can be used for quantification and allows for learning about case strategies. The information contained in Asset Recovery Watch is updated on a periodic basis;

(b) Based on cases from the Asset Recovery Watch database and on case-related information provided by States parties and signatories to the Convention, UNODC has continued its work on developing a digest of asset recovery cases,

¹¹ TRACK is available at www.track.unodc.org.

¹² See www.track.unodc.org/LegalLibrary/Pages/home.aspx?chapter=5.

¹³ See <http://star.worldbank.org/corruption-cases/arwcases>.

which contains a compilation and analysis of cases related to the recovery of proceeds of corruption;

(c) The Puppet Masters Database of the StAR Initiative is a compilation of large-scale corruption cases involving the misuse of legal structures to conceal the origin and ownership of stolen assets. It was launched in October 2011.¹⁴

26. UNODC has finalized the revised Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool,¹⁵ incorporating asset recovery features, and is currently testing its functionality. The expanded version of the Tool offers new features relevant for the asset recovery process. UNODC is also considering further improving the tool by placing it on a more modern technological platform.

27. In addition to the information available through TRACK, a number of policy studies addressing knowledge gaps in specific areas of asset recovery have been produced through the StAR Initiative, including the following: *On the Take: Criminalizing Illicit Enrichment to Fight Corruption*;¹⁶ *Politically Exposed Persons: Preventive Measures for the Banking Sector*;¹⁷ *Public Office, Private Interests: Accountability through Income and Asset Disclosure*;¹⁸ *The Puppet Masters: How the Corrupt Use Legal Structures to Hide Stolen Assets and What to Do About It*.¹⁹

28. A study on settlements in cases of transnational bribery and asset recovery is being finalized and it is intended that it will be launched at the fifth session of the Conference of the States Parties. Furthermore, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is working with the StAR Initiative to update a 2011 study on tracking anti-corruption and asset recovery commitments;²⁰ and UNODC is assessing the feasibility of models or best practice guides for asset recovery, either as a single document or as model provisions focusing on specific articles.

29. Finally, mention should be made of the country-specific asset recovery guides that have been developed by the Group of Eight (G-8) and the Group of Twenty (G-20), which were described as being very useful by several speakers in the Working Group. On the basis of the discussion in the Working Group, it was noted that more States parties may wish to prepare similar guides and make them available publicly, including through the legal library.

¹⁴ See <http://star.worldbank.org/corruption-cases/assetrecovery>.

¹⁵ See www.unodc.org/mla.

¹⁶ Available from <http://star.worldbank.org/star/publication/take-criminalizing-illicit-enrichment-fight-corruption>.

¹⁷ Available from <http://star.worldbank.org/star/publication/politically-exposed-persons>.

¹⁸ Available from <http://star.worldbank.org/star/publication/public-office-private-interests>.

¹⁹ Available from <http://star.worldbank.org/star/publication/puppet-masters>.

²⁰ The 2011 report (*Tracking Anti-Corruption and Asset Recovery Commitments: A Progress Report and Recommendations for Action*) is available from <http://star.worldbank.org/star/publication/tracking-anti-corruption-and-asset-recovery-commitments>.

V. Innovative partnerships: Arab Forum on Asset Recovery

30. The Arab Forum on Asset Recovery is a platform bringing together the G-8 countries, the Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition and countries in the Arab World.

31. The Deauville Partnership adopted an Asset Recovery Action Plan at Camp David, United States, on 21 May 2012, in which G-8 and Arab transition countries committed to a number of actions. The commitments undertaken by each G-8 country included the publication of a guide on specific steps required for assistance and cooperation in matters related to, inter alia, asset tracing, whether through mutual legal assistance or other forms of cooperation; the designation or appointment of the offices or persons responsible for mutual legal assistance and other forms of cooperation; the adoption of measures for the enforcement of foreign confiscation orders; and the provision of funding and/or in-kind expertise for specialized training in Arab transition countries. The commitments undertaken by Arab transition countries included legal and institutional reforms; pursuing membership of the Egmont Group and other international forums; adoption and enforcement of rules on customer due diligence, beneficial ownership, asset declarations, conflict of interest and politically exposed persons; and the creation of asset recovery task forces that comprise dedicated, experienced law enforcement officials and have access to all relevant financial documents. Both sides agreed to establish the Arab Forum on Asset Recovery.

32. The first Arab Forum on Asset Recovery was held in Doha from 11 to 13 September 2012 and was co-organized by Qatar and the United States presidency of the G-8 and supported by the StAR Initiative. The Governments of 26 countries attended the inaugural meeting.²¹ The workplan developed as a follow-up to the forum included three special sessions on technical challenges.

33. Special session I, held in Qatar from 2 to 4 April 2013, addressed domestic coordination of asset recovery efforts and the asset recovery guides produced by the G-8 countries and Switzerland. Its objectives were to share good practices and lessons learned for domestic coordination; develop skills in formulating an investigative plan for an asset recovery case and an overarching strategy for all investigations; share knowledge with asset recovery practitioners on the effective use of the asset recovery guides produced by the G-8 countries and Switzerland; develop skills to plan and draft a formal mutual legal assistance request; and provide a platform for side meetings between the countries seeking asset recovery and the various G-8, partner and regional countries.

34. Special session II, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, from 11 to 13 June 2013, addressed financial investigations. Its objectives were to share good practices in conducting financial investigations, including participation in practitioners networks (such as the Global Focal Point Initiative established by INTERPOL and the StAR Initiative); increase awareness of results-oriented strategies to plan and lead financial investigations involving multiple targets, assets and jurisdictions; develop

²¹ Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States and Yemen. The European Union also participated.

skills to identify and utilize a number of approaches to conducting financial analysis and investigations; gain familiarity with various tools and techniques for successful financial investigations; and provide a platform for side meetings.

35. Special session III, held in London on 3 and 4 September 2013, focused on the role of civil society in asset recovery. Its objectives were to discuss progress and barriers regarding asset recovery; highlight the diverse roles played by civil society organizations in asset recovery; and provide a platform for dialogue and sharing of knowledge between civil society organizations, Governments and international organizations in order to explore opportunities for enhanced collaboration. The special session provided an opportunity to discuss a draft civil society organizations guide to asset recovery, drawing on the publication of *Non-State Actors in Asset Recovery* in 2011 by the International Centre for Asset Recovery of the Basel Institute on Governance. It is intended that the guide will be presented at the fifth session of the Conference of the States Parties.

36. The second Arab Forum on Asset Recovery is scheduled to be held in Morocco from 28 to 30 October 2013.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

37. Seven years after the Conference of the States Parties established asset recovery as one of its priority areas, work on the issue, as mandated by the Conference and the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery, has made considerable progress. The development and availability of cumulative knowledge has been improved through a number of databases, manuals, best practice guides and policy studies. Enhancing trust and confidence between requesting and requested States will remain an ongoing topic; and various networks have been established and are being used, although many challenges remain. The development of specialized capacity for asset recovery has received much attention and will continue to require a major effort in terms of creativity and resources from all sides.

38. On the other hand, progress cannot be measured without taking into account actual returns. For the first time, there are sufficient data for careful yet informed estimates on the number of initiated asset recovery cases and the amount of frozen, confiscated and returned assets or assets recovered through other avenues. These figures allow for more informed discussion on whether the activities undertaken have resulted in progress in actual returns. Further, the experience of countries actively pursuing asset recovery, including the Arab countries in transition, creates a wealth of information on asset recovery practice and provides invaluable insights into challenges and opportunities. Moreover, at the global level, the forthcoming second edition of the study on tracking anti-corruption and asset recovery commitments will provide an opportunity to record progress in the effective implementation of the Convention.

39. Compared with the situation seven years ago, work on asset recovery has reached a new level. The Conference may wish to consider the progress achieved and provide guidance on ways to enhance asset recovery and address persisting challenges. In that context, the Conference may wish to take into consideration the following aspects:

(a) Taking into account the available knowledge products developed by the StAR Initiative, the Conference may wish to identify continuing knowledge gaps and areas in which further knowledge products should be developed;

(b) The Conference may wish to call upon States parties to provide regular updates on their legislation and asset recovery cases and to expand, where appropriate, the information contained in the relevant databases of knowledge on asset recovery (e.g. TRACK and Asset Recovery Watch);

(c) Noting the country-specific guides developed in the context of the G-8 and G-20, the Conference may wish to encourage States parties to develop similar guides on asset tracing and mutual legal assistance in their jurisdictions and make them publicly available, including through the legal library and the Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool;

(d) The Conference may wish to take into consideration whether the establishment of a forum for information exchange and sharing of experience among central authorities for mutual legal assistance could further contribute to direct communication, trust and confidence between requesting and requested countries;

(e) Taking into account the recommendation made by the Working Group at its meeting held on 29 and 30 August 2013 that States parties consider adopting a curriculum approach to technical assistance programmes, the Conference may wish to make recommendations on such a curriculum. It may also wish to give guidance on further technical assistance activities, such as the facilitation of case coordination meetings, the placement of advisers, support for inter-agency groups, and the exchange of personnel and regional approaches to capacity-building;

(f) The Conference may wish to note the lessons learned from the Arab Forum on Asset Recovery and to consider to what extent they could be applied to other regions, especially with a view to enhancing trust and confidence between requested and requesting countries;

(g) The Conference may wish to recommend the collection and systematization of good practices and tools in cooperation for asset recovery, including the use and expansion of secure information-sharing tools with a view to enhancing early and spontaneous information exchange;

(h) The Conference may wish to recommend that a framework for good practice procedures (such as a step-by-step guide) for asset recovery be developed, with a view to enhancing internationally coherent approaches to asset recovery cases and based on the lessons learned from past cases;

(i) The Conference may also wish to encourage countries to engage actively in the preparation of the review of chapter V of the Convention against Corruption in the second cycle of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the Convention against Corruption, and to request the Working Group to make recommendations in that regard.