

**CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS
CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION, SIXTH SESSION
St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 2-6 November 2015**

SPECIAL EVENT

UNCAC and Civil Society Participation in Anti-Corruption Efforts

**4 November 2015, 3.30 p.m.- 5 p.m.
Conference Room C, Pavilion 7**

I. INTRODUCTION

The panel aims to contribute to an understanding of the role of civil society in anti-corruption efforts at national level and in international forums, assess the extent of progress in recognising and facilitating that role; and make recommendations for how to advance in this area.

Civil society plays a multifaceted role in countering corruption, including in prevention and enforcement efforts. This role includes cooperation with governments on anti-corruption initiatives, proposing reforms, monitoring implementation of laws and policies, providing advice to whistleblowers, initiating remedial action and raising public awareness.

UNCAC Article 13 explicitly calls for civil society participation in anti-corruption efforts: "Each State Party shall take appropriate measures to promote the active participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector, such as civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, in the prevention of and the fight against corruption and to raise public awareness regarding the existence, causes and gravity of and the threat posed by corruption" (UNCAC Article 13).

There are a great number of good practice examples of civil society participation and an enabling environment for such participation. However, there are also reasons for concern. Practice is very varied across countries and across sectors or subjects. In some cases the very existence of anti-corruption NGOs' is called into question.

There are also good practices and challenges with respect to UNCAC processes and bodies. In the review process the majority of countries have welcomed civil society participation while others have proven reluctant. In global meetings such as COSP subsidiary bodies, the countries with reservations about participation have raised concerns about fulfilling the UNCAC commitment in UNCAC Article 13.

II. PANELLISTS

Moderator:

Miklos Marschall, Deputy Managing Director, Transparency International Secretariat

Speakers:

Cathal Gilbert, Civic Space Monitor Manager, CIVICUS

Elena Panfilova, Vice-Chair, Transparency International,

Martina Schmidt, Senior Anti-Corruption Officer, OSCE Tajikistan,

Anga Timilsina, Programme Manager, UNDP Global Anti-Corruption Initiative

III. FORMAT AND AGENDA

Each panellist will deliver a 5 minutes presentation/speech. These are followed by a moderated discussion in which the audience is also invited to take part. The discussed issues will include:

- 1) Shrinking civil society space and specific risks that anti-corruption CSOs and activists face
- 2) Good practice and challenges of government - CSO cooperation in the anti-corruption field and other CSO contributions
- 3) Trust and distrust between government and CSOs (national level participation)
- 4) Civil society in the Implementation Review Mechanism and CoSP subsidiary bodies
- 5) Civil society participation in other international anti-corruption frameworks

IV. PUBLICATIONS

- Transparency International: Civil Society Participation, Public Accountability and the UN Convention against Corruption 2015
- CIVICUS: State of Civil Society Report 2015
- CIVICUS: Civil Society Watch Report 2015

Co-organisers of the special event: Kingdom of the Netherlands, Kingdom of Norway, Peru