



**Conference of the States Parties
to the United Nations
Convention against Corruption**

Distr.: General
29 October 2015

English only

Sixth session

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 2-6 November 2015

**Statement submitted by the UNCAC Coalition,
a non-governmental organization not in consultative
status with the Economic and Social Council***

The following document is being circulated in accordance with paragraph 1 (i) of resolution 4/6 of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and rule 17, paragraph 3 (b), of the rules of procedure for the Conference.

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Addressing Corruption in an Era of Climate Change

UNCAC Coalition submission to the 6th UNCAC Conference of States Parties

In advance of the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris, France, government leaders will conclude a new international agreement on the climate. To achieve that agreement, important commitments will be needed regarding mitigation and adaptation goals, climate finance, capacity building and technology transfer as well as transparency, accountability and compliance mechanisms. In order to realize these goals, it is vital that the international community recognize the increased risk of corruption in an era of climate change and take steps to prevent it.

Corruption pitfalls in an era of climate include, but are not limited to, (1) increased loss of life and property damage in extreme weather, whether buildings and highways are constructed contrary to building codes and zoning requirements pursuant to bribes being passed to local building officials; (2) fraud in carbon emissions permit trading, which goes undetected in the absence of meaningful reporting and accountability standards for climate finance; and (3) corruption in relation to natural resource management, which can affect food security, endangered species and biodiversity, and deforestation.

Finally, in an era of climate change, with the international community on the cusp of a global commitment to limit global temperature increase, significant public monies will be put towards limiting greenhouse gases and carbon emissions. When economies are drained by bribery and embezzlement, our ability to safely and effectively address climate change is severely comprised.
