

CDA Nan Fife's Participation in Saudi Side Event
Experiences of States Parties in Making Use of Best Practices Suggested under
the COSP and its Subsidiary Bodies
Tuesday, November 7, 13:30-15:00, Room M6

Good afternoon. First I would like to thank the delegation of Saudi Arabia for hosting this important panel discussion. I am grateful to have been invited to take part and I look forward to the discussion to follow.

Combatting corruption and promoting transparency is a global imperative, which means every country, including the United States, must take it seriously. We are not exempt from corruption, nor do we have a perfect record. But throughout history and in the present day, our institutions and citizens respond to corruption by confronting it and promoting integrity.

The UNCAC and its reviews are invaluable tools for all of us to better tackle corruption both domestically and internationally. Having a set of international standards and best practices at our fingertips is something we should all take full advantage of. Today I will discuss how the United States is endeavoring to do just that.

I'll start with what the United States is doing domestically. We have at least 30 separate offices within the U.S. government that administer programs subject to UNCAC provisions, including the Departments of State, Justice, and Treasury, the Office of Government Ethics, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of the Special Counsel, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy, and the Judicial Branch, just to name a few. As you can imagine, this alone presents its own set of coordination challenges.

To address this, we engage Convention implementers across this wide variety of U.S. agencies in routine and ongoing discussions, as well as make them aware of the wide variety of UNCAC resources at their disposal through the UNODC website.

More specifically, we work to ensure that the U.S. Office of Government Ethics is fully aware of all of the Convention's provisions on codes of conduct, financial disclosure and training, and education of public officials within the executive branch.

We work with the appropriate offices within the Departments of Justice and Treasury to make them fully aware of UNCAC requirements on such topics as the criminalization of specific conduct, asset recovery, and money laundering.

We also share drafts of questionnaires and checklists being developed by UNODC with this wide variety of U.S. government officials, not only to keep them informed about the process, but also to solicit their views on whether the questionnaires would elicit the information necessary to help determine adherence.

During our own review, experts from across the U.S. government contributed to efforts to complete questionnaires and checklists. We invited agency experts to join meetings with evaluators to learn about different viewpoints and experiences related to the questionnaires and to incorporate best practices into their domestic programs.

We also made it a priority to include representatives of civil society and the business community in our review.

We shared draft and final results of the U.S. first cycle review report with relevant domestic agencies. We then followed up with the appropriate agencies whose programs were subject to observations and recommendations.

We then made our full review report and our answers to the checklist fully accessible to the public by publishing them on both the UNCAC website and the U.S. Department of State website. This is very important for addressing our shortcomings.

And we hope that by being transparent and open with our review process and results, we can encourage other countries to be similarly transparent with their own reviews.

In addition, the United States seeks to engage all of the subject matter experts in all of our relevant agencies in reviewing and responding to the proposed agendas and requests for information from the Secretariat before each Implementation Review Group or Working Group meeting.

I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage all Member states to respond to those requests. That way we can all benefit from the Secretariat's analyses of those responses and can become aware of good practices in specific subject areas from around the world.

We also share the analyses of the Secretariat presented at the Working Group meetings, as well as the materials presented by panelists with the appropriate U.S. government officials. Sharing these analyses helps encourage agencies to fully provide responses to notes verbale when they see that they can learn from and adopt others' good practices.

Conversely, if a specific country delegation visits a U.S. agency to learn about U.S. anti-corruption practices, we try to ensure that the agency can access that country's evaluation report so their exchange of information is as relevant as possible.

In a similar vein, we found serving as a reviewer of another State Party very helpful. It allowed us to identify good practices to adopt in U.S. domestic programs and helped us build an appreciation for the existence of an international community of practitioners in their respective subject areas.

I would now like to turn to what the United States is doing with regard to using the UNCAC in our foreign policy efforts.

First, the United States actively supports and encourages fellow members of other international groups such as APEC, the OAS, and the G20 to sign and ratify the Convention, meet their obligations under the Convention and the review mechanism, and publish their full evaluation reports.

In addition, we use the evaluation reports of the UNCAC review mechanism to help inform international technical assistance programs in areas covered by the Convention.

In fact, in Fiscal Year 2016 the US Agency for International Development and the State Department spent approximately \$125 million on anti-corruption technical assistance programs. This includes direct support to the review mechanism, to which we have recently pledged an additional \$500,000 over the next two years.

We also support a broad range of programs that help countries prevent corruption before it starts and build capacity for criminal justice and anticorruption authorities to investigate and prosecute complex corruption cases.

U.S. foreign assistance programs have also helped build electronic databases to increase transparency in public procurement and keep track of court cases.

Mentors from U.S. government agencies and other relevant international organizations, including the UNODC, have helped draft and implement legislative reforms, ethics programs, and codes of conduct to strengthen implementation of the UNCAC.

To help facilitate the continuation of this important work, I encourage your delegations to support the adoption of the U.S. sponsored Resolution on Technical Assistance to Support Effective Implementation of the UNCAC. This resolution attempts to build on the lessons learned from the COSP and the review mechanism, and better links our work in Vienna to the delivery and improvement of technical assistance programs in the field.

As a final thought, the United States is pleased to continue our strong international cooperation, consistent with UNCAC Chapter 4, to resolve complex corruption cases. We remain actively engaged in the international cooperation working group, which is meeting on the margins of this COSP.

Evidence obtained through UNCAC cooperation and other sources was critical to the resolution of several high-profile corruption cases, such as the VimpelCom case which involved over \$550 million in bribery payments. We have used the treaty to prosecute more than 170 corruption cases in more than 38 countries.

Further evidence that the UNCAC and its reviews are as important now as ever.

Thank you.