



Permanent Mission of Italy
International Organisations - Vienna

**CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE
UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST
CORRUPTION**

General Discussion (item 1.F)

**Statement by
Ambassador Alessandro Cortese**

Abu Dhabi, 16-20 December 2019

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you Mr. President,

Allow me to congratulate you on your election and thank the Government of the United Arab Emirates for the hospitality and for the impeccable organization of the Conference in these beautiful premises as well as UNODC for the preparatory work.

Mister President, Distinguished Delegates, Italy fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, but let me add a few remarks in my national capacity.

As already stated here by previous speakers, corruption undermines sustainable development, distorts competition and fuels injustice. Above all, it erodes trust in public institutions.

Combatting corruption is therefore a **moral imperative** if we are to **preserve the rule of law and the legitimacy of democratic States**.

Italy is fully committed to this and believes in the essential role played by **international cooperation**. My Country is particularly active in all fora related to corruption, including the United Nations, the Group of Countries against Corruption of the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and, last but not least, the **G20**, of which I wish to stress that we will **co-chair the Anti-Corruption Working Group in 2020**.

Italy's holistic approach **to preventing and combatting this form of crime is fully in line with the United Nations Convention against Corruption**. In particular, my Country has significantly **benefitted from the participation in its review mechanism**, which has served as a powerful incentive for large scale anti-corruption reforms at the domestic level.

In 2019, **Italy's second review**, focused on prevention and asset recovery, has been completed and the country report is now publicly available. While thanking the Governments of Sierra Leone and the United States, as well as UNODC, for their excellent and professional work, I wish to express Italy's satisfaction with the results of the review, which confirm the advanced and effective anti-corruption architecture in place, as well as a strong partnership with the private sector and civil society to promote integrity and transparency.

When it comes to **prevention**, the Italian National Anticorruption Authority (ANAC), which is part of my delegation and is attending this Conference with two side events, is of central importance. As an independent administrative body, the Authority has greatly contributed to foster a culture of prevention in the public administration. ANAC has proven its capacity to exercise effective oversight of public procurement procedures, it has adopted comprehensive Guidelines on conflicts of interest in the public sector, and has in fact become one of the main channels of reports from **whistleblowers**, whose protection has been significantly enhanced in 2017.

The obligation which lies upon each public administration, and on each State-owned enterprise, to designate a corruption prevention officer and to develop a three-year plan for the prevention of corruption in accordance with the national plan developed by ANAC, has been identified in the second review cycle among the Italian successes. Corruption prevention in the public and private sector is the focus of a side event co-sponsored by Italy.

Another feature of Italy's fight against corruption is the strong commitment to addressing the **links between corruption, organized crime and money laundering** through a very advanced framework of investigative and procedural measures and an independent judiciary. Such measures are often drawn from the experience in the fight against organized crime and are then adapted to countering corruption. In response to a recommendation from the first review cycle of UNCAC, our law number 3 of January 2019 has amended the Italian Code of Criminal Procedure to allow the use of both **undercover agents** and the **most advanced investigation tools**, such as online surveillance, not only for mafia and terrorism but also for corruption offences.

Finally, asset recovery. This is another area where the common approach to organized crime and corruption is applied. The Italian system of asset recovery relies on a wide range of options for the confiscation of proceeds of crime and corruption, which have proven effective in countering the economic dimension of the most serious crimes. **Italy's capacity to provide international cooperation in asset recovery in both conviction and non-conviction-based proceedings, including for the return of assets**, has also been acknowledged as a **good practice** in the second review cycle.

Mr. President,

In concluding, I wish to stress that effective anti-corruption policies need to be based on evidence. To this end, Italy has tabled a **draft resolution** which aims at advancing the development of objective methodology for the measurement of corruption. I wish to make hereby an appeal to all States parties to support this initiative. Thank you.