

**THE 8TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATE PARTIES
TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION**

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**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE HEAD OF DELEGATION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

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Deputy Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan -
ACD Director,
Vice-President of the IAP**

**Mr President,
Distinguished delegates,**

It is my great pleasure and honour to attend this conference and deliver a statement on behalf of my country – the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Your Excellencies,

Corruption is a global issue that destroys the pillars of a stable society and hinders prosperity. It drives poverty. It undermines democratic values. It weakens the rule of law. And it threatens national security. This threat has a vast geographical spread: and it infects every country in every continent around the globe.

And so we must combine our efforts and cooperate effectively as a community to address the threat. To this end, the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) was a significant step forward for the international community towards our goal of establishing societies free of the scourge.

As a member of the extensive international community that is combatting corruption, the Republic of Azerbaijan, too, is implementing reforms to defeat this enemy of social prosperity.

This fight is a priority for Azerbaijani state policy and is founded on the strong political will of President Ilham Aliyev. The policy focuses on the establishment of a favourable business environment and enhancement of social prosperity and stability.

Present-day Azerbaijan has one of the fastest-growing economies and is among the world's top reformers according to the World Bank's report, Doing Business 2020.

This stems from our belief that an effective fight against corruption requires a systematic approach. We believe that corruption is an issue not only for national security, but also one for our economy and development.

Thus, Azerbaijan's anti-corruption strategy is not isolated on a separate agenda, but it is an integral part of the country's overall strategy for development.

Since signing up to UNCAC in 2004, Azerbaijan has undertaken major reforms to align its national legislation and institutional set-up in full conformity with the convention's requirements. This process has been guided by several National Action Plans to combat corruption, adopted and implemented between 2004 and 2019.

Azerbaijan has also put considerable effort into reforming a judicial system that is essential for the effectiveness of its anti-corruption campaign. We have focused on extending e-court proceedings. And in April this year, a new phase of reforms set to achieve the highest standards of independence and integrity was launched by Presidential Decree. Reforms in process envisage the establishment of mediation services and specialist commercial courts.

Azerbaijan applies a comprehensive approach to eliminating corruption, employing a combination of prevention and punitive measures.

Here, I should particularly stress the role of the "ASAN Service" model in the elimination of factors conducive to corruption. "ASAN" renders public services according to principles of efficiency, transparency, courtesy, responsibility and flexibility within a "one-stop shop" system, and is an effective weapon in our anti-corruption armoury. Today this service - which in 2015 won a UN Public Service Award – covers almost the entire country and returns customer satisfaction ratings close to 100%.

Mr President,

I reaffirm the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the goals and standards set down in UNCAC.

And we appreciate very much the peer review mechanism operated by the Implementation Review Group.

Please allow me to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the Secretariat and national experts from Latvia and Sudan for their commendable work within the Second Cycle review of the Republic of Azerbaijan. We are absolutely

determined to continue our collaboration in pursuit of the principal objectives of the review mechanism and firmly believe that, primarily, it will benefit the implementation of UNCAC at national level.

All the reforms conducted in Azerbaijan have been framed to ensure the adoption and implementation of international standards and best practice.

Fully aware that victory over corruption is impossible without efficient international cooperation, we are open to dialogue and the sharing of best practice with all appropriate stakeholders, at all levels.

And so Azerbaijan is an active participant in all initiatives to fight corruption, with a close focus on specialist international institutions, including GRECO, OECD, IACA, and International Association of Prosecutors – the only worldwide organization of prosecutors, which I represent here as a Vice-President, as well as the anti-corruption agencies of other states.

Our particular interest is in building the capacities of specialist anti-corruption agencies, including the Anti-Corruption Directorate, that I lead. Thus, I am happy to highlight our effective cooperation with the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), whose educational programmes contribute greatly to the level of professional training for local practitioners.

In conclusion, I underline once more the need to enhance synergies in tackling corruption and the importance of fast and flexible responses to the new challenges posed by this social scourge.

I wish you all fruitful discussions and deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.

