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**Statement submitted by the Global Organization of
Parliamentarians Against Corruption, a non-governmental
organization 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.

The present text is being circulated in English and in any other languages as received by the secretariat.



Written reports by NGOs, CoSP8: GOPAC statement

Presented by John Hyde, GOPAC Secretary.

GOPAC (the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption) welcomes the focus on asset recovery and international cooperation in the agenda of CoSP this year. GOPAC, which officially declared its support for the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) at the signing ceremony in Merida, Mexico in 2003, is delighted to welcome the nation of Samoa as the most recent (2018) Pacific signatory to UNCAC. GOPAC reiterates the importance of political will and the key role of parliamentarians in promoting integrity and enacting and implementing strong anti-corruption regimes nationally.

GOPAC welcomes Item 4 of the provisional agenda regarding Prevention, in its reference to Parliaments, which acknowledges in (71) that UNODC continued its cooperation with the Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC) to strengthen the role of parliamentarians in the fight against corruption. As well as the referenced May 2018 anti-corruption awareness workshop for the Tonga Legislative Assembly, undertaken by UNODC and UNDP, in partnership with GOPAC, GOPAC has worked with numerous Parliaments in the two years since CoSP 7. We note that in the Report on the meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption held in Vienna from 4 to 6 September 2019, the role of parliaments and GOPAC in prevention is also acknowledged. GOPAC also supports the Permanent Mission of Pakistan on the revised draft resolution entitled "Promoting good practices on the role of national parliaments in preventing and combating corruption in all its forms".

As an original partner organisation at the first CoSP, GOPAC reiterates the importance of CoSP and the UNCAC being a partnership. A hallmark of the success of UNCAC is its non-punitive and peer-driven approach for member states. GOPAC believes this has maintained genuine engagement by States parties with stakeholders such as parliamentarians and civil society. We welcome that UNODC informs national governments that their state delegations to the CoSP-UNCAC should include "policy makers." Accordingly, we have encouraged GOPAC members to work with their governments to ensure that parliamentarians are part of these official state delegations. We acknowledge the inclusion of a number of GOPAC members in state delegations at CoSP8.

GOPAC observed the International Day of Anti-Corruption on 9 December this year at the Qatar Parliament in Doha, as part of the GOPAC World Conference VII. Our theme for this biennial conference was "Integrity Matters". Over 200



parliamentarians attended this conference. This conference also saw the conclusion of the two-terms of our Chair, Hon Fadli Zon, the former Deputy Speaker of the Indonesian House of Representatives. GOPAC acknowledges his contribution to our organisation and also the professionalism of GOPAC's secretariat being co-located in the Parliament of Indonesia for four years.

Like many member organisations, as an independent NGO, GOPAC continually examines and refines its own governance – our success in engaging parliamentarians to accede to and then implement UNCAC has been very much peer driven. GOPAC is a region-based organisation and our membership at this CoSP includes the Speaker of the Kenyan Parliament and Chair of APNAC (the African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption) as well as both government and opposition parliamentarian from across the globe.

GOPAC's original primary focus was on fostering political will for member States to sign UNCAC. Now that we have 186 signatories our focus must shift more onto effective implementation of UNCAC. The benefit of our recently concluded world conference one week ago in Doha, and now participation in CoSP in Abu Dhabi, is that our membership can share best practices in UNCAC implementation and partnerships to achieve the same.

GOPAC notes that in this Eighth Session agenda item (3), Technical Assistance - Efforts to strengthen the implementation of the UNCAC in small island developing States, it is recorded that Fiji and Tuvalu specifically mentioned the role of parliament and their work with GOPAC. Several States noted the importance of leadership in setting and driving the anti-corruption agenda.

Small island developing States reported that, in general, the ratification of the Convention was positively perceived by Government, parliament and society at large. Samoa noted that the accession process itself was simple and that there had been strong political will in the country to accede to the Convention. National consultations, including pre-ratification workshops and the national assessment conducted in Samoa before accession, were deemed important.

Further, GOPAC concurs with the national country feedback that Pacific island countries reported on the support that they had received through the United Nations Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption (UN-PRAC) project in compiling information to complete their self-assessment checklists, workshops held in-country on the Mechanism and tailored support throughout the review process, to help them both as States under review and as reviewers. GOPAC believes that this model of UN support in the Pacific sub-region is worthy of replication in other SIDS and also other smaller landlocked / continental countries.

GOPAC has been fortunate to work with the UN Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption (UN-PRAC) project in Samoa. Samoa is one of the most recent signatories to UNCAC, in April 2018, and their accession builds on a number of



opportunities assisting in the development of political training and furthering the advocacy of one of our most active parliamentary groups, GOPAC Samoa. GOPAC also participated in late November in the Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Committees workshop in Auckland, New Zealand, hosted by UNDP and UN-PRAC. GOPAC acknowledges the support of a number of development partners around the world.

GOPAC calls for a meaningful commitment to adopting a whole-of-society approach to addressing corruption. Rather than just being seen as involved in the passage of eventual legislation, it is important that parliamentarians are valued for their inputs into the policy-setting processes and as advocates for greater community and stakeholder engagement. Parliament does have an important role in oversight and making governments accountable and this should also apply to the process whereby governments commit to policy change and development, not just the democratic passage of legislation.

In 2006, the GOPAC Global Conference in Arusha, Tanzania issued a resolution outlining a commitment to create the Global Task Force of the UNCAC (GTF-UNCAC) with the aim of enhancing the capacity of parliamentarians to localise the Convention by adapting international standards to national needs and to play an important oversight role in the monitoring and review of the national effort to implement the UNCAC.

A Forum of Parliamentarians has been hosted in conjunction with every Conference of States Parties to the UNCAC since. This Forum of Parliamentarians is one of GOPAC's flagship events.

This year's 8th Forum of Parliamentarians contains a major panel session on Parliament's Role in Enhancing Holistic Governance. We are pleased to receive collaboration from UNODC and UNDP through their Australian Aid (DFAT) funded UN-PRAC Project in the Forum which occurs on Wednesday 18 December 2017, 9 a.m.- 10 a.m. in Conference Room 6. We are delighted to have the President of Kiribati, HE Taneti Maamau, as a speaker in this session. The Parliament of Kiribati was one of the first Pacific parliaments to create a GOPAC chapter, and under the President's government, one of the first Pacific parliaments to establish a Parliamentary Committee on Anti-Corruption. That parliament committee has now evolved into a separate, independent Leadership Commission. We also welcome the strong contributions of our African regional chapter, with APNAC and GOPAC Kenya President, the Speaker Rt. Hon. Justin Muturi, also on our panel.

Parliamentary oversight is a key component of good practice UNCAC implementation. As open government develops and borders shrink, more players and partnerships are actively contributing to preventing and tackling more sophisticated corruption. This panel session explores innovative, holistic roles Parliaments have to take on.



The Forum aims to enhance the capacity of parliamentarians to localise the UNCAC by adapting international standards to national needs and to play an important oversight role in the monitoring and review of the national effort to implement the UNCAC.

GOPAC was founded in October 2002 as a result of a Global Conference in Ottawa, Canada which brought together over 170 Parliamentarians and 400 observers dedicated to fighting corruption and improving good governance. GOPAC is unique in that it is the only international network of Parliamentarians focused solely on combating corruption. Its members represent more than 50 countries in all regions of the world. GOPAC's vision is to "achieve accountability and transparency through effective anti-corruption mechanisms and inclusive participation and cooperation between Parliamentarians, government and civil society".

At GOPAC's biennial general assembly in Yogyakarta in 2015, parliamentarians prioritised our responsibilities as directly elected representatives of the peoples of the world to combat corruption in all its forms and actively work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 16 of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice for all, and effective, accountable institutions at all levels. As we draw closer to 2030 and the end of the SDGs, it is becoming more evident that without the access to justice, transparency and accountability enshrined in SDG 16, we will not be able to implement the other SDGs effectively.