



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

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Prevention

Progress on the activities of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. At its third session, held in Doha from 9 to 13 November 2009, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption adopted resolution 3/2, entitled “Preventive measures”. In that resolution, the Conference decided to establish an interim open-ended intergovernmental working group, in accordance with article 63, paragraph 7, of the Convention, and rule 2, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure of the Conference, to advise and assist the Conference in the implementation of its mandate on the prevention of corruption.
2. In the same resolution, the Conference also decided that the Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption should perform the following functions:
 - (a) Assist the Conference in developing and accumulating knowledge in the area of prevention of corruption;
 - (b) Facilitate the exchange of information and experience among States on preventive measures and practices;
 - (c) Facilitate the collection, dissemination and promotion of best practices in corruption prevention;
 - (d) Assist the Conference in encouraging cooperation among all stakeholders and sectors of society in order to prevent corruption.
3. The Conference further decided that the Working Group should meet during the sessions of the Conference and, as appropriate, hold at least two intersessional meetings within existing resources. That decision was made pursuant to article 63, paragraph 7, of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, and rule 2, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure of the Conference.
4. The Conference affirmed the decision in its resolution 4/3, entitled “Marrakech declaration on the prevention of corruption”, and resolution 5/4, entitled “Follow-up

* CAC/COSP/2021/1.



to the Marrakech declaration on the prevention of corruption”, in which it decided that the Working Group should continue its work to advise and assist the Conference in the implementation of its mandate on the prevention of corruption.

5. At its sixth session, held in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, from 2 to 6 November 2015, the Conference adopted resolution 6/1, entitled “Continuation of the review of implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption”. In that resolution, the Conference launched the second cycle of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which included the review of implementation of chapter II (Preventive measures) of the Convention. In that connection, the Conference requested the Secretariat to structure the provisional agendas of the Implementation Review Group and of other subsidiary bodies established by the Conference, such as the Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption, in such a way as to avoid the duplication of discussions, while respecting their mandates.

6. At its eighth session, held in Abu Dhabi from 16 to 20 December 2019, the Conference adopted resolution 8/8, entitled “Follow-up to the Marrakech declaration on the prevention of corruption”. In that resolution, the Conference welcomed the ongoing efforts of the Working Group to facilitate the sharing of information between States parties on their initiatives and good practices relating to the topics considered by the Working Group at its meetings held in Vienna from 5 to 7 September 2018 and from 4 to 6 September 2019. In addition, the Conference requested States parties to continue sharing information, and requested the Secretariat, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to continue its work as an international observatory, including by updating the thematic website of the Working Group with relevant information.

7. The present note has been prepared to inform the Conference at its ninth session of progress made in the implementation of the mandate of the Working Group. It is aimed at assisting the Conference in its deliberations and in providing guidance on the future work of the Working Group.

II. Overview of the discussions and recommendations of the Working Group at its eleventh and twelfth meetings

8. In its resolution 8/7, entitled “Enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption bodies in fighting corruption”, the Conference decided to include the issue of enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption bodies in the agenda of Working Group. In its resolution 8/13, entitled “Abu Dhabi declaration on enhancing collaboration between supreme audit institutions and anti-corruption bodies to more effectively prevent and fight corruption”, the Conference requested the Working Group to include, as a topic for discussion at its future meetings, strengthening the role of supreme audit institutions in the prevention of and fight against corruption. In its resolution 8/14, entitled “Promoting good practices in relation to the role of national parliaments and other legislative bodies in preventing and combating corruption in all its forms”, the Conference requested the Working Group to include the role of parliaments and other legislative bodies in strengthening the implementation of the Convention as a topic on the agenda for its twelfth meeting, and to invite the Inter-Parliamentary Union and similar organizations to participate in a thematic panel discussion on the topic.

9. The topic of enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption bodies was included in the agenda of the eleventh meeting of the Working Group. The topics of the role of supreme audit institutions in the prevention of and fight against corruption and the role of parliaments and other legislative bodies in strengthening the implementation of the Convention were included in the agenda of the twelfth meeting of the Working Group.

10. With regard to the development and accumulation of knowledge in the area of prevention of corruption, States parties and several intergovernmental organizations shared their relevant activities and experiences in the course of three thematic discussions held at the eleventh and twelfth meetings of the Working Group. Representatives of the Secretariat presented background notes, summarizing and analysing the input received from States parties on the topics of discussion.
11. During the thematic discussions at the eleventh and twelfth meetings, under the topic of exchange of information and experience on preventive measures and practices, the Working Group discussed the experiences of States parties in the areas of enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption bodies, strengthening the role of supreme audit institutions in the prevention of and fight against corruption, and the role of parliaments and other legislative bodies in strengthening the implementation of the Convention. Speakers reported on the different measures their countries had taken to implement the various provisions of chapter II of the Convention.
12. It was reported that measures had been taken to strengthen legislative, institutional and strategic frameworks, including in response to the recommendations emanating from the Implementation Review Mechanism. Specific measures had included ensuring the independence of anti-corruption bodies, providing them with sufficient specialized personnel and adequate funding, strengthening their internal integrity and promoting inter-institutional cooperation.
13. Speakers noted the importance of technology in enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts, including in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as the importance of providing training to public officials on codes of conduct, conflicts of interest, asset disclosure, and means to report incidents of corruption.
14. Speakers noted the critical role that parliaments and parliamentarians played in efforts to fully implement the Convention. They recalled that strengthening the integrity and accountability of members of parliaments, including by introducing codes of conduct, was important for ensuring that parliaments were well equipped to carry out their functions.
15. Speakers also noted the importance of introducing a system of asset and interest disclosure for parliamentarians to prevent conflicts of interest and ensure accountability. They reaffirmed the significance of international and regional cooperation, in particular through interparliamentary forums for the exchange of good practices and experiences.
16. Furthermore, speakers highlighted the importance of providing public access to information and data sources to ensure effective oversight and accountability in the management of public affairs. They underlined the importance of transparency in the work of supreme audit institutions, which required the publication of audit findings.
17. Several speakers indicated that promoting the participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector was a priority for the supreme audit institutions of their countries and informed the Working Group that civil society was engaged in assessing the implementation of national anti-corruption plans.
18. The Working Group welcomed the efforts of the Secretariat to support States parties in implementing the Convention, in particular in relation to measures to prevent corruption, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to continue to provide technical assistance, upon request, while focusing on the safety of beneficiaries, in coordination with bilateral and multilateral technical assistance providers.
19. The Working Group acknowledged that progress had been made by States parties in strengthening the capacity of anti-corruption bodies and underlined the need to sustain such efforts and assist States parties in overcoming related challenges.
20. The Working Group encouraged States parties to prioritize strengthening the capacity of anti-corruption bodies and to support each other in the development and

implementation of such initiatives, including through the exchange of good practices, experiences and challenges.

21. The Working Group requested UNODC to continue its efforts to gather information on the good practices of States parties in implementing article 6 (Preventive anti-corruption body or bodies) of the Convention and to continue to provide, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, technical assistance to States parties for strengthening the effectiveness of their anti-corruption bodies.

22. The Working Group recommended that States parties share additional information with the Secretariat about their activities, initiatives and partnerships to implement Conference resolution 8/8.

23. The Working Group acknowledged that progress had been made by States parties towards enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption bodies, strengthening the role of supreme audit institutions in the prevention of and fight against corruption and promoting the role of parliaments and other legislative bodies in strengthening the implementation of the Convention.

24. The Working Group recommended that States parties continue to promote the exchange of good practices and information in order to strengthen the role of parliaments and other legislative bodies. Achieving that objective required engagement with global and regional parliamentary assemblies and organizations and the establishment of agreements with the parliaments and legislative bodies of other States parties. The Group also recommended that States parties continue to exchange good practices and information on cooperation between supreme audit institutions and anti-corruption bodies.

25. The Working Group requested the Secretariat to continue to provide technical assistance to States parties, upon request and subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to support the implementation of article 9, paragraph 2, of the Convention and to continue efforts to gather information on good practices related to the management of public finances, in particular those arising from the Implementation Review Mechanism.

26. The Working Group recommended that States parties pay renewed attention to the use of information and communications technologies to prevent corruption, in line with Conference resolutions 6/7 and 6/8.

27. The Working Group recommended to the Conference the adoption of a multi-year workplan for the Group, while recognizing the need to leave sufficient room on the agenda of the Group to add topics for discussion or to amend those already suggested.

28. The Working Group emphasized the need for both States parties and the donor community to reconfirm their commitment to the prevention of corruption and also emphasized the need for sufficient and predictable funding, including in the form of multi-year, soft-earmarked extrabudgetary contributions, so that UNODC could continue to provide technical assistance for the prevention of corruption at the national, regional, interregional and global levels.

III. Update on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Working Group made at its eleventh and twelfth meetings

A. Development and accumulation of knowledge in the area of prevention of corruption

Recommendation

29. At its tenth meeting, the Working Group requested UNODC to continue to provide technical assistance, upon request, in coordination with bilateral and

multilateral technical assistance providers. That request was reiterated by the Working Group at its eleventh meeting, when the Group welcomed the efforts of the Secretariat to support States parties in implementing the Convention, in particular in relation to prevention activities, during the COVID-19 pandemic, and requested UNODC to continue to provide technical assistance, upon request, while focusing on the safety of beneficiaries, in coordination with bilateral and multilateral technical assistance providers.

Action taken

30. UNODC continued to develop global knowledge products. The knowledge tools and publications were prepared on the basis of research, analysis and experience accumulated regionally and globally. The Implementation Review Mechanism continued to be one of the key sources for identifying areas in which tools were needed.

31. UNODC publications in electronic format were disseminated at relevant conferences, workshops and training events, and to counterparts and other stakeholders during virtual country visits undertaken under the Implementation Review Mechanism. They were also made available on the UNODC website (see www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/publications.html).

32. Further information on action taken to address the recommendation is provided in the report of the Secretariat on the status of implementation of relevant Conference resolutions ([CAC/COSP/2021/12](#)).

Recommendation

33. The Working Group requested UNODC to continue its efforts to gather information on the good practices of States parties in implementing article 6 of the Convention and to continue to provide, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, technical assistance to States parties for strengthening the effectiveness of their anti-corruption bodies.

Action taken

34. During the reporting period, UNODC enhanced the capacities of anti-corruption practitioners and other stakeholders to prevent, detect, investigate and prosecute corruption cases. The Secretariat supported 18 States parties through national and regional activities.

35. Further information on the action taken to address the recommendation is provided in the report of the Secretariat on the status of implementation of relevant Conference resolutions ([CAC/COSP/2021/12](#)).

B. Exchange of information and experience among States on preventive measures and practices

Recommendation

36. The Working Group requested the Secretariat to continue to provide technical assistance to States parties, upon request and subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to support the implementation of article 9, paragraph 2, of the Convention and to continue efforts to gather information on good practices related to the management of public finances, in particular those arising from the Implementation Review Mechanism.

Action Taken

37. UNODC developed and started implementing the Abu Dhabi declaration programme, a three-year programme aimed at supporting States parties in the implementation of article 9, paragraph 2, of the Convention.

38. Further information on the action taken to address the recommendation is provided in the report of the Secretariat on the status of implementation of relevant Conference resolutions ([CAC/COSP/2021/12](#)).

Recommendations

39. The Working Group recommended that States parties continue to promote the exchange of good practices and information in order to strengthen the role of parliaments and other legislative bodies. Achieving that objective required engagement with global and regional parliamentary assemblies and organizations and the establishment of agreements with the parliaments and legislative bodies of other States parties. The Working Group also recommended that States parties continue to exchange good practices and information on cooperation between supreme audit institutions and anti-corruption bodies.

Action taken

40. UNODC reached out to the Inter-Parliamentary Union to strengthen the cooperation between the two entities. A project proposal on strengthening the role of the parliaments and other legislative bodies in the prevention of and fight against corruption was developed.

41. On 9 December 2020, to mark International Anti-Corruption Day, UNODC and the Africa Young Parliamentarians Network hosted a meeting held in a hybrid format (in person and online) addressing transparency and accountability during the COVID-19 pandemic.

42. A side event was held on the margins of the special session of the General Assembly against corruption, held in June 2021, to enhance the capacity of parliamentarians to implement the political declaration adopted by the Assembly at the special session, support implementation of the Convention and oversee national anti-corruption efforts.

43. Another side event was held on the margins of the special session against corruption, focused on the topic of strengthening whistle-blower protection mechanisms in Africa: the role of parliamentarians in fast-tracking the adoption of legislative and policy interventions to protect whistle-blowers.

44. Further information on the action taken to address the recommendations is provided in the report of the Secretariat on the status of implementation of relevant Conference resolutions ([CAC/COSP/2021/12](#)).

C. Collection, dissemination and promotion of good practices in the prevention of corruption

Recommendation

45. The Working Group recommended that States parties provide to the Secretariat, for its compilation and dissemination, a list of the open data initiatives and sources that they maintained.

Action taken

46. In implementing the recommendation of the Working Group, the secretariat prepared an oral update based on the information provided by Governments in response to the notes verbales dated 21 February 2020 and 27 February 2020 from the secretariat of the Conference addressed to the States parties. As at 18 May 2020, submissions had been received from the following 13 States parties: Argentina, Armenia, Ecuador, Iraq, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mexico, Paraguay, Poland, Qatar, Russian Federation and Ukraine.

47. With the agreement of the countries concerned, the full text of the submissions has been made available on the UNODC website.¹

Recommendations

48. The Working Group recalled Conference resolution 8/8, in which the Conference decided that the Group should hold at least two meetings prior to the ninth session of the Conference, and requested the Secretariat, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to continue its work as an international observatory, including by updating the thematic website of the Working Group with relevant information.

49. The Working Group also urged States parties to continue using the information available on the thematic web pages of the Group on policies, practices and measures adopted to prevent corruption, including through the development of national anti-corruption strategies. In addition, the Group encouraged States parties to continue sharing with the Secretariat information on their efforts to prevent corruption, to be published on the thematic web pages of the Working Group.

Action taken

50. UNODC continued to gather, update and make available on the thematic web pages of the Working Group the information provided by States parties, presentations made at the meetings of the Group, and relevant reports and links.²

51. In implementing resolution 8/7 and the recommendations of the Working Group, the Secretariat prepared a background paper entitled “Enhancing the effectiveness of anti-corruption bodies (article 6, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the United Nations Convention against Corruption)” (CAC/COSP/WG.4/2020/4) and an addendum (CAC/COSP/WG.4/2020/4/Add.1). The paper was prepared on the basis of the information received by the States parties in response to a note verbale dated 5 February 2020 from the secretariat of the Conference addressed to the States parties and an analysis of the executive summaries of country review reports under the second cycle of the Implementation Review Mechanism. As at 5 March 2020, submissions had been received from the following 22 States parties: Austria, Bhutan, Botswana, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Croatia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Indonesia, Lebanon, Mauritius, Morocco, Netherlands, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Spain, United Arab Emirates, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). As at 25 August 2020, additional information had been received from the following 14 States parties: Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Burundi, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Italy, Mexico, Qatar, Russian Federation, Senegal, State of Palestine and Ukraine.

52. In implementing Conference resolution 8/14 and the recommendations of the Working Group, the Secretariat prepared a background paper on the role of national parliaments and other legislative bodies in strengthening the implementation of the Convention (CAC/COSP/WG.4/2021/2). The paper was prepared on the basis of the information provided by Governments in response to a note verbale dated 10 December 2020 and a reminder note verbale of 27 January 2021 from the secretariat of the Conference addressed to the States parties. As at 19 March 2021, submissions had been received from the following 39 States parties: Algeria, Austria, Azerbaijan, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Niger, North Macedonia, Oman, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United States and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

¹ Available at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/WG-Prevention/session11.html and www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/WG-Prevention/session12.html.

² www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/WG-Prevention/working-group-on-prevention.html.

53. In implementing Conference resolution 8/13 and the recommendations of the Working Group, the Secretariat prepared a background paper on the role of supreme audit institutions in the prevention of and fight against corruption (CAC/COSP/WG.4/2021/3). The paper was prepared on the basis of the information provided by Governments in response to a note verbale dated 10 December 2020 and a reminder note verbale of 27 January 2021 from the secretariat of the Conference addressed to the States parties. As at 1 April 2021, submissions had been received from the following 43 States parties: Algeria, Austria, Azerbaijan, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, North Macedonia, Oman, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United States and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). As at 14 June 2021, additional information had been received from Iraq and Madagascar.

54. With the agreement of the countries concerned, the full text of the submissions was made available on the UNODC website.¹

D. Encouraging cooperation among all stakeholders and sectors of society in the collective fight against corruption

Preventing and combating corruption in the private sector

55. In 2020, UNODC delivered online training to junior ethics officers from the private sector in Mozambique and organized business integrity workshops in Fiji, Mauritius and Solomon Islands. In December 2020, UNODC co-hosted a business integrity seminar with the National Supervision Commission of China and supported a virtual conference on integrity in relation to the COVID-19 response and economic recovery.

56. Three meetings involving experts from the private sector and academia were held to initiate the process of adapting selected modules of the Education for Justice (E4J) initiative for use in an integrity education programme tailored for companies and universities.

57. In 2020, UNODC contributed to the United Nations Global Compact Twentieth Anniversary Leaders Summit and delivered a 20-hour programme of presentations and interactive discussions, including 10 live sessions, to highlight the relevance of the Convention and its principles to corporate integrity and compliance.

58. In 2021, UNODC supported efforts to prevent corruption in the private sector by strengthening corporate compliance and promoting good practices among Brazilian companies. In February 2021, UNODC conducted a meeting with the Board of Directors of the World Compliance Association to explore opportunities for synergies to strengthen corporate compliance in Latin America.

Promoting education on the prevention of corruption

59. At the global level, under its Anti-Corruption Academic Initiative, UNODC held a seminar on anti-corruption in times of COVID-19, on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day 2020.

60. Under its Education for Justice initiative, UNODC organized the Education for Justice Global Dialogue Series, consisting of online discussions on such topics as education for the rule of law and the role of youth, schools and higher education institutions in contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16.

61. At the regional level, UNODC contributed to an academic workshop organized by the South-Eastern European Anti-Corruption Academic Initiative.

62. At the national level, UNODC delivered a series of online training programmes on anti-corruption, integrity and ethics for university lecturers from Kenya, Mexico and Pakistan.

63. In 2021, UNODC held two meetings with primary- and secondary-level teachers to discuss the adaptation to the educational context of Greece of the teaching resource kits for primary and secondary school teachers, developed under the Education for Justice initiative.

64. UNODC delivered lectures on its anti-corruption work to students from Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Germany and Nigeria.

Awareness-raising in schools

65. To mark International Anti-Corruption Day 2020, UNODC supported competitions for students organized under the leadership of the Hellenic National Transparency Authority, the Ministry of Education and the Institute of Educational Policy of Greece.

Other work with youth

66. In October 2020, UNODC launched the first East Africa Youth Online Blockchain Challenge. Innovative young developers in Eastern Africa were challenged to design and implement blockchain-based software applications to solve real-world challenges, focusing on whistle-blower protection, public procurement and financial investigations.

67. In December 2020, UNODC held a conference on the second cycle of the Implementation Review Mechanism for law students in Uzbekistan. Using a case study, the conference participants engaged in a simulated country review.

68. In May and June 2021, UNODC, in partnership with the International Anti-Corruption Academy, organized two online anti-corruption summer school programmes for youth from Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia and Nepal) and Africa (Angola, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Togo, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia).

69. Further information is provided in the report of the Secretariat on the status of implementation of relevant Conference resolutions ([CAC/COSP/2021/12](#)).
