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**Review of the implementation of the United Nations
Convention against Corruption**

Good practices and experiences of, and relevant measures taken by, States parties after the completion of country reviews, including information related to technical assistance

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

In line with previous documents prepared by the Secretariat focusing on good practices and experiences of, and relevant measures taken by, States parties after the completion of their country reviews, the present document provides an account of such measures taken by States parties after the completion of their reviews under both cycles. It is an update to the report presented at the eighth session of the Conference on the same topic ([CAC/COSP/2019/11](#)).

* [CAC/COSP/2021/1](#).



I. Introduction

1. Article 63, paragraph 5, of the United Nations Convention against Corruption provides that the Conference of the States Parties shall acquire the necessary knowledge of the measures taken by States parties in implementing the Convention and the difficulties encountered by them in doing so. Moreover, pursuant to paragraph 40 of the terms of reference of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the Convention, adopted by the Conference in its resolution 3/1, each State party shall submit information in its responses to the comprehensive self-assessment checklist on progress achieved in connection with the observations contained in its previous country review reports.
2. In its decision 5/1, the Conference decided that the Implementation Review Group should begin promptly to collect, with the support of the secretariat, and discuss relevant information in order to facilitate the assessment of performance of the Implementation Review Mechanism.
3. In its resolution 8/2, the Conference, recalling its decision 5/1 and its resolution 6/1, encouraged States parties to keep using the Implementation Review Group as a platform for the voluntary exchange of information on national measures taken during and after the completion of country reviews, including strategies adopted, challenges encountered and best practices identified, as well as, where appropriate, the follow-up to the recommendations made in the country review reports.
4. Thus, the secretariat addressed five notes verbales¹ to States parties, inviting them to submit information on measures they had taken in follow-up to gaps or needs identified during the first- or second-cycle reviews. The information received was summarized in documents prepared by the Secretariat.² It should be recalled that the previous documents, as well as the present document, contain not only information taken from the written submissions of States in response to the aforementioned notes verbales, but also information provided by States in statements at the different sessions of the Implementation Review Group, as well as information received in the context of the country reviews and the delivery of technical assistance by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The present document provides an update to the information contained in the report on good practices and experiences of, and relevant measures taken by, States parties after the completion of the country reviews, including information related to technical assistance, that was presented to the Conference at its eighth session ([CAC/COSP/2019/11](#)).
5. As of September 2021, 173 States had completed their executive summaries under the first cycle of the Implementation Review Mechanism, and 57 had completed their executive summaries under the second cycle. Twenty-two States provided

¹ The notes verbales were sent on 25 February 2015, 17 April 2016, 31 March 2017, 2 August 2019 and 26 July 2021.

² The first document was presented at the sixth session of the Conference, and entitled “Assessment of the performance of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption” ([CAC/COSP/2015/6](#)). The second document was prepared for the resumed seventh session of the Implementation Review Group, and entitled “Good practices and experiences of, and relevant measures taken by, States parties after the completion of the country reviews, including information related to technical assistance” ([CAC/COSP/IRG/2016/12](#)). The third document was prepared for the seventh session of the Conference, and entitled “Analysis of good practices, experiences and relevant measures taken by States parties after completion of the country reviews during the first cycle of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption” ([CAC/COSP/2017/12](#)). The fourth document was presented at the eighth session of the Conference, and entitled “Good practices and experiences of, and relevant measures taken by, States parties after the completion of the country reviews, including information related to technical assistance” ([CAC/COSP/2019/11](#)).

relevant information³ for the analysis in response to the secretariat's most recent request. The secretariat has also made use of statements made at the twelfth and the resumed twelfth sessions of the Implementation Review Group, which provided information from an additional 18 States, bringing the number of States from which new information was gathered to 40.⁴

6. Having gathered information since 2015, it should be noted that the secretariat has gathered responses and information from the majority of States based on several submissions or statements made to the Implementation Review Group. It is equally of interest to note that States parties continue sharing not only information related to measures taken after the reviews, but also, increasingly, information on reform efforts in preparation for the second-cycle review. By September 2021, information was available from a total of 153 States⁵ on measures they had taken towards enhancing the implementation of the Convention. The information gathered thus confirms the role of the Implementation Review Mechanism in triggering reform efforts in States across all regional groups and in relation to all substantive areas of the Convention.

³ In accordance with paragraph 12 of Conference resolution 6/1, the secretariat will make available the reports from States on follow-up, as applicable, on the country profile pages, available at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/country-profile/index.html.

⁴ Afghanistan, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, France, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Kenya, Latvia, Madagascar, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, State of Palestine, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Ukraine.

⁵ Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Niue, North Macedonia, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Figure I
Regional breakdown of States parties with information provided in 2019 and 2021 on measures taken in preparation for or after the completion of the reviews (as of September 2021): first cycle

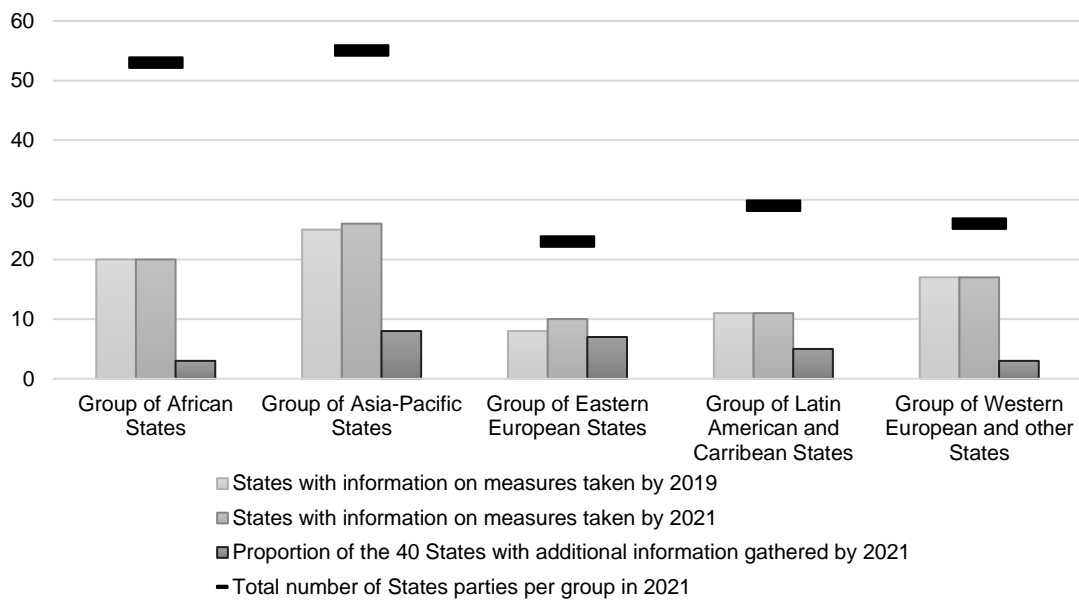
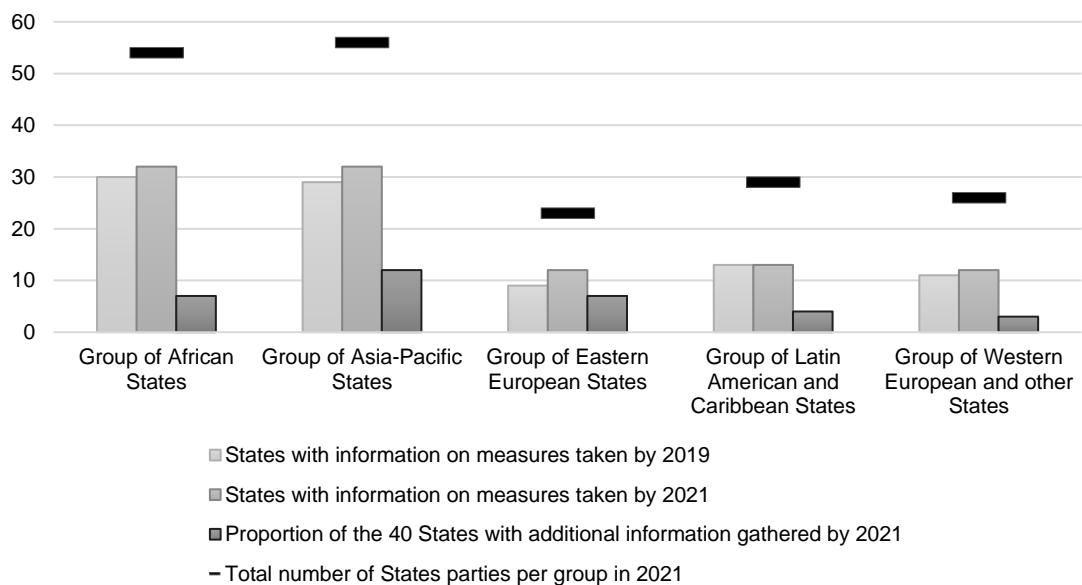


Figure II
Regional breakdown of States parties with information provided in 2019 and 2021 on measures taken in preparation for or after the completion of the reviews (as of September 2021): second cycle



7. For the purpose of the present update, the measures taken by the 40 States from which the most recent information was gathered have been categorized as follows:

- (a) Identifying and addressing gaps and shortcomings in national frameworks for fighting corruption;
- (b) Policy developments;
- (c) Triggering legislative reform and changes;
- (d) Inter-institutional cooperation and institution-building;

- (e) International cooperation: impact across borders;
- (f) Enhanced use of information technology.

II. Identifying and addressing gaps and shortcomings in national frameworks for fighting corruption

8. In their responses, States highlighted the important role of the Implementation Review Mechanism in the global fight against corruption. They noted that the Mechanism accelerated progress in the implementation of the Convention and was critical for promoting continuous adherence. In improving international cooperation, it facilitated the identification and addressing of common challenges and the building of trust to collaborate on closing the gaps that allow corruption to exist. The outcome of the reviews provided an incentive to bring legislation and the institutional framework more in line with the standards of the Convention, and guidance on that process.

9. States also underscored the linkages between combating corruption and the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, noting that the findings of the Implementation Review Mechanism had an impact well beyond its immediate scope. In addition to that comprehensive value and impact, States continued to share how the Mechanism provided support for their domestic efforts to implement the Convention and combat corruption. For example, one State noted how the review process had further consolidated the resolve to eliminate corruption from society and to achieve good governance. The experience gained through the Mechanism had had a catalytic effect on the implementation of preventive measures, helping to develop a comprehensive legal framework. The review process itself, together with its outcome, had reinforced efforts to implement the Convention.

10. The impact of the Implementation Review Mechanism was also reflected in States' efforts to put in place coordination and other inter-institutional mechanisms to address the outcomes of the review reports. As is reflected in the note by the Secretariat on technical assistance (CAC/COSP/2021/10), an increasing number of States explained how they had followed up on the recommendations or technical assistance needs identified in their reviews. One State reported having adopted a comprehensive remediation plan anchored in its holistic national anti-corruption strategy to address the gaps that had been identified. This measure would ensure the sustainability of and a strategic linkage to the country's overarching national development plan and the Sustainable Development Goals. Other measures reported included establishing a national follow-up committee consisting of focal points of relevant national stakeholders to address the recommendations made in a country's review.

III. Policy developments

11. A noteworthy new trend in the type of information reported by States was the many policy developments, which were often noted as starting points for legislative and institutional changes. One State reported that a legislation road map had been prepared for revisions to its criminal code aimed at addressing the gaps identified through the review process concerning illicit enrichment, active bribery of foreign public officials, corruption in the private sector, and trading in influence. Another State reported that, as part of its annual programme, the Government planned to establish new institutions and amend legislation, including reforming the legislation on ethics in public office.

12. One State noted the revision of joint proclamations by its anti-corruption authority and relevant ministries to strengthen public service delivery by ensuring compliance with the established standards, through incentives, investigations and penalties.

13. States also referred to institution-specific policies and measures, such as carrying out inspections of the ministries and institutions responsible for public service delivery. One State had created an action plan for preventing corruption based on a risk assessment that had identified areas within its police force that were prone to or deemed to be at high risk of corruption.

14. Two States referred to the preparation of codes of conduct for public officials and parliamentarians. In one of them, that process had been facilitated through a series of workshops supported by UNODC and the World Bank.

A. Anti-corruption strategies

15. Many States noted that the adoption of anti-corruption strategies had triggered further measures. Examples included plans to address identified gaps in a coordinated and synergetic manner, strengthen public sector integrity by improving conflict of interest rules, improve accountability in public procurement and establish a beneficial ownership register. One State reported how a multi-year anti-corruption strategy with an accompanying action plan was to be developed based on an evaluation, with the goal of ensuring a cohesive approach and a basis for measuring progress.

16. States also reported on how they had extended the reach of their anti-corruption strategies by establishing supplementary, sectoral anti-corruption programmes that addressed corruption risks within individual authorities. One State noted that the risks had been identified using software based on a methodology of corruption risk management.

B. Inclusion of individuals and groups outside the public sector

17. States also referred to the inclusion and collaboration of various non-governmental stakeholders, such as members of civil society and representatives from the private sector, in the preparation of their anti-corruption policies and strategies. One State provided information on a cross-governmental initiative, led by its federal court of accounts and the office of the comptroller general, to develop a plan to improve integrity control systems and ultimately implement best practices for preventing corruption. The initiative had sought to evaluate risks and identify key regulatory and structural gaps, in order to address them in the plan.

18. Another State reported that, in addition to adopting an anti-corruption strategy, a new methodological approach to the fight against corruption had been taken. The new approach involved all stakeholders and had led to a collective agreement on the three components of the strategy: education, prevention and repression. With regard to the component on education, the State reported that awareness-raising campaigns had been conducted with the involvement of “opinion leaders”, the media and civil society organizations. Another State, highlighting the importance of education, indicated that anti-corruption education had been successfully integrated into the public school curriculum for grades 4 to 12, and that public education books on fighting corruption had been published.

C. Access to information

19. With reference to articles 10 and 13 of the Convention, input on other policy measures related to public reporting and the participation of society, States highlighted enhanced public access to information as a key component of their anti-corruption plans. One State had enabled public access to, and promoted public participation in, efforts to further strengthen oversight actions in its House of Representatives by launching an open parliament initiative. Several other States referred to their membership of the Open Government Partnership as another way to enhance public oversight and participation. One State reported that it had conducted

a public consultation process on draft legislation to establish a new body charged with the prevention, detection and investigation of corruption in the public sector.

20. The establishment of a one-stop shop system was reported by some States as a means to eliminate aspects that were considered conducive to corruption in the public sector. Another State reported that it had published guidelines on the right to access information, aimed at raising awareness about the rights of citizens, as provided for in a recently adopted law.

D. Combating money-laundering

21. Policies relating to anti-money-laundering and to asset and interest disclosures were another emerging topic in the replies submitted by States. One State reported that it had adopted a new draft instruction establishing criteria for designating politically exposed persons, enhancing due diligence and providing clarity on its financial disclosure system. Another State explained that a directive extending the financial disclosure framework to further categories of employees in the public service had been adopted in 2021 following the completion of its second-cycle review. Another State highlighted that, in order to stay ahead of criminal elements, it had started to proactively update the processes for designated financial institutions and designated non-financial businesses and professions as a priority element of its anti-money-laundering regime.

IV. Triggering legislative reform and changes

22. As has been the case previously, the majority of States indicated that they had adopted or were in the process of adopting legislation to address the outcomes of the reviews and implement the Convention. The adoption of legislation plays a fundamental role in implementing chapter III of the Convention, on criminalization and law enforcement, and chapter IV, on international cooperation. Thus, most reported legislative reforms continued to relate to amendments or new provisions in line with the outcomes of the first-cycle reviews. While some States reported having established comprehensive legal frameworks, others reported specific legislative amendments.

23. Among the examples of how particular offences had been added or revised in response to the findings of the reviews, one State noted that amendments had been made to its criminal code to redefine the scope of corruption offences and of domestic and foreign public officials, as well as private entities covered by bribery offences. Another State highlighted the fact that its criminal code had been amended to criminalize explicitly all instances of granting, soliciting or accepting undue advantages in favour of third parties, as well as to criminalize passive and active bribery in the private sector. One State reported that measures had been taken to bring the definition of a public official into compliance with article 2 of the Convention by expanding the definition of such officials in the criminal code.

24. States also continued to report on plans to amend their criminal law legislation, such as in the area of public sector ethics, for instance, through the creation of new offences, such as nepotism.

A. Protection of witnesses and reporting persons

25. States continued to cite the preparation or adoption of laws concerning the protection of witnesses and/or reporting persons, in accordance with articles 32 and 33 of the Convention. Such measures ranged from bringing a whistle-blower act within the ambit of the requirements of the Convention, to legislative amendments to strengthen the protection of reporting persons from any form of retaliation. One State

indicated its intention to augment the existing whistle-blower compensation policy by drafting a whistle-blowers' protection bill.

26. One State reported that a recommendation from its first-cycle review had led to consultations with civil society organizations prior to the adoption of a new whistle-blower protection Act. The new Act was aimed at regulating the conditions for protecting persons against unjustified sanctions and establishing a system for receiving and verifying reports. It also provided for the establishment of an independent office on the protection of whistle-blowers, replacing the office of the labour inspector, which had previously been tasked with dealing with reporting persons. The role of the new office would be to review and address any unjustified employment-related actions or retaliatory acts taken against a reporting person and to audit the implementation of the Act.

27. At times, the outcome of the Implementation Review Mechanism and the findings of another evaluation had proven to be mutually reinforcing. That had been the case for one State, which indicated that it had enhanced the protection provided to persons who disclosed information and witnesses involved in investigations. It had also reversed the burden of proof for reporting persons, clarified what type of harm constituted "detriment" and increased the authority of relevant institutions to oversee how they handled disclosures. The same State also reported on amendments made to whistle-blower protection in the private sector by expanding the regime to provide greater protection to persons reporting misconduct within companies. The reforms required all public companies, large proprietary companies and corporate trustees of registerable superannuation entities to have a whistle-blower policy and had resulted in an increase in anonymous disclosures. Furthermore, it had become easier to obtain civil redress, and it was now possible to impose civil penalties in addition to criminal sanctions.

28. One State explained that, although its law on victims, witnesses and experts could apply to reporting persons in certain circumstances, that had proved insufficient to ensure their protection in all cases. Therefore, in the framework of article 8, paragraph 4, of the Convention, and in line with the State's anti-corruption strategy, a bill on whistle-blower protection had been prepared to establish communication channels to facilitate the reporting of acts or situations of corruption in the public sector and provide enhanced protection to such reporting persons.

B. Liability of legal persons

29. As had been found in the previous analysis, the liability of legal persons (art. 26 of the Convention) remained an area where States reported on legislative reforms. For example, one State reported that it had introduced administrative liability of legal entities and sanctions "for giving unlawful remuneration on behalf or in favour of" a bribe-giver or bribe-taker.

30. Another State reported that it had amended its legislation to provide a clear procedural framework for sanctions against legal persons by setting up a detailed regulation of the court proceedings, prescribing the competences of the court and the possibilities for appeal. The new law provided additional grounds for initiating proceedings against legal persons and increased the maximum penalty in cases where the advantage was not "property" and was the result of foreign bribery. The law was further amended in 2020 to address additional issues identified in court practice, such as a limitation period for administrative proceedings against legal persons and changes in the territorial jurisdiction of the court.

C. Asset and interest declarations

31. One State noted that it had amended its legislation to expand the scope of the officials required to make asset and income declarations. The expansion also related to the obligations to encompass interest and expenditure declarations. Another State

reported having amended its legislation to require public officials, upon assuming and leaving office, to declare not only their own assets, but also those of their spouses and children.

32. In one State, legislative amendments had addressed a recommendation to ensure the online publication of asset declarations by shifting the responsibility from the anti-corruption body to the reporting public officials themselves. The amended law also extended the scope of asset reporting obligations to members of supervisory boards of State-owned enterprises. Concerning a related recommendation issued under article 52, paragraph 5, of the Convention, on sharing declarations with competent authorities in other jurisdictions, the State indicated that its Data Protection Act prevented it from implementing that recommendation.

33. One State reported the establishment of an ethics and integrity directorate mandated to receive and process the declarations of public officials. It had also amended its laws to enable greater scrutiny of politically exposed persons and beneficial ownership.

34. Several States had taken measures to expand the scope of those required to declare their assets and conflicts of interest. Public officials that had been added included officials in positions particularly vulnerable to corruption, members of the Government and other public office holders, as well as high-level public officials. One State had expanded the scope of assets to be declared to include movable and immovable assets used by the declaring official, even if they belonged to third parties. Legislative amendments made in relation to conflicts of interest had aimed at establishing clear definitions and reporting obligations. One bill on asset declarations was aimed at preventing illicit enrichment, while another established the requirement to report all gifts received.

D. Judiciary

35. Many States reported having made legislative amendments relating to the creation of specialized anti-corruption courts and prosecution offices. One State noted that this had been done in particular to ensure asset recovery. Another State highlighted constitutional amendments to reduce opportunities for corruption, strengthen public oversight of the exercise of the judicial power and increase the confidence of the public in the judiciary in line with article 11, paragraph 1, of the Convention. This had been accompanied by the adoption of laws to ensure integrity in the judiciary through changing rules relating to the composition of the judicial council and the selection of judges at the constitutional court. Further changes had included the declaration obligations of judges and the establishment of a supreme administrative court. One State had introduced a bill to amend the procedure for the impeachment and removal of judges in order to safeguard the integrity of the judiciary. The amendment had been introduced following a recommendation from the first-cycle review to prevent any undue influence in the pursuit of justice.

36. One State reported that its supreme court planned to establish 120 “accountability courts” throughout the country to ensure the speedy trial of corruption cases, with 20 such courts set up in the initial implementation phase.

E. Money-laundering and asset recovery

37. Legislative amendments and the adoption of new laws concerning money-laundering reflected the interlinked nature of chapters II, III, IV and V of the Convention. One State outlined how it had passed legislation to regulate the financial sector to prevent corruption and money-laundering. Another State had amended its criminal code to allow for value-based confiscation if the property itself could not be returned or restituted, or if the benefit was missing or had been expropriated.

38. Other legislative measures related to asset recovery included the preparation of a law on asset forfeiture and one on proceeds of crime. One State highlighted various legislative amendments aimed at combating money-laundering and ensuring asset recovery, such as through the introduction into the criminal code of a new type of extended confiscation, enabling the confiscation of part of a property. The new measures also allowed for assets that had been transferred to close relatives to be confiscated. Other innovative legal provisions introduced by States related to the seizure of virtual currency and of ownership interest in a legal entity, as well as seizure of substitute assets.

39. States also reported on measures taken with regard to the direct recovery of assets and on the adoption of provisions enabling non-conviction-based confiscation, in accordance with articles 53 and 54 of the Convention. One State reported that it had established an anti-money laundering unit within the anti-corruption body and its regional offices to ensure the effective implementation of anti-money-laundering measures.

V. Inter-institutional cooperation and institution-building

A. Establishment of new institutions

40. Information was received on the numerous anti-corruption institutions, with a variety of broad or specialized mandates, that had been established since the publication of the previous report. In some States, several anti-corruption institutions had been created simultaneously, thus establishing an institutional anti-corruption framework that had previously not existed. For example, one State reported having created a law enforcement anti-corruption body to implement pretrial proceedings and a department within the public prosecutor's office to deal with cases of civil forfeiture of illegal assets, as well as specialized anti-corruption courts.

41. Another State shared information on the establishment of its independent anti-corruption commission, an access to information commission and an asset recovery office. In response to recommendations made in its second-cycle review, one State reported on the adoption of a law establishing a commission on the right to information with the mandate to implement and monitor the application of the law. In another State, collaboration between civil society and the access to public information agency had led to the development of an index to measure the level of compliance by all entities required to proactively publish information.

42. In order to facilitate asset seizure and ensure the proper administration of seized assets, one State reported having established a new office for the management of seized property. Another State reported that it had set up a commission on countering corruption and forfeiture of illegal assets, which had combined the functions of five pre-existing institutions in the fields of prevention of corruption, conflict of interest and forfeiture of illegally obtained assets. The State reported that combining those functions into the mandate of one body had ensured the necessary link between functions on prevention of corruption, verification of asset declarations, ascertaining of conflict of interests and forfeiture of illegally acquired assets.

43. States also reported having created anti-corruption institutions or units within established institutions aimed at ensuring integrity within those authorities. For example, one State reported that an anti-corruption unit had been established within the police to enhance integrity and take responsibility for internal investigations into corruption. Another State reported having establishing corruption prevention committees at different levels of government, honesty and integrity units within educational institutions and "integrity stores" in schools.

44. States also referred to the creation of institutions dedicated to ensuring integrity in public procurement and public finances. One such example was the establishment by a House of Representatives of a research centre on State finance accountability to

provide expertise on transparency and accountability in the management and oversight of public finances. Another State reported that, in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, it had established a special oversight team for disaster management to ensure that emergency packages were implemented in an accountable manner and effectively reached the targeted groups.

B. Inter-institutional cooperation and coordination

45. States continued to report that the measures they had taken to enhance inter-institutional coordination had often been a direct response to a recommendation or a reaction to witnessing the importance of enhanced coordination during their first-cycle reviews. One State noted how efforts to enhance cooperation between its anti-corruption body and specialized prosecution body had resulted in an annual joint retreat. Further common mechanisms and procedures for securing electronic evidence had also been developed in order to intensify the collaboration between the two institutions.

46. Several States reported measures such as the signing of memorandums of understanding to enhance mutual coordination and cooperation, including with private sector entities in order to improve information exchange.

47. Other inter-institutional coordination mechanisms had also been created and took different forms, ranging from the establishment of an anti-corruption justice centre (a joint task force between the police, the prosecution service and the courts to adjudicate major corruption cases) to a cross-sectoral advisory council to coordinate government action. The advisory council, it was noted, was also mandated to serve as a centre of excellence for coordinating research, analysis and training, as well as providing public education and raising awareness about corruption. One State indicated that a new law ensured active interaction among State bodies with regard to counteracting corruption.

48. An interdisciplinary research network had been established in one State to build a bridge between the public sector and the scientific-academic sector, in order to generate alternative and integrative views on corruption and contribute to strengthening both the identification of problems, as well as the design and implementation of innovative public policies. It was noted that that initiative had been taken to enhance the evidence base for policymaking.

C. Enhancing institutional capacity

49. Capacity-building at the institutional level was widely highlighted. Notably, many States referred to the use of training, which mirrors a trend identified in relation to the technical assistance needs emerging from the reviews.⁶ Continuous training was a requirement in many contexts, for example, for investigators, and had been addressed by seconding members of the police force to external agencies to support and coordinate investigations into financial crime. Other States reported that international support had enabled several training bodies to dispense technical knowledge to public officials, police officers, prosecutors and judges.

50. The creation of training modules for judges and prosecutors was noted by one State. Such modules included training on bribery, to clarify situations where an undue advantage was intended for a third party, or where the advantage was not material. Similarly, another State reported on courses on ethics, integrity and anti-corruption skills and knowledge for judges, prosecutors, investigators, police officers and civil servants. One State reported that the technical assistance it had received had enabled training on investigation, forensics, interrogation techniques, filing cases for court

⁶ For further information, see the note by the Secretariat on the analysis of technical assistance needs emerging from the country reviews and assistance delivered by UNODC in support of the implementation of the Convention against Corruption ([CAC/COSP/2021/10](#)).

proceedings and confiscation; all activities were related to recommendations emerging from and gaps identified in its country reviews.

51. Also in response to a recommendation on improving the independence of the financial and human resources of two specialized authorities, one State reported that its anti-corruption authority was being evaluated. The outcome was expected to result in the foundations being laid for improved independence.

VI. International cooperation: impact across borders

52. In their accounts of measures taken after the completion of the implementation reviews, States also referred to legislative amendments and new laws relating to chapter IV of the Convention, on international cooperation. Many States reported having concluded or being in the process of negotiating treaties to facilitate extradition and mutual legal assistance. One State reported that its anti-corruption body had signed memorandums of understanding with sister agencies in other States with a view to enhancing international cooperation.

53. Other legislative amendments had been made to enable authorities to access information held on and communicated between electronic devices to better assist international law enforcement partners. In order to further ensure rapid access to information in corruption cases, one State had streamlined the process for obtaining communication data from service providers in other jurisdictions without the need for a mutual assistance request. Another State reported having established legislative provisions to allow information-sharing with other jurisdictions.

54. In line with article 46, paragraph 28, of the Convention, on the payment of costs related to executing a request for mutual legal assistance, one State noted that the requesting State would be informed regardless of whether it would be expected to cover such expenses or not. The State explained that it would ask the requesting State to cover “exceptional costs” only.

55. In relation to asset recovery, the importance and positive impact of participation in regional and international forums and asset recovery networks for information exchange and coordination was again highlighted by a number of States. One other State reported that it had advocated including asset recovery measures in all new agreements and treaties on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

VII. Enhanced use of information technology

56. The enhanced and active use of information technology solutions had already been reported in the previous report of the Secretariat, and this trend continued to be reflected by an increasing number of States. One State referred to such measures as the “digitalization of anti-corruption efforts”, while another reported on the establishment of an online platform to receive and respond to requests for information from citizens. The platform allowed citizens to see the status of their request and receive notifications at each stage of processing. An open-source digital platform compiling government actions and services of relevant agencies had been established in one State for the monitoring of the results of such actions.

57. In one State, the supreme court had created a website for the monitoring of all proceedings concerning acts of corruption, such as bribery, exaction, improper collection of fees, influence-peddling, false declaration, breach of trust, money-laundering, tax evasion, fraudulent acquisition of subsidies, coercion, inducement of a subordinate to commit a punishable act, administration for personal gain and illicit enrichment.

A. E-procurement and transparency in public finances

58. Several States referred to the use of e-procurement, with enhanced oversight, simplification and clarity all being highlighted as benefits of its introduction. As an example, one State cited the introduction of an electronic public procurement platform that provided an overview of all the items procured by government at both the central and local levels. Owing to the platform's open data format, civil society and the media were able to gain access to procurement contracts, allowing for strengthened public oversight. Digitalizing its procurement system had been a component of another State's efforts to simplify its public procurement procedures and improve transparency. The same State also reported that an online platform on business procedures had been established with donor support to clarify the administrative modalities and procedures to obtain licences for businesses.

59. Also in the quest for enhancing transparency, one State reported that it had established a "transparency portal" for the budgeting process of public finances, while another processed State expenses (with certain exceptions) through an electronic database, following the adoption of a new law on budgetary transparency. For enhanced transparency in public spending, one anti-corruption body had established an online tool compiling all financial transactions in the public sector. Similarly, an electronic dashboard for real-time tracking of budget and infrastructure spending had been established in another State. Driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, data on expenses on health-care infrastructure had been added as a separate category. As part of its initiative for continuous professional development, one State highlighted that it had held a series of online training sessions on budgetary accountability, compliance and financial audit.

B. Registers for the declaration of interests and assets

60. States noted the implementation of information technology solutions for the collection and verification of asset declarations. One State had created an electronic register of asset declarations, which was automatically verified by comparing data from declarations submitted to or held in other State registers. A new law in one State included provisions establishing the electronic reporting of assets and interests, as well as enabling its anti-corruption body to access the electronic databases of all State institutions.

61. One State reported that its anti-corruption body was developing a monitoring system to record the interests of persons who entered high public positions up to three years before they had assumed their function, as well as the activities carried out by those persons up to one year after they left their positions.

C. Systems for reporting acts of corruption

62. One State reported that it had adopted a law providing for the creation of a unified electronic portal for whistle-blowers in order to ensure the existence of secure and confidential ways to report acts of corruption. Another State reported on the operationalization of a digitalized system guaranteeing reporting persons' anonymity and noted that the new system, in combination with awareness-raising activities, had led to reports that were more substantiated and accompanied by evidence. An anti-corruption complaints portal had been established in another State to allow citizens to report acts of corruption. Although the portal was administered by the anti-corruption body, its use was also made available to all governmental entities.

D. Enhanced access to information

63. States referred to information technology tools in the context of rendering information easily available for operational purposes in relation to international

cooperation. Examples ranged from the creation of a dedicated section on the website of the public prosecutor's office of one State, where all relevant acts and international instruments on mutual legal assistance were made available, to the establishment of a case management system to compile statistical data for the monitoring of extradition and mutual legal assistance cases. The latter had been rendered possible with the support of a donor to implement a recommendation made in the context of the Implementation Review Mechanism. The State also noted that an update to the system was planned by the donor, demonstrating the ongoing nature of measures relating to information technology to make use of the best available tools and facilitate the efforts of public authorities.

64. A number of States referred to the use of innovative solutions to ensure the implementation of the Convention in response to the rapidly changing environment and the increased occurrence of complex cyber-enabled crimes, which had been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. One State referred to the use of online platforms as a means of exchanging information and enhancing cooperation. Reference was also made to the newly established Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities and the Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime (SHERLOC) knowledge management portal. The State indicated that such online platforms facilitated quick cooperation and collaboration in the face of the ever-evolving crime of corruption.

VIII. Technical assistance

65. With regard to technical assistance needs identified during the review process and delivered by UNODC in support of the implementation of the Convention, the Secretariat has prepared a separate analysis, which is available to the Conference in document [CAC/COSP/2021/10](#).

IX. Conclusions and issues for further consideration

66. Ten years after the adoption of the first country review reports, the Implementation Review Mechanism was repeatedly hailed as having a catalytic impact on States' anti-corruption reform efforts. As can be seen from the information contained in the present document, legislative reform, either the adoption of new laws or amendments to existing ones, continues to be the most frequently taken measure. The legislative measures exemplified in the document run the full gamut of the four substantive chapters of the Convention subject to review under both cycles, from article 2, paragraph (a), on the definition of a public official, to article 59, on international cooperation in asset recovery. Many States underscored how the measures taken to address the findings of the review reports had been possible thanks to support and technical assistance from other States or donor institutions. The Conference may wish to consider recalling the continued importance of the Mechanism and the emanating country-specific findings as a central source for identifying gaps as well as providing technical assistance.

67. The innovative approaches that States included in their replies showcase determination and a continued commitment to implementing the Convention and to preventing and fighting corruption. Such approaches include the role of education at all levels and the innovative use of information technology to speed up and make processes more transparent and allow access to data and information. The Convention highlights how the whole of society has a role to play in addressing corruption, from international organizations, Governments, their institutions and public officials, to non-governmental stakeholders and individuals. The importance of wide stakeholder engagement has been captured in these innovations, with information being made available through a plethora of online platforms and other information technology solutions, all in an effort to enhance transparency, public oversight and streamlining processes while reducing opportunities for corruption. The Conference may wish to

encourage States to continue seeking new, innovative ways to address corruption and to strengthen anti-corruption value-based education, and share these experiences and their impact with other States.

68. Furthermore, States continued to reflect on ways in which the Implementation Review Mechanism was a trigger for enhanced inter-institutional or inter-agency cooperation, at both the domestic and the international levels. One such element is the recent creation of the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities, an anti-corruption practitioner resource through which States will be able to share international best practices and cooperate operationally on specific cases with a transnational element. The Conference may wish to continue to promote that Network as a quick, efficient and agile tool for combating cross-border corruption offences by encouraging States to join the Network.

69. The impact of the Implementation Review Mechanism was also felt in relation to technical assistance delivery and in addressing the needs identified by States parties in both cycles. Several donors had harnessed the strength and validity of the nationally owned and prioritized technical assistance needs and had designed various technical assistance delivery programmes around the outcome of the reviews. While that was encouraging, there were still a large number of technical assistance needs that remained to be addressed. In discussing the next phase of the Mechanism, the Conference may wish to recall that chapter VI of the Convention addresses technical assistance and information exchange. This chapter has not yet been subject to any review. On a number of occasions in the subsidiary bodies, some States parties have suggested that it could be subject to review in the next phase.

70. As noted also with regard to technical assistance,⁷ States frequently emphasized that any measures taken after the completion of the reviews, or at times even in preparation for the review, were not static. The technical assistance needs and the measures to address implementation gaps needed to be monitored, adjusted and adapted to the ever-changing environment within which they were implemented. This echoes article 5, paragraph 3, of the Convention, which provides that: “Each State party shall endeavour to periodically evaluate relevant legal instruments and administrative measures with a view to determining their adequacy to prevent and fight corruption.” Of the 40 States from which new information was gathered, 35 had already featured in the analysis provided in previous documents by the Secretariat, showcasing how any measures taken in the fight against corruption remain a continuous process in an evolving environment. In June 2021, States parties recommitted to the goals of the Convention through the adoption of the political declaration at the special session of the General Assembly against corruption. Therefore, in recalling the political declaration, the Conference may wish to call upon States parties to redouble their efforts to cooperate and unite in the fight against corruption when designing a follow-up process for the implementation of that political declaration.

⁷ See [CAC/COSP/2021/10](#).