



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

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## Open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the United Nations Convention against Corruption

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

**Implementation of chapter IV of the United Nations  
Convention against Corruption: lessons learned,  
good practices and challenges**

## **Non-binding guidelines for strengthening international and multilateral cooperation to further prevent, identify, investigate and prosecute corruption during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery**

Note by the Secretariat

### *Summary*

The present document contains non-binding guidelines that have been prepared pursuant to resolution 9/1, entitled “Sharm el-Sheikh declaration on strengthening international cooperation in the prevention of and fight against corruption during times of emergencies and crisis response and recovery”, which was adopted by the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption at its ninth session, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, from 13 to 17 December 2021.

## **I. Introduction**

1. Emergencies – whether they are health-related, like the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, or humanitarian crises, natural disasters or conflict or post-conflict situations – create increased corruption risks. Urgent efforts are often required in order to respond quickly to such emergencies and provide essential goods, services and economic relief, resulting in potential sacrifices in transparency and accountability. Such situations affect all Governments because of the global nature of the supply chain and financial systems and the ways in which organized criminal groups operate across borders. Stronger international cooperation during times of emergency and crisis can lead to coordinated responses to identify and disrupt the

\* [CAC/COSP/EG.1/2023/1](#).



activities of those who commit corrupt acts and can contribute to the development of preventive measures through the sharing of intelligence and experiences.

2. In its resolution 9/1, entitled “Sharm el-Sheikh declaration on strengthening international cooperation in the prevention of and fight against corruption during times of emergencies and crisis response and recovery”, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption called upon the open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the United Nations Convention against Corruption to collect and analyse, with the support of the secretariat, information provided by States parties on best practices and challenges concerning international cooperation in combating corruption during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery, with a view to developing non-binding guidelines for strengthening international and multilateral cooperation to further prevent, identify, investigate and prosecute corruption during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery.

3. In line with that mandate, in July 2022 the secretariat sent to States parties a note verbale in which it requested information on such best practices and challenges. The contributions received from States parties and governmental experts were summarized in the conference room paper on best practices and challenges concerning international cooperation in combating corruption during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery, and efforts to further explore and enhance knowledge of the links between corruption and other forms of crime (CAC/COSP/EG.1/2022/CRP.1), which was submitted to the eleventh open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the Convention, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022. The subject was further discussed during the eleventh session of the expert meeting.

4. The guidelines (see annex) take into account the contributions of States parties and the discussions of the open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the Convention, as well as the outcomes of a meeting of experts on the implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh declaration held in Cairo on 12 and 13 December 2022, and a subsequent virtual consultation with those experts on 22 May 2023. Moreover, the guidelines build on an extensive analysis and synthesis of relevant guidance, policy papers and materials, including those issued by the Group of 20, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Global Task Force on Corruption and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

## **II. Non-binding guidelines**

5. The overall aim of the non-binding guidelines is to support the efforts of States parties to address the most prevalent corruption risks encountered at different stages of an emergency or crisis response, including at the national, international and multilateral levels. The guidelines are without prejudice to other context- and sector-specific guidelines, such as those concerning: (a) specific types of crises and emergencies; (b) specific sectors; (c) the intensity of the emergency or crisis; and (d) the type of corrupt practices employed. They are therefore designed to be applicable to different crisis response and recovery situations. The guidelines are intended to be high-level, non-prescriptive principles that allow States parties to determine the specific implementation modalities.

6. The non-binding guidelines consist of 13 high-level guidelines applicable during all stages of emergencies and crisis response and recovery. They are structured into three main sections, covering national legal and institutional frameworks, international cooperation, and multilateral and bilateral forums and assistance, preceded by an overarching section containing cross-cutting principles. That structure is intended to link the guidelines to the specific concerns and corruption risks arising in those different contexts. Each section begins with a context statement, and each guideline is followed by a non-exhaustive list of examples of implementation in the form of bullet points.

### **III. Next steps**

7. The non-binding guidelines contained in the annex to the present document are submitted to the expert meeting for its consideration. The guidelines are intended to serve as a platform for the exchange of capacity and expertise among States parties and may be supplemented and reviewed on the basis of experiences and lessons learned in their implementation.

## Annex

### **Non-binding guidelines for strengthening international and multilateral cooperation to further prevent, identify, investigate and prosecute corruption during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery**

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## Introduction

Emergency, crisis and conflict situations present unique corruption vulnerabilities and constraints, making it even more important to integrate appropriate anti-corruption elements into emergency preparedness and crisis response and recovery.<sup>1</sup>

## Aim and target audience

The overall aim of the present document is to support the efforts of States parties to address the most prevalent corruption risks encountered at different stages of an emergency or crisis response, including at the national, international and multilateral levels. The guidelines are designed to be broadly applicable to crisis response and recovery situations and are therefore without prejudice to other context- and sector-specific guidelines, such as those concerning: (a) specific types of crises and emergencies; (b) specific sectors; (c) the intensity of the emergency or crisis; and (d) the type of corrupt practices employed. The guidelines are intended to be high-level, non-prescriptive principles that allow States parties to determine the specific implementation modalities.

## Outline

The present document consists of 13 high-level guidelines applicable during all stages of emergencies and crisis response and recovery. It is structured into three main sections, covering national legal and institutional frameworks, international cooperation, and multilateral and bilateral forums and assistance, preceded by an overarching section containing cross-cutting principles. That structure is intended to link the guidelines to the specific concerns and corruption risks arising in those different contexts. Each section begins with a context statement, and each guideline is followed by a non-exhaustive list of examples of implementation in the form of bullet points.

## Methodology

The present document has been prepared pursuant to paragraph 23 (b) of resolution 9/1 of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, entitled “Sharm el-Sheikh declaration on strengthening international cooperation in the prevention of and fight against corruption during times of emergencies and crisis response and recovery”. Under that resolution, the open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the United Nations Convention against Corruption was directed to develop non-binding guidelines for strengthening international and multilateral cooperation to further prevent, identify, investigate and prosecute corruption during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery.

The guidelines reflect contributions received from States parties and governmental experts, as summarized in the conference room paper on best practices and challenges concerning international cooperation in combating corruption during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery, and efforts to further explore and enhance knowledge of the links between corruption and other forms of crime (CAC/COSP/EG.1/2022/CRP.1), which was submitted to the eleventh expert meeting, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022. The guidelines also draw on the outcomes of a meeting of experts on the implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh declaration held in Cairo on 12 and 13 December 2022, and a subsequent virtual

<sup>1</sup> Such efforts should ensure that anti-corruption elements remain a key priority and are integrated into all aspects of emergency response and recovery measures from the very beginning, building on the expertise of relevant anti-corruption institutions. Particular constraints include the need for rapid response in situations often characterized by loosened regulatory environments, extraordinary institutional arrangements, delays in the availability of data and information, limited capacity and resources available for the effective and efficient prevention of and fight against corruption, and the limited participation of diverse stakeholders in relevant decision-making processes.

consultation with those experts on 22 May 2023. Moreover, they build on an extensive analysis and synthesis of relevant guidance, policy papers and materials, including those issued by the Group of 20, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Global Task Force on Corruption and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

The guidelines are also intended to serve as a platform for the exchange of capacity and expertise among States parties and may be supplemented and reviewed on the basis of experiences and lessons learned in their implementation.

## I. Cross-cutting principles

Times of emergency and crisis response and recovery present operational exigencies and legal, policy and institutional constraints and are often characterized by increased risks of corruption, such as conflicts of interest, the misappropriation of public funds, abuse of public procurement procedures, domestic and transnational bribery, money-laundering and other types of crime, which may have disparate impacts on specific sectors and vulnerable groups. In particular, the demand for rapid economic and health- and humanitarian-related relief and the speed with which States parties are required to respond during times of emergency and crisis create new and increased opportunities for corruption, making it even more important to incorporate appropriate safeguards pertaining to accountability, integrity, participation and transparency, as outlined in the eleventh preambular paragraph of Conference resolution 9/1. Such safeguards may include intersectional approaches to addressing the gender dimensions of corruption.

The cross-cutting guidelines set out below are applicable at the national, international and multilateral levels during all stages of emergencies and crisis response and recovery.

### Guideline 1

**Ensure appropriate emergency preparedness by integrating anti-corruption and integrity measures before a crisis occurs and by enabling continuous evaluation and adaptation of those measures to inform future emergency planning. Anti-corruption measures should be prioritized as an integral part of all aspects of the emergency response**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Reviewing and strengthening legal, policy and institutional frameworks to integrate appropriate anti-corruption and integrity elements and minimize the need for ad hoc decision-making during an emergency.
- Ensuring that anti-corruption authorities are involved in the design and implementation of response and recovery efforts and embedding anti-corruption safeguards, such as strong internal and external audit systems, in emergency responses.

## Guideline 2

### **Continuously monitor and review relevant anti-corruption tools, mechanisms and interventions, including during times of emergency<sup>2</sup>**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Developing monitoring standards that are adapted to emergency responses and institutional frameworks that designate responsibilities for monitoring and review.
- Consistently monitoring and reviewing the efficacy of relevant anti-corruption tools, mechanisms and efforts applied during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery in order to identify gaps and good practices and improve the effectiveness of public expenditure, service delivery and relevant operational, legal, policy and institutional frameworks.
- Identifying indicators to assess the effectiveness and continued relevance of such tools, mechanisms and efforts. Ongoing assessments will allow States parties to evaluate their response and use the data to inform current measures, as well as their strategies and plans for future crises.
- Utilizing information and communications technology tools, as outlined in guideline 3.

## Guideline 3

### **Encourage the development and use of information and communications technologies and data to enhance transparency and help prevent, detect and counter corruption<sup>3</sup>**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Encouraging the development and use of information and communications technologies and data to support anti-corruption efforts. Such tools may be useful for evidence-gathering, transparency and information-sharing, reporting and monitoring, inter-agency cooperation and international cooperation.
- Developing information and communications technology tools to quickly collate, analyse, store and exchange data, strengthen data quality and validate data to ensure reliable, timely and accurate information.
- Promoting the use and exchange of anti-corruption tools that may be applied during times of emergency.

## Guideline 4

### **Support the participation and involvement of different stakeholders in the design and implementation of anti-corruption tools and initiatives and encourage their application by stakeholders and beneficiaries<sup>4</sup>**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Regularly identifying stakeholders with relevant anti-corruption expertise and harnessing their skills in order to develop and implement appropriate anti-corruption tools and initiatives. Donors, international financial institutions, the private sector, the media, civil society organizations and community leaders

<sup>2</sup> See also guidelines 3, 5–9, 11 and 13, below.

<sup>3</sup> See also guidelines 5 and 8–10, below.

<sup>4</sup> See also guidelines 5–7 and 9, below.

all play critical roles in helping to identify, detect and report cases of corruption, while also supporting interventions related to crisis response and recovery.

- Building beneficiaries' and stakeholders' knowledge of anti-corruption and integrity approaches and resilience.
- Encouraging the establishment of coordination mechanisms to facilitate the timely and effective engagement of various stakeholders and beneficiaries.

## **Guideline 5**

### **Ensure transparency and information flows during times of emergency**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Ensuring the timely and consistent flow of relevant information, both internally among public authorities and externally to the public and other stakeholders, including through centralized mechanisms and accessible platforms.<sup>5</sup>
- Developing channels and mechanisms that facilitate the reporting in good faith and on reasonable grounds of any facts concerning corruption and related offences, and ensuring that adequate protections are afforded, including against any unjustified treatment.<sup>6</sup>

## **II. National legal and institutional frameworks**

Emergency preparedness and response and recovery efforts begin at the national level and often require countries to harness the expertise and capacity of a number of institutions quickly and to ensure sufficient coordination among them. To integrate strong anti-corruption measures from the beginning, it is important to involve anti-corruption authorities, as well as those with specific experience in working on crisis response and recovery, in the design and development of pre-crisis legislation, policies and strategies and in the implementation and monitoring of response and recovery activities and procedures. Institutionalized corruption risk management processes are also essential to help identify and address particular corruption vulnerabilities that arise during crises and to learn from past emergencies. Engagement with actors outside the public sector to inform the development of typologies of corruption risks, help build support for response measures, strengthen accountability in the allocation and distribution of recovery funds, monitor government action and provide ongoing feedback, and support government efforts to detect corrupt acts has also proved important in past emergencies. A strong national response lays the groundwork for greater international cooperation.

## **Guideline 6**

### **Consistently engage in corruption risk management processes to identify, assess and manage corruption risks and implement effective mitigation measures<sup>7</sup>**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Analysing past emergencies and identifying typologies of corruption risks that were present and may recur, including linkages between corruption and other forms of crime.<sup>8</sup> This may include reviewing capacity and coordination functions and identifying particular sectors that may face greater corruption

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<sup>5</sup> See also guidelines 1, 3 and 4, above. On information flow, see also guidelines 8 and 9, below.

<sup>6</sup> See principle 4 of the Group of 20 High-level Principles on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Emergencies. See also guidelines 1 and 3, above.

<sup>7</sup> See also guidelines 1, 2 and 4, above, and guideline 7, below.

<sup>8</sup> Conference of the States Parties resolution 9/1.



risks, as well as examining how resources for response and recovery procedures were previously approved, allocated and expended.

- Engaging with relevant stakeholders to identify risks and design, update and improve mitigation measures, including by using the information, analysis and reports produced by such stakeholders.<sup>9</sup>
- Incorporating and implementing corruption risk management processes, in particular in institutions responsible for or concerned with crisis response and recovery, to help prevent corruption risks from arising and to have such processes in place in the event of an emergency. States parties may consider using predictive modelling in those processes to help identify where risks exist and where resources may be needed.
- Continuing to assess corruption risks during an emergency in order to identify emerging or sector-specific corruption risks and re-evaluating, revising or enhancing existing risk mitigation measures as necessary to ensure that they remain appropriate.

## Guideline 7

### **Enhance legislation, regulations, policies and strategies and ensure that anti-corruption measures are properly integrated<sup>10</sup>**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Establishing legal, administrative and regulatory frameworks that incorporate robust anti-corruption safeguards, so that the necessary measures are in place prior to the onset of an emergency or crisis. Particular attention should be paid to systems for procurement and policies on financial disclosure, codes of conduct and conflicts of interest,<sup>11</sup> as well as systems requiring the disclosure of beneficial ownership information by legal persons and appropriate access thereto, in order to enable the use of such information as an anti-corruption tool.<sup>12</sup>
- Ensuring that national frameworks include multilateral or international coordination mechanisms to facilitate cooperation among relevant authorities when a crisis occurs.<sup>13</sup>
- Establishing and strengthening monitoring capacity to help safeguard the management of public funds and ensuring that sufficient oversight mechanisms, such as audit systems, are in place prior to an emergency or crisis.

## Guideline 8

### **Establish strong institutional frameworks, including systems for effective coordination, and afford relevant authorities the necessary independence, resources and mandates and access to relevant information concerning corruption and corruption vulnerabilities<sup>14</sup>**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Identifying relevant authorities and bodies to be involved at different stages of the crisis and emergency response and recovery process, including specialized anti-corruption and judicial authorities, and clearly designating their mandates,

<sup>9</sup> See also guideline 4, above.

<sup>10</sup> See also guidelines 1, 2 and 6, above, and guidelines 8 and 9, below.

<sup>11</sup> On conflicts of interest, see also guideline 9, below.

<sup>12</sup> On beneficial ownership information, see also guidelines 9 and 11, below.

<sup>13</sup> See also guideline 8, below.

<sup>14</sup> See also guidelines 1–3 and 5, above, and guidelines 7, 9 and 11, below.

areas of competence and decision-making processes during times of crisis and emergency.

- Ensuring appropriate capacity, training and resources among the authorities involved in crisis and emergency response and recovery. This may include providing training to relevant public officials on appropriate anti-corruption elements.
- Establishing a coordination framework to enhance cooperation and information-sharing among relevant authorities to help facilitate a common strategy and operational plan.
- Empowering audit authorities to make relevant recommendations and suggestions or decisions, where appropriate.
- Establishing robust oversight mechanisms, such as effective external and internal audits and risk management protocols, to help strengthen accountability.<sup>15</sup>

## Guideline 9

**Establish and, where necessary, further strengthen procurement processes and public financial management systems so that they are characterized by the principles of transparency, competition and objective decision-making and contribute to strategic public spending and sustainability**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Integrating anti-corruption safeguards into all aspects of the procurement process, limiting the use of accelerated procedures and incorporating lessons learned from past emergencies.
- Establishing and, where necessary and appropriate, further strengthening the entire public procurement process by integrating transparent, competitive and objective public procurement systems, including through the use of electronic means.
- Developing and improving guidelines for the use and governance of emergency procurement procedures.<sup>16</sup>
- Putting in place adequate internal and external audit systems and, where necessary, strengthening them to help monitor the allocation and distribution of emergency relief and ensuring the implementation of measures to prevent corruption during times of emergency and crisis.<sup>17</sup>
- Enhancing transparency within public procurement by enabling access to information on all stages of the procurement process.<sup>18</sup> This may also include information on the specific use, award, management and delivery of projects that use response and recovery funds, as well as on the recipients of public contracts and the associated beneficial owners.<sup>19</sup>
- Facilitating public scrutiny and monitoring of procurement processes.<sup>20</sup>
- Minimizing opportunities for public officials and decision-makers to use their status, influence or insider knowledge to profit from procurement processes or from the design, allocation, distribution or management of crisis response and recovery measures by requiring them to disclose potential conflicts of interest

<sup>15</sup> See principle 2 of the G20 High-level Principles on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Emergencies. On risk management protocols, see also guideline 6, above.

<sup>16</sup> On pre-agreed, pre-cleared and pre-approved procedures, see also guidelines 1 and 7, above.

<sup>17</sup> See Conference of the States Parties resolution 9/1, para. 6.

<sup>18</sup> On information flow, see also guidelines 3, 5 and 8, above, and guideline 11, below.

<sup>19</sup> On beneficial ownership, see also guideline 7, above, and guideline 11, below.

<sup>20</sup> See guideline 4, above.

and ensuring appropriate review, management and sanction mechanisms, thereby promoting a culture of accountability and integrity.<sup>21</sup>

- Analysing previous bids to develop relevant price and cost benchmarks, such as by compiling price comparison reports on certain goods and supplies on the basis of previous procurement data, in order to help deter and prevent fraud, corruption, price gouging and inefficient public spending.
- Establishing appropriate measures to effectively manage public finances during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery. Such measures may include:
  - Ensuring that budgets and accounts are accessible by the public.
  - Using flexible and effective financial distribution policies to manage funds allocated for relief.
  - Enabling supreme audit institutions and other relevant entities to perform their functions.<sup>22</sup>
- Implementing measures to limit opportunities for improper public contract transactions and corruption.<sup>23</sup> This may include developing lists of preferred or restricted suppliers, adopting unified regional procurement responses and concluding agreements with suppliers before a crisis occurs to mitigate disruptions throughout the procurement process.
- Ensuring cooperation and coordination among government entities responsible for procurement and those responsible for the prevention and investigation of fraud, corruption and related crimes, including supreme audit institutions.<sup>24</sup>

## Guideline 10

### **Mandate criminal justice and other competent authorities to tackle corruption and the misuse of public funds associated with crises and emergencies**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

- Empowering criminal justice and other relevant competent authorities to execute their functions effectively and independently in order to end impunity for corruption, including when it results from crises and emergencies.
- Ensuring that competent authorities have sufficient capacity, training and resources and that there is sufficient coordination among them, including through the provision of expert support, such as support from engineers or forensic accountants, to enable authorities to quickly adapt and continue their proper functioning in emergencies and to react to new criminal patterns.
- Employing and maximizing the utilization of all available and appropriate investigatory means and tools, including electronic evidence, special investigative techniques, forensic expertise and financial investigations, to enable the prosecution of offences and the possible confiscation of associated proceeds of crime.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See Conference of the States Parties resolution 9/1, para. 4. See also principle 2 of the G20 High-level Principles on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Emergencies. On conflicts of interest, see also guideline 7, above.

<sup>22</sup> See also guideline 8, above.

<sup>23</sup> See principle 3 of the G20 High-level Principles on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Emergencies.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. See also Conference of the States Parties resolution 9/1, para. 5 and guideline 8, above.

<sup>25</sup> See also guideline 3, above.

### III. International cooperation

International cooperation is one of many aspects of the criminal justice response that is affected in situations of emergency and crisis response and recovery. Emergency situations often give rise to elements of transnational corruption, such as the misappropriation of public or donor funds, irregularities in international public procurement and instances of national or transnational bribery, and links to other forms of crime, such as money-laundering or organized crime. The need to devote adequate human and financial resources to ensure rapid responses in times of emergency may directly affect the capacity of States parties to effectively engage in international cooperation.

#### Guideline 11

**Strengthen mechanisms to effectively prevent and respond to corruption and corruption vulnerabilities through international cooperation, by connecting authorities and collaborating across borders to ensure that transnational cases can be effectively prevented, detected, investigated and prosecuted and that proceeds of crime can be confiscated during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

##### *Legal and institutional frameworks*

- Ensuring the existence of adequate legal and institutional frameworks for international cooperation and information exchange in order to allow for effective responses to corruption, including during times of crisis and emergency.<sup>26</sup>
- Continuing to review and revise mechanisms for international cooperation as necessary in order to strengthen existing networks and information exchange.<sup>27</sup>

##### *Connecting authorities and collaborating across borders*

- Making available information on contact persons and contact channels for the exchange of information among competent national authorities, including central authorities, specifically in emergency and crisis situations.
- Encouraging the use of informal cooperation channels, direct contact between competent authorities and alternative means of communication, including in the absence of an agreement, and promoting the spontaneous exchange of information during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery.<sup>28</sup>
- Strengthening the exchange of information at the international and regional levels through networks and cooperation platforms, such as the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GlobE Network).<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> See principle 5 of the G20 High-level Principles on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Emergencies. On information flow, see also guideline 5 and the final bullet point of guideline 9, above.

<sup>27</sup> See also guideline 2, above.

<sup>28</sup> See also guideline 8, above.

<sup>29</sup> See Conference of the States Parties resolution 9/1, para. 18.

- Taking appropriate measures to enhance beneficial ownership transparency by ensuring that adequate, accurate and timely beneficial ownership information is available and accessible to competent authorities, including by promoting the disclosure of beneficial ownership information and the use of registries, as appropriate.<sup>30</sup>

## Guideline 12

### **Enhance communication and information exchange among competent national authorities during times of crisis and recovery and effectively utilize available mechanisms for international cooperation, including mutual legal assistance and other forms of cooperation**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

#### *Communication and information exchange*

- Strengthening the prompt and secure exchange of information between competent authorities (including central authorities) through formal and informal channels, including among dedicated contact persons.<sup>31</sup>
- Developing and strengthening the use of reliable, high-quality, timely and effective electronic communication channels that enable competent authorities to rapidly share up-to-date information through existing mechanisms, including those of the Globe Network and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).<sup>32</sup>

#### *Mutual legal assistance and judicial cooperation*

- Encouraging the transmission and acceptance of mutual legal assistance requests through electronic means, and the use of databases that allow authorities to monitor the progress of mutual legal assistance requests related to emergencies at the national and international levels.<sup>33</sup>
- Considering prioritizing requests related to emergencies, including requests concerning corruption and money-laundering offences, providing the requesting jurisdictions with timely updates on the status of such requests and considering prioritizing access to public records and databases in cases of emergencies and crises.
- Considering developing guidelines or handbooks on evidentiary and procedural requirements for granting requests for mutual legal assistance and the criteria for prioritizing such requests.
- Encouraging the entering into and signing of bilateral and regional agreements and arrangements to cooperate and exchange information in emergency situations.

#### *Other forms of cooperation, and exchange of capacity and expertise*

- Strengthening cooperation in investigations of and proceedings in civil and administrative matters relating to corruption and considering carrying out joint or coordinated investigations, where appropriate.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., para. 11. On beneficial ownership, see also guidelines 7 and 9, above.

<sup>31</sup> See also guideline 8, above.

<sup>32</sup> See Conference of the States Parties resolution 9/1, para. 18. See also guidelines 3 and 8, above.

<sup>33</sup> See also guideline 3, above.

<sup>34</sup> See also guideline 8, above.

- Considering sharing capacity and expertise, where appropriate, including through the Globe Network and INTERPOL and through relevant international mechanisms and platforms to prevent and respond to corruption and corruption vulnerabilities during times of emergency and crisis response and recovery.<sup>35</sup>

#### IV. Multilateral and bilateral forums and assistance

Emergency and crisis situations, such as the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, conflicts and natural disasters, test the resilience of international economic, development and humanitarian systems. The need for rapid, sustained and coordinated relief efforts lies at the heart of multilateral responses in these situations. However, the need to respond quickly often leads to simplified regulations and procedures that facilitate response and recovery efforts. At the same time, large sums of money, in the form of both domestic funds and funds from donors and international financial institutions, are released to address the crisis and accelerate recovery, creating opportunities for corruption in such situations. In this way, corruption can undermine multilateral and bilateral responses, making it even more important to recognize its impact during times of emergency and crisis response. At the same time, donors, development partners and agencies that provide vital relief are aware of the inherent corruption risks and have developed a range of policies and practices to address them.

##### Guideline 13

**Enhance cooperation and coordination among regional, multilateral and international organizations by establishing channels for the exchange of information, good practices and experience in addressing corruption in emergency and crisis response and recovery and by incorporating appropriate anti-corruption measures into the provision of emergency relief assistance, recognizing the particular contexts and sensitivities of addressing corruption in times of conflict, emergency and crisis**

States parties may apply this guideline by:

##### *Regional, multilateral and international mechanisms*

- Enhancing cooperation and coordination among relevant regional, multilateral and international organizations and using those organizations as a forum to exchange information, good practices and experience in addressing corruption in emergency and crisis response and recovery.<sup>36</sup>
- Continuing to emphasize the need for such increased multilateral cooperation as part of the international agenda.<sup>37</sup>
- Exploring ways in which anti-corruption measures related to emergency and crisis response and recovery can be incorporated into international and regional mechanisms to review the implementation of relevant anti-corruption instruments.<sup>38</sup>

##### *Bilateral and multilateral assistance*

- Strengthening integrity in the provision of emergency relief assistance by analysing corruption risks and incorporating adequate anti-corruption elements, such as codes or standards of conduct and relevant oversight and sanctioning

<sup>35</sup> See Conference of the States Parties resolution 9/1, para. 21.

<sup>36</sup> See also guidelines 3 and 5, above.

<sup>37</sup> See also guidelines 3 and 6, above.

<sup>38</sup> See also guideline 4, above.

systems,<sup>39</sup> enhancing coordination among assistance providers and recipients<sup>40</sup> and allowing the consistent monitoring and evaluation of bilateral and multilateral assistance.<sup>41</sup>

Collecting and exchanging best practices with a view to improving integrity in the provision of emergency relief assistance.

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<sup>39</sup> On codes of conduct, see also the first bullet point under guideline 7, above.

<sup>40</sup> See also guideline 2, above.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.