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English only

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**Implementation Review Group****Fourteenth session**

Vienna, 12–16 June 2023

**Briefing for non-governmental organizations in accordance with resolution 4/6 of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption entitled “Non-governmental organizations and the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption”****Summary**

1. At its fourth session, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption adopted resolution 4/6 entitled “Non-governmental organizations and the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption”. In that resolution, the Conference decided that briefings for non-governmental organizations would be convened on the margins of the sessions of the Implementation Review Group (hereinafter: “the Group”) on the outcomes of the review process, including technical assistance needs identified. The Conference also decided that those briefings would be conducted by the secretariat in cooperation with a member of the bureau and would be based on the reports of the Group, thematic implementation reports and regional supplementary addenda. The Conference requested States parties and signatories to use the briefings and to draw on the discussions and proposals of its fourth session to continue the constructive dialogue on the contribution of non-governmental organizations to the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the Convention (hereinafter “the Mechanism”).
2. Moreover, in the same resolution, the Conference encouraged non-governmental organizations to report to it and/or the Group, as appropriate, individually or collectively, on their activities and contributions to the implementation of the recommendations and conclusions of the Group approved by the Conference, including those related to meeting technical assistance needs and advancing capacity to effectively implement the Convention. The briefings would serve to further promote constructive dialogue with non-governmental organizations dealing with anti-corruption issues.
3. The first briefing for non-governmental organizations, held in accordance with Conference resolution 4/6, took place in the margins of the third session of the Group on 20 June 2012, and subsequent briefings were held annually on 30 May 2013, 5 June 2014, 4 June 2015, 23 June 2016, 22 June 2017, 5 September 2018,



3 September 2019, 1 September 2020, 7 September 2021, and 15 June 2022, in the margins of the fourth to the thirteenth sessions of the Group.

4. The twelfth briefing for non-governmental organizations was held in the margins of the fourteenth session of the Group on 13 June 2023, and was chaired by Pierre Bertels (Belgium), Rapporteur of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption at its tenth session. The Chair delivered introductory remarks, welcoming the decision taken by the Conference to involve non-governmental organizations in the work of the Mechanism.

5. At the start of the briefing, the secretariat recalled Conference resolution 4/6 and reiterated the terms of the briefing for non-governmental organizations. In order to allow for a more interactive discussion, the participants were invited to ask questions after each of the three presentations by the secretariat, which covered (i) the performance of the Mechanism ([CAC/COSP/IRG/2023/2](#)) and the next phase of the Mechanism ([CAC/COSP/IRG/2023/3](#)), (ii) the thematic report and its regional addendum by the secretariat on the implementation of chapter II (Preventive measures) of the Convention ([CAC/COSP/IRG/2023/5](#) and [CAC/COSP/IRG/2023/5/Add.1](#)), as well as (iii) an update on technical assistance needs emerging from the country reviews and on technical assistance provided by UNODC in support of the implementation of the Convention ([CAC/COSP/IRG/2023/6](#)).

6. In the ensuing discussion, one speaker expressed appreciation to UNODC for the quality of analysis provided in the pre-session documents and for its assistance to NGOs within the framework of the rules of procedure of the Conference, encouraged States parties to invite NGOs to join meetings as experts and panellists, emphasized the importance of admitting civil society organizations to meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference and highlighted the need for enhanced participation of NGOs in the Implementation Review Mechanism. The speaker also noted that the commitments included in the political declaration entitled “Our common commitment to effectively addressing challenges and implementing measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation”, adopted by the General Assembly at its special session held from 2 to 4 June 2021, should be taken into account in the development of the next phase of the Mechanism. In response to a question regarding a timetable for the discussions on the next phase of the Implementation Review Mechanism, a representative of the secretariat referred to the deliberations during the sessions of the Implementation Review Group, which were held in 2022, and noted that a decision on the extension of the current phase of the Mechanism would need to be taken at the tenth session of the Conference.

7. One speaker provided information on access to information campaigns conducted by his organization in several countries, with the view to tracking progress on their reviews under the Mechanism.

8. In response to a question on whether UNODC had observed any changes in corruption trends since the launch of the Mechanism, a representative of the secretariat noted that the review process under the Mechanism examined compliance with the Convention and provided a benchmark for measuring progress in compliance and information that was used in producing thematic reports of global and regional trends. Furthermore, in response to a question on the role of UNODC in enhancing the participation of NGOs from developing countries in processes in the framework of the Conference, a representative of the secretariat noted that, inter alia, online participation allowed for a more inclusive approach and broadened the potential contribution of non-governmental organizations to global anti-corruption efforts. He also referred to regional dialogues that were being organized by UNODC, with the participation of civil society organizations in the run up to the tenth session of the Conference. Moreover, he highlighted the importance of special events in facilitating the participation of non-governmental organizations and noted that UNODC benefitted from collaboration with civil society organizations that had an established track record and relevant expertise.

9. One speaker spoke about the involvement of the private sector in addressing corruption and referred to her organization's work with the private sector. A representative of the secretariat noted that UNODC was implementing several projects focused on private sector transparency and integrity.

10. Another speaker provided information about the efforts of her organization to promote measures to enhance transparency in the funding of candidatures for political office and political parties and highlighted the need to conduct a survey on good practices in this regard. The speaker referred to the lack of comprehensive legislation as one of the prevailing challenges in this area and called on the Conference to follow up on the mandate contained in the political declaration, to maintain, strengthen, develop and implement measures that protect the integrity of the electoral process and promote its accountability to voters, transparency and impartiality in domestic electoral institutions and oversight mechanisms, and transparency in the funding of candidatures for elected public office, political parties and electoral campaigns. In response to a question on whether UNODC was implementing any projects on article 7(3) of the Convention, a representative of the secretariat provided information on the expert group meetings on transparency in political finance and on corruption involving vast quantities of assets, organized by UNODC.<sup>1</sup>

11. The representative of the United States provided information on her Government's preparations for the tenth session of the Conference, to be held in Atlanta from 11 to 15 December 2023, which her Government was honoured to host. She noted that December 2023 would mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Since its adoption, the Convention had served as a common framework that guided States parties in their efforts to prevent and combat corruption, and it had been directly responsible for the progress made by the international community in the shared fight against corruption. She informed the participants that the US Department of State's Coordinator on Global Anti-corruption, Richard Nephew, had been nominated for the presidency of the tenth session of the Conference. She also outlined the priorities of the US Government for the Conference, including strengthening the Convention's role in the multilateral anti-corruption architecture; championing the role of civil society; promoting stronger law enforcement cooperation on asset recovery; and global action to promote financial transparency and integrity. The speaker also presented the website developed by the host country for the Conference ([www.cosp10.us](http://www.cosp10.us)) and informed the participants about the events that were to be held prior to the Conference, noting that the events were open to all non-governmental organizations, irrespective of their admittance to the Conference. In addition, she encouraged all participants to apply for visas as soon as possible, regardless of the information provided on the websites of embassies or consulates. In that regard, she noted that no conference-specific visas would be issued to participants. She indicated that diplomats, employees of international organizations and foreign governmental bodies could apply for the appropriate visa categories and submit their applications, using either a letter of invitation to the Conference or the note verbale circulated on 18 April 2023, issued by UNODC.

12. During the ensuing discussion, several speakers expressed their appreciation to the Government of the United States for hosting the Conference. In this regard, one speaker highlighted the importance of deliberations and possible resolutions on transparency in public procurement, whistle-blower protection, beneficial ownership transparency, redress for victims of corruption, links between organized crime and corruption, gender and corruption, and follow-up to the UNGASS political declaration. The speaker invited States parties to share information with civil society organizations regarding the planned composition of their delegations at the Conference, to provide funding for civil society participation and to collaborate with

<sup>1</sup> See Expert Group Meeting on Transparency in Political Finance [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/meetings/prague-egm-2019.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/meetings/prague-egm-2019.html) and Global Expert Group Meeting on Corruption Involving Vast Quantities of Assets: [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/meetings/oslo-egm-2019.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/meetings/oslo-egm-2019.html).

them on the organization of special events and to inform their national civil society groups about their substantive priorities for the Conference. He also reiterated that, twenty years after the adoption of the Convention, it was time to reconsider the limited role of civil society in the work of the Conference and to consider options to facilitate the participation of non-governmental organizations in sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference.

13. One speaker informed the participants about the publication of the report “Exporting Corruption 2022” and noted the need to develop guidelines for victims compensation in foreign bribery cases. She noted that UNODC could also be mandated, and receive funding for the preparation of a report on foreign bribery, which would include relevant statistical data, including on investigations and case outcomes and for the establishment of public databases on cross-border investigations and cases and on corporate crime (to the extent to which such information could be published). A representative of the secretariat informed the participants about an upcoming knowledge product on compensation of victims of corruption and overhaul of the Asset Recovery Watch database, under the UNODC/World Bank Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative.

14. In response to a question on formal and informal synergies between the review mechanisms established under the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, a representative of the secretariat informed participants that regular consultations between the secretariats take place.

15. In concluding, the Chair welcomed all statements made by participants and noted with appreciation that the briefing provided another important opportunity to strengthen collaboration and dialogue between civil society and the States parties to the Convention.

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