



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

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## Report on the meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption held in Vienna from 4 to 6 September 2019

### I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 3/2, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption decided to establish an interim open-ended intergovernmental working group to advise and assist the Conference in the implementation of its mandate on the prevention of corruption.
2. The Conference decided that the Working Group should perform the following functions:
  - (a) Assist the Conference in developing and accumulating knowledge in the area of prevention of corruption;
  - (b) Facilitate the exchange of information and experience among States on preventive measures and practices;
  - (c) Facilitate the collection, dissemination and promotion of best practices in corruption prevention;
  - (d) Assist the Conference in encouraging cooperation among all stakeholders and sectors of society in order to prevent corruption.
3. The efforts by the Working Group to facilitate the sharing of information between States parties have been continuously welcomed by the Conference, including in its resolution 7/6. In that resolution, the Conference underlined the importance of the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Working Group at its seventh and eighth meetings, held in Vienna from 22 to 24 August 2016 and from 21 to 23 August 2017, respectively. The Conference also requested States parties to continue to share information and requested the Secretariat, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to continue its work as an international observatory, including by updating the thematic website of the Working Group with relevant information.
4. As recalled in its decision 7/1, the Conference had requested in its resolution 6/1 that the Secretariat structure the provisional agendas of the subsidiary bodies established by the Conference in such a way as to avoid the duplication of discussions, while respecting their mandates.
5. In compliance with Conference resolution 7/5, entitled “Promoting preventive measures against corruption”, the Working Group had included as the topic for 2019



lessons learned on the development, evaluation and impact of anti-corruption strategies (art. 5 of the Convention).

## **II. Organization of the meeting**

### **A. Opening of the meeting**

6. The Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption held its tenth meeting in Vienna, from 4 to 6 September 2019, which included two meetings held jointly with the Implementation Review Group, on 4 September.

7. The meeting was chaired by María Consuelo Porrás Argueta (Guatemala), the President-designate of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption at its seventh session.

8. In opening the meeting, the Chair recalled resolution 3/2, in which the Conference had established the Working Group and defined its functions, including those of assisting the Conference in developing and accumulating knowledge in the area of prevention of corruption and of facilitating the exchange of information and experience. She also recalled resolution 7/5, in which the Conference had decided that the topic for discussion at the present meeting would be lessons learned on the development, evaluation and impact of anti-corruption strategies (art. 5 of the Convention). She underlined that the Conference, in the same resolution, had recognized the recommendation by the Working Group to leave room in its agenda to add or amend topics of discussion to maximize the cross-fertilization of the discussions held by the Working Group and the Implementation Review Group, which had led to the organization of work for the present meeting, including the two joint meetings of the two groups.

9. The Director of the Division for Treaty Affairs noted that the work undertaken by the Working Group since its first meeting, in 2010, had resulted in the accumulation of knowledge and expertise, and he expressed appreciation to States parties for their cooperation in sharing information in various forms, thus allowing others to benefit from their experience. He also noted that, as chapter II of the Convention (preventive measures) was being reviewed under the second cycle of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, this information had proved invaluable in allowing national experts to assess the level of implementation of the Convention by their countries and to serve as reviewing experts for their peers. Similarly, the information generated by the Implementation Review Group through the thematic reports prepared by the Secretariat, among others, provided a solid basis for discussions in the Working Group and assisted the Conference as well as individual States in shaping the corruption prevention agenda at various levels. He underlined the importance of a comprehensive approach to combating corruption effectively and drew the attention of the Working Group to the preventive measures and the principles of integrity, accountability, objectivity and transparency, which were included in chapter II. The Director also drew the attention of the Working Group to General Assembly resolution 73/191, entitled “Special session of the General Assembly against corruption”, in which the Assembly had decided to convene in the first half of 2021 a special session of the Assembly on challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption. He emphasized that the reduction of corruption and bribery and the development of accountable and transparent institutions were envisioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and that anti-corruption measures and principles could help to deliver results in all areas of the Agenda.

## B. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

10. On 4 September, the Working Group adopted the following agenda:
  1. Organizational matters:
    - (a) Opening of the meeting;
    - (b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
  2. Implementation of Conference resolutions 7/5, entitled “Promoting preventive measures against corruption”, and 7/6, entitled “Follow-up to the Marrakech declaration on the prevention of corruption”:
    - (a) Good practices and initiatives in the prevention of corruption: lessons learned on the development, evaluation and impact of anti-corruption strategies (art. 5 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption);
    - (b) Other recommendations.
  3. Future priorities.
  4. Adoption of the report.

## C. Attendance

11. The following States parties to the Convention were represented at the tenth meeting of the Working Group: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, China, Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

12. The European Union, a regional economic integration organization that is a party to the Convention, was represented at the meeting.

13. The following specialized agency of the United Nations was represented by an observer: International Telecommunications Union.

14. The following intergovernmental organizations were also represented: Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre, Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, Council of Europe, Criminal Information Centre to Combat Drugs, Group of States against Corruption, International Anti-Corruption Academy, International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), League of Arab States, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and World Customs Organization.

15. The Sovereign Order of Malta, an entity maintaining a Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations (Vienna), and the Basel Institute on Governance, a not-for-profit Swiss foundation working to prevent and combat corruption, were also represented at the meeting.

### **III. Implementation of Conference resolutions 7/5, entitled “Promoting preventive measures against corruption”, and 7/6, entitled “Follow-up to the Marrakech declaration on the prevention of corruption”, and of the recommendations agreed upon by the Working Group at its meeting held in September 2018**

#### **A. Thematic discussion on lessons learned on the development, evaluation and impact of anti-corruption strategies (art. 5 of the Convention)**

16. The Chair introduced the substantive discussion of the item, for which the Secretariat had prepared a background paper ([CAC/COSP/WG.4/2019/2](#)).

17. A representative of the secretariat thanked States parties for the information that they had provided in advance of the meeting, which formed the basis of the background paper. The representative emphasized the importance of lessons learned on the development, evaluation and impact of anti-corruption strategies. The representative stated that, in their submissions, States had recognized the importance of anti-corruption policies and strategies to broader approaches to combating organized crime and promoting good governance and sustainable development. Many States had underlined the need to include a wide range of stakeholders in the development of such strategies in order to ensure successful implementation and coordination. The need to identify high-quality indicators of impact as part of a monitoring, evaluation and reporting system had also been highlighted in many submissions.

18. A panellist from Qatar delivered a presentation on the achievements and way forward in the implementation of national anti-corruption preventive policies. He outlined the vision, mission, methodology, pillars and institutional framework of the national strategy for promoting integrity and transparency of his country, which was developed in a comprehensive and inclusive manner, with the support of technical assistance provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). He also described forthcoming legislative and procedural amendments, in particular in the areas of whistle-blower protection and mutual legal assistance. A new initiative regarding an integrity charter for public officials was also described. It had been designed to strengthen integrity, promote respect for the law and ethical conduct among public officials and enhance the confidence of service recipients in public institutions. Through positive reinforcement and an emphasis on strengthening relations among public officials and with the public, the integrity charter was aimed at both informing the community of the standards of conduct to expect from public officials and, in turn, promoting an environment of mutual trust and ethics. He thanked UNODC for the technical assistance provided to Qatar in support of its corruption prevention efforts and in the development of the national strategy.

19. A panellist from Serbia outlined the progress made and challenges faced during the implementation of the national anti-corruption strategy of his country for 2013–2018. He explained how the monitoring and evaluation of the strategy, which were conducted by the anti-corruption agency, allowed for alternative reporting by civil society organizations and included an electronic reporting mechanism that facilitated further input, contributed to the production of an annual assessment, which included relevant data, identified challenges and led to recommendations for each following year of the strategy. He described the development of sector-based anti-corruption strategies and measures, noting as an example the strategy of the Ministry of Interior for preventing corruption in the police forces. He also described how national priorities and a model anti-corruption plan developed by the anti-corruption agency had inspired the development of local anti-corruption plans containing corruption prevention measures for municipalities and communities based on their

specific context, challenges and priorities. Those local plans helped to foster meaningful participation in the implementation process of local civil society organizations, trade unions, the private sector and the broader community.

20. A panellist from Italy discussed the role of the national anti-corruption authority of her country in overseeing a “cascade model” to anti-corruption strategies based on a three-year national anti-corruption plan and complemented by three-year anti-corruption and transparency programmes adopted by each public institution. She reported that this approach provided significant advantages in terms of aligning priorities and of ownership at the institutional level, leading to concrete measures and sector-specific achievements. She also reported on the key contribution that monitoring and evaluation had made to subsequent measures taken under the anti-corruption plan. In addition, she spoke about the national legal framework for the protection of whistle-blowers in the public and private sectors. She described four communication channels and an electronic platform available to public employees for reporting misconduct, along with applicable confidentiality protection levels. She informed the Group that, as a result, the number of reports received had more than doubled in the past two years.

21. A panellist from Sri Lanka delivered a presentation on the national action plan of his country for combating bribery and corruption, and described the series of consultations held during its development to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach. He described four strategies incorporated into the action plan, namely, prevention measures, strengthening value-based education and community engagement, institutional strengthening and legal and policy reform. He also identified several achievements, including rules related to gifts, conflicts of interest, integrity and potential legislative amendments. He emphasized that a key component of the action plan was the monitoring and evaluation methodology, with the objectives of monitoring progress in implementation, ensuring periodical oversight and evaluating the impact of its implementation on reducing corruption. He thanked UNODC for its technical assistance and support to the development and implementation of corruption prevention measures.

22. During the ensuing discussion, one speaker outlined the national anti-corruption strategy of his country, which included numerous recommendations and measures to prevent corruption and strengthen integrity under the oversight and coordination of an anti-corruption authority. The speaker described how the strategy had been developed through a consultative and inclusive approach, resulting in the identification of priorities and challenges to be addressed at the implementation stage. It was noted that monitoring and evaluation were integral to the strategy implementation and included input from implementation partners, as well as academia, civil society and citizens. The speaker noted the importance of identifying and using indicators in monitoring and evaluation and of assessing the impact of measures taken.

23. Speakers emphasized the importance of anti-corruption strategies and policies to the successful prevention of corruption. Several speakers remarked that the identification of the necessary elements to be included in national anti-corruption strategies should be grounded in the framework of the Convention. Speakers emphasized that national anti-corruption strategies should be ambitious but realistic in what could be achieved during the designated time period. Specific priorities identified for incorporation into such strategies included codes of ethics and strengthening integrity in the public service, value-based education, legislative reform, public procurement, transparency and access to public information, digitalization, open government, anti-corruption academies and training centres, awareness-raising activities, corruption risk assessments, codes of corporate governance and prevention of corruption in the private sector. Some speakers advocated a zero-tolerance policy with maximum deterrence measures and strict enforcement of anti-corruption criminal legislation as effective measures for the prevention of corruption.

24. Speakers noted the importance of including elements of national and international cooperation in national strategies, in particular in terms of sharing evidence and intelligence pertaining to corruption investigations. In this regard, reference was made to Conference resolutions 5/1 and 6/4 and the emphasis placed therein on international cooperation. Emphasis was also placed on prohibitions for public officials from holding assets, shares or bank accounts outside of the national jurisdiction to prevent conflicts of interest. It was noted that financial audits to ensure compliance with such prohibitions relied on effective and efficient international assistance, in particular from international financial institutions.

25. Speakers described a range of approaches to the development and implementation of national anti-corruption strategies. Several speakers noted the importance of an initial assessment and diagnosis of the corruption risks and challenges present in a country as an initial step in the development of a national anti-corruption strategy, which could be achieved through experience-based surveys. In addition, many speakers emphasized the value of an inclusive, participatory approach to both the development and implementation processes that would include civil society organizations, academia, young people, women, the private sector, the general public and other non-governmental stakeholders. Several speakers noted the importance of political will and context to combat corruption, including that, in some cases, of a constitutional mandate, in order to ensure support for the development and implementation processes. Speakers described the value of lessons learned from the experience of other States parties, as well as the engagement of international organizations in the development and implementation of national anti-corruption strategies.

26. One speaker described the value of developing separate strategies for the prevention of corruption and the investigation and prosecution of corruption, given the different stakeholders involved and challenges addressed. Sector-specific and stakeholder-specific anti-corruption strategies were also described, in particular in relation to education, young people and women. Other speakers remarked on the value of distinct national, regional and local anti-corruption strategies, which could address various context-specific challenges and priorities. In this regard, it was noted that decentralizing anti-corruption policies and practices allowed for specialized interventions and the targeting of concrete corruption priorities, while avoiding conflicting or overlapping mandates among various public institutions. In addition, the decentralized approach implied that each institution acted autonomously, free of external pressures, and was responsible for its own budget and accountable for its integrity programme. The importance of identifying implementation partners, including in the private sector, was identified as important to the achievement of the concrete measures set forth in anti-corruption strategies. One speaker highlighted the need for flexibility in the implementation of national strategies so as not to stifle creative tools that managers and leaders of various government institutions devised to respond to the unique situations, priorities, vulnerabilities and needs of their offices.

27. Several speakers noted the importance of identifying appropriate indicators to evaluate implementation progress in a systematic way, as well as the impact of measures taken in preventing and combating corruption effectively. Speakers noted that indicators should be tailored to the legal, social and cultural context of each country. In addition, it was mentioned that monitoring and evaluation systems could be supported by relevant stakeholders, such as the private sector and civil society organizations. One speaker highlighted the benefit of entering into bilateral arrangements for that purpose. Speakers emphasized that an integral component of monitoring and evaluation was the production of reports, often on an annual or quarterly basis, on progress made and challenges encountered during implementation. It was noted that those reports were often mandated by law and made available to the public. Speakers reported that regular evaluation of the state of implementation of the strategy was helpful to make adjustments to the strategy goals, outcomes and timelines, and to be able to respond to emergent challenges and priorities.

28. Several speakers highlighted challenges encountered during the implementation process and described how lessons learned during that process had informed subsequent anti-corruption strategies. In this regard, the importance of ensuring the allocation of sufficient resources to carry out implementation activities under the strategy was highlighted. One common challenge noted by many speakers was the effective coordination of a wide range of implementation stakeholders, including the division of roles and responsibilities. Another common challenge was the identification of appropriate indicators to measure implementation progress and impact. In this regard, speakers noted the significant resources necessary to collect and analyse the data relevant to the indicators identified. One speaker noted the significant value of experience-based indicators, as opposed to perception-based indicators.

29. Speakers thanked UNODC for collecting and distributing good practices and lessons learned on the implementation of article 5 of the Convention, and for providing technical assistance to requesting States parties in this area.

## **B. Oral update on the status of implementation of Conference resolutions 7/5 and 7/6**

30. The Chair introduced the item on the status of implementation of Conference resolutions 7/5 and 7/6 and invited participants to provide observations and comments after the introductory presentation by the secretariat.

31. A representative of the secretariat presented an update on the implementation of the two resolutions, focusing on information-sharing, new UNODC knowledge tools and national, regional or global initiatives undertaken by States parties with the support of UNODC.

32. In fulfilment of its role as an international observatory of good practices in the prevention of corruption, the Secretariat had continued to collect information from States parties on their implementation of chapter II of the Convention and to update the website of the Working Group. Furthermore, UNODC had continued to support the work of the relevant anti-corruption bodies and to provide them with technical assistance to strengthen their capacity. The Secretariat had continued its close cooperation with the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities, had provided support to various regional associations of anti-corruption authorities, in particular in Africa, South-East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and had provided targeted national-level assistance to anti-corruption bodies in 10 countries.

33. UNODC had also provided assistance to 10 States parties in the development or revision of national anti-corruption policies and strategies or in the identification of policy reform agendas. With respect to strengthening integrity, transparency, accountability and the rule of law, UNODC had supported several initiatives, including the drafting or revision of codes of conduct, laws on freedom of information and provisions for whistle-blowers, working jointly with supreme audit institutions to promote the implementation of the Convention and organizing targeted seminars and trainings for officers and public officials in charge of integrity.

34. In regard to the protection of reporting persons, the *Resource Guide on Good Practices in the Protection of Reporting Persons* published by UNODC was now available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. Three regional conferences or workshops had been held on whistle-blower and witness protection, in South Asia, the Pacific region and East Africa, respectively. Assistance for drafting relevant legislation had been provided to four States, including by means of comments on draft laws and in-country workshops. UNODC had continued its advocacy of better protection for reporting persons, including by cooperating with the International Anti-Corruption Academy to deliver training on the issue.

35. In addition, UNODC had provided technical assistance and expertise to States parties on the implementation of the Convention through targeted legislative and

capacity-building activities at the regional and country levels, including on asset declaration and conflict of interest regulation systems, procurement and strengthening the role of parliamentarians in anti-corruption efforts. The regional platforms for fast-tracking the implementation of the Convention had proved to be an effective instrument in that regard.

36. UNODC had continued its cooperation with the Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption to strengthen the role of members of parliaments in anti-corruption efforts, organizing joint workshops for members of parliament in two States parties.

37. UNODC also had worked with multiple stakeholders on the prevention of corruption in the criminal justice sector. UNODC continued to implement, with the support of Qatar, its Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration. A judicial ethics training package, consisting of an e-learning course, a self-directed offline course and a trainers' manual based on the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct, had been developed and rolled out. More than 40 jurisdictions were now using the tool in their national training activities. These resources were available in Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

38. Technical assistance had been provided at the national level to the judiciaries of Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador and Haiti. In addition, UNODC had supported national and regional initiatives to strengthen integrity and prevent corruption in law enforcement organizations, including in police, customs, border control and prisons forces. UNODC continued to implement, in partnership with INTERPOL and Transparency International, the CRIMJUST programme for strengthening criminal investigations and criminal justice cooperation along the cocaine route in Latin America, the Caribbean and West Africa.

39. UNODC had continued to promote the participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector, including civil society, media and young people, in the prevention of corruption. In order to strengthen the capacity of the private sector and civil society organizations, a round-table discussion with representatives of civil society and social technology companies has been held to discuss the development of anti-corruption open data platforms.

40. UNODC had also continued to lead the Anti-Corruption Academic Initiative, which sought to promote anti-corruption research and education in higher-level education institutions. The Initiative had actively involved more than 400 universities in its activities and produced a comprehensive anti-corruption educational tool, the Menu of Resources, which contained more than 1,800 articles, publications and research papers related to corruption for use by universities in their existing programmes. A key resource associated with the Initiative was the model university course on the Convention, which UNODC had developed and made available online for free in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The Education for Justice initiative, a component of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, was aimed at building a culture of lawfulness among children and young people through the provision of age-appropriate educational materials on topics related to criminal justice and crime prevention, and the integration of those materials into the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education.

41. UNODC had continued to maintain and update the Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge website and to develop knowledge products for practitioners.

42. UNODC had also engaged in anti-corruption work in areas that had gained increasing recognition over the past few years, such as corruption in sports and corruption related to environmental and wildlife crime.

43. At the national and regional levels, UNODC had continued to rely heavily on the field-based network of anti-corruption advisers for addressing technical assistance needs. The assistance delivered by the network continued to be instrumental in supporting States parties effectively. The advisers worked in close collaboration with

experts from UNODC headquarters and the field office network. Technical assistance work of UNODC had been enabled through global projects, which were financially supported by different donors.

44. One speaker reported on the corruption awareness-raising initiatives undertaken in her country to strengthen the participation of society in anti-corruption efforts.

### C. Other recommendations

45. The Chair introduced the substantive discussion on the item and the secretariat provided an oral update.

46. In his introductory statement, a representative of the secretariat noted the ever-increasing need for technical assistance and elaborated on the tools and resources developed to provide technical assistance to States parties, underlining also some of the challenges faced in that regard. He informed the group that technical assistance needs identified through the Implementation Review Mechanism and on an ad hoc basis were addressed at the global, regional and national levels using the substantive expertise available at UNODC Headquarters, in the UNODC network of regional anti-corruption advisers and in the regional and country offices. Challenges in meeting technical assistance needs included limited resources to address the level of demand and the need to expand the existing UNODC network of regional anti-corruption advisers to ensure global coverage.

47. During the discussion, the panellist from Myanmar described the efforts undertaken by her country to strengthen the existing policy, legal and institutional frameworks and noted the progress made in the establishment of an anti-corruption commission, the adoption and revision of the legislative mandate of the Commission and steps taken to strengthen the capacity of its operations. She noted that the Commission's mandate had been developed and strengthened in response to the recommendations made during the first cycle review of the implementation of the Convention by Myanmar. The panellist also elaborated on the technical assistance received from UNODC and other development partners to participate effectively in the Implementation Review Mechanism and to respond to the recommendations stemming from the review. Support had thus been provided in, among other areas, the development of legislation, the identification of policy priorities and the design and implementation of measures to prevent, detect and prosecute corruption, including through financial investigation capacity-building activities. She highlighted in particular support from UNODC for efforts by Myanmar to strengthen integrity education, organize integrity camps for young people and establish corruption prevention units in 20 national ministries.

48. The panellist from the International Olympic Committee noted the activities that the Committee had undertaken to address corruption in sport. She underlined that, for sport to serve as an effective vehicle to promote peace and social inclusion, it must be credible and free of corruption. She emphasized the special status of sports organizations, which often involved complex public-private relations. She reported that, within the Committee, a specific commission was responsible for overseeing ethics within the organization and served as a model for the entire Olympic movement. She described how the Committee contributed to strengthening good governance in the national sports federations. She informed the Working Group of actions taken by the Committee to support integrity in sport and prevent manipulation in sports competitions, specifically underlining the initiatives conducted jointly with UNODC, such as the recent publication entitled *Reporting Mechanisms in Sport: Practical Guide for Development and Implementation*, and the establishment and operation of the International Partnership against Corruption in Sport.

49. During the ensuing discussion, a speaker from the International Anti-Corruption Academy outlined the work of the Academy and how it has supported various States parties in the implementation of the Convention, in designing and implementing

measures to prevent corruption and in building the capacity of practitioners and institutions.

#### **IV. Future priorities**

50. The Chair introduced the discussion on future priorities and drew attention to the mandate of the Working Group to advise and assist the Conference.

51. A representative of the secretariat recalled that, since 2010, the Working Group had deliberated on all articles of chapter II of the Convention. Some articles had been discussed multiple times, including public sector (art. 7), codes of conduct for public officials (art. 8) and participation of society (art. 13), while other provisions had received less attention, including preventive anti-corruption body or bodies (art. 6), management of public finances (art. 9, para. 2), public reporting (art. 10), private sector (art. 12) and measures to prevent money-laundering (art. 14), which had each been discussed once.

52. The representative also recalled that the topics for future discussion suggested by the Working Group at its seventh, eighth and ninth meetings had included measuring corruption, corruption risks and the impact of anti-corruption efforts through scientifically-based indicators; conflicts of interest, in particular interlinkages between conflicts of interest and illicit enrichment, asset and interest disclosure systems and reporting persons (art. 7, para. 4, and art. 8, para. 5, of the Convention); measures and systems to facilitate reporting by public officials (art. 8, para. 4); corruption in the private sector (art. 12); and public reporting (art. 13, para. 2).

53. The representative noted that the Working Group might wish to consider recommending to the Conference the adoption of a new multi-year work plan for the Group, while recognizing that there should be room within the Group's agenda for adding topics of discussion or amending those suggested.

54. Several speakers reported on the different measures that their countries had taken to implement the provisions of chapter II of the Convention. Some countries had thus implemented measures to strengthen legislative, policy and institutional frameworks; activities to promote education and the empowerment of society; open government and open data initiatives to enhance transparency and access to information, which enabled, among others, enhanced public scrutiny of public procurement practices; and efforts designed to improve the trust of citizen in public administration, including through reinforcing corruption reporting mechanisms.

55. A speaker noted the importance of the Working Group as a space to build partnerships and emphasized the need to discuss not only experiences and good practices, but also challenges encountered to identify jointly solutions and assist States in their effort to create effective anti-corruption policies and measures. The speaker indicated that priorities should be defined in the long-term and that duplication should be avoided.

56. Speakers recommended multiple topics for inclusion in the Working Group's multi-year workplan for consideration by the Conference.

57. Several speakers proposed that the topic of preventing corruption in the private sector (art. 12 of the Convention) be included in the Working Group's future workplan. This could include the development of public-private partnerships to share information on compliance programmes and the use of codes of conduct and accounting and auditing standards to prevent corruption. It was proposed that the role of such intermediaries as law firms, banks and financial institutions be analysed. Increased cooperation between the private sector and law enforcement authorities to improve the transparency of beneficial ownership was also proposed as a topic deserving further discussion.

58. Several speakers proposed that the workplan include a focus on transparency, and, in particular, open data. Speakers noted that transparency was a cross-cutting and

complementary principle throughout the Convention and that this priority area could facilitate the exchange of experience and best practices with regard to multiple articles of the Convention, including articles 9, 10 and 13. Several speakers proposed that this discussion include the identification of best practices in the use of technology to prevent corruption and increase transparency, while others highlighted the role of civil society, including in decision-making, and the potential need to evaluate and simplify administrative processes to improve its participation.

59. Some speakers recommended that the Group further explore the topic of anti-corruption policies, strategies and measures, in particular the evaluation of their impact and effectiveness, with a focus on experience-based indicators.

60. A number of speakers proposed measures against impunity in preventing corruption as a topic.

61. Other proposed topics included mechanisms to foster and promote integrity within society, identifying and sharing best practices on ethics and integrity standards for public officials, and ways to highlight positive examples of anti-corruption efforts, for example by identifying role models and presenting awards. One speaker proposed analysing the role of preventive measures for addressing national and foreign bribery. Another speaker suggested focusing on identifying potential vulnerabilities to corruption within public institutions and the use of tools to manage such risks.

62. Following the presentation by the secretariat, several speakers proposed that the topics identified at previous meetings of the Working Group be considered for inclusion in the new multi-year workplan.

## V. Conclusions and recommendations

63. The Working Group recommended that the Conference of the States Parties adopt at its eighth session a multi-year workplan for the Group, proposing a variety of topics for its consideration, as outlined in the section on future priorities above. It also recommended that informal meetings be held in advance of the session to discuss the workplan.

64. The Working Group also recommended continuing the practice of organizing joint meetings with the Implementation Review Group in order to enhance the sharing of information between the two Groups, including on the thematic report on chapter II of the Convention.

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

66. The Working Group recommended that, to avoid duplication of efforts and increase effectiveness during the eighth session of the Conference, States parties combine and coordinate efforts when considering tabling resolutions related to the prevention of corruption.

67. The Working Group welcomed the work of the Secretariat in performing the functions of an international observatory gathering information on good practices in the prevention of corruption and making it available online on the thematic web page of the Group, and requested the Secretariat to continue its efforts to gather information on good practices by States with regard to anti-corruption initiatives.

68. The Working Group urged States parties to continue to use the information available online on the thematic web page of the Group on policies, practices and measures implemented to prevent corruption, including through the development of national anti-corruption strategies. Moreover, the Group encouraged States parties to continue to share with the Secretariat information on their efforts to prevent corruption, for posting on the thematic web page.

69. The Working Group recognized the efforts of the Secretariat to support States parties in implementing the Convention and requested UNODC to continue to provide technical assistance, upon request, in coordination with bilateral and multilateral technical assistance providers, in particular in developing countries.

70. The Working Group underlined the urgency of providing sufficient extrabudgetary resources to UNODC to offer such technical assistance and called upon States parties and other donors to reconfirm their commitment to the prevention of corruption, for example, by providing soft-earmarked and multi-year financial contributions.

71. The Working Group acknowledged the progress made in the development, evaluation and impact of anti-corruption policies and strategies and underlined the need to maintain those efforts, including by using the method outlined in the UNODC *National Anti-Corruption Strategies – A Practical Guide for Development and Implementation*.

72. The Working Group encouraged States parties to continue to exchange good practices and lessons learned on the development and implementation of anti-corruption policies and strategies.

## **VI. Adoption of the report**

73. On 6 September 2019, the Working Group adopted the report on its tenth meeting.

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