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Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative
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UNCAC Legal Library Launched: New Database of Anti-Corruption Legislation from 178 States

Washington, D.C., September 01, 2011 — As prosecutors and law enforcement agencies strengthen their efforts to combat corruption, a new database is logging government efforts to implement legislation that supports anti-corruption and asset recovery.

Launched today, the United Nations Convention against Corruption Legal Library supports asset recovery and anti-corruption efforts. The database is co-funded by the Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative, a joint programme of the World Bank Group and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

“It is our hope that the UNCAC legal library will mobilize and inform government efforts to improve their asset recovery legislation,” said Jean Pesme, StAR Coordinator and Manager at the World Bank Group. “StAR supports partner countries’ efforts to build their institutional capacity to recover assets, and the right legislative environment is a crucial component. It can also be a critical resource for countries seeking mutual legal assistance on asset recovery, as it provides direct access to the laws of their counterparts and facilitates the preparation of such requests.”

The UNCAC Legal Library is a comprehensive database of anti-corruption and asset recovery legislation and jurisprudence from over 175 States, systematized in accordance with the requirements of the Convention. The legal library, which will be regularly updated, identifies laws that have been successfully used to recover assets as well as barriers to asset recovery caused by inadequate or incompatible legal frameworks. This practical and user-friendly resource will aid countries as they design and improve their legal frameworks so that they are more conducive to the recovery of stolen assets.

The UNCAC legal library is accessible from UNODC’s anti-corruption portal known as TRACK (Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge). In addition to the Legal Library, the TRACK portal contains an anti-corruption learning platform where analytical materials and tools generated by partner organizations can be accessed in one central location. TRACK is also a community of practice for partner institutions and practitioners where registered users can collaborate and exchange information.

Commenting on the UNCAC Legal Library and TRACK portal, the Chief of UNODC’s Corruption and Economic Crime Branch, Dimitri Vlassis, said: “The now functional Implementation Review Mechanism of the UNCAC has shown how important knowledge on legislation is for all countries around the world, which can be inspired from each other’s challenges and successes. The Legal Library is intended to be the tool that meets this need for information.”

The UNCAC Legal Library is part of the StAR Initiative’s support for efforts of policymakers and practitioners to eliminate safe havens for the proceeds of corruption and to generate knowledge and legal information concerning the UN Convention against Corruption. To access the database, visit <http://www.track.unodc.org>.

About StAR – the Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative

The Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative (StAR) is a partnership between the World Bank and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). StAR supports international efforts to end safe havens for corrupt funds. StAR works with developing countries and financial centres to reduce the laundering of the proceeds of corruption and to facilitate more systematic and timely return of stolen assets.