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Organization of the session

Report of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption on its preparatory work for the special session of the General Assembly on challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly, pursuant to Assembly resolution [74/276](#), the report of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption on its preparatory work for the special session of the General Assembly on challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation, to be held from 2 to 4 June 2021.

* A/S-32/1.



Report of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption on its preparatory work for the special session of the General Assembly on challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation

I. Mandate and background

1. In its resolution [73/191](#), the General Assembly decided to convene in the first half of 2021 a special session of the General Assembly on challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation. In the same resolution, the Assembly also decided that at that special session, it would adopt a concise and action-oriented political declaration, agreed upon in advance by consensus through intergovernmental negotiations under the auspices of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Further, in its resolution, the General Assembly invited the Conference of the States Parties to lead the preparatory process for the special session by addressing all organizational and substantive matters in an open-ended manner and requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to provide substantive expertise and technical support.
2. At its eighth session, held in Abu Dhabi from 16 to 20 December 2019, the Conference recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution entitled “Special session of the General Assembly against corruption”. Also at its eighth session, the Conference considered the item entitled “Special session of the General Assembly against corruption”.¹
3. On 1 June 2020, the General Assembly adopted the draft resolution recommended by the Conference as resolution [74/276](#), entitled “Special session of the General Assembly against corruption”. In that resolution, the General Assembly decided, inter alia, that the special session of the General Assembly on challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation was to be convened for three days, from 26 to 28 April 2021, at United Nations Headquarters, in New York. Subsequently, on 31 August 2020, the General Assembly, in its decision 74/568, noting with concern the situation concerning the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), decided to convene the special session from 2 to 4 June 2021.
4. In its resolution [74/276](#), the General Assembly also reiterated the central role of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption in improving the capacity of and cooperation among States parties to achieve the objectives set forth in the United Nations Convention against Corruption and in promoting and reviewing its implementation. In that resolution, the General Assembly also reiterated its invitation to the Conference to lead the preparatory process for the special session by addressing all organizational and substantive matters in an open-ended manner and requested the Conference to produce, in due time, a concise and action-oriented political declaration agreed upon in advance by consensus through intergovernmental negotiations under the auspices of the Conference, for adoption by the General Assembly at its special session.
5. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the extended Bureau of the Conference to organize all actions to be taken by the Conference in preparation for the special session and to address all organizational and substantive matters in an open-ended and transparent manner, including by appointing facilitators for the informal consultations on the draft political declaration, and, in consultation with Member States, to develop a workplan and timeline to advance consultations on the draft political declaration.

¹ See [CAC/COSP/2019/17](#).

6. Subsequently, the extended Bureau undertook to organize all the actions required in connection with the preparatory process for the special session, including the appointment of Eric Anderson Machado (Peru) and Hamad Alkaabi (United Arab Emirates) as co-facilitators for the informal consultations on the draft political declaration and the approval of a workplan and timeline.

7. In its resolution 74/276, the General Assembly also reiterated the importance of an inclusive preparatory process, including extensive substantive consultations, and invited the Conference of the States Parties to hold up to three intersessional meetings, as required, to advance such consultations. The Assembly also encouraged organs, entities and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, relevant international and regional organizations, civil society, academia and other relevant stakeholders to fully contribute to the preparatory process, in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure and established practice, and requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to collect such contributions, including specific recommendations on the issues to be addressed by the General Assembly at its special session, and make them available to the Conference.

8. Accordingly, in line with the workplan approved by the extended Bureau, the Conference held three intersessional meetings on preparations for the special session. The first intersessional meeting was held from 2 to 4 September 2020. At that meeting, the Conference discussed the status of preparations for the special session and held a general discussion. Two panel discussions – on challenges and approaches to the prevention of corruption during times of crisis and on ending impunity by effectively combating corruption – were held during that meeting.²

9. The second intersessional meeting of the Conference was held on 19 and 20 November 2020. In addition to discussing the status of preparations for the special session and holding a general discussion, the Conference held three panel discussions, on the following topics: (a) denying safe havens to corruption offenders and their proceeds of crime; (b) challenges in identifying, tracing and freezing proceeds of corruption, and possible solutions; and (c) optimizing cooperation and assistance mechanisms, especially those involving vast quantities of assets.³

10. At its third intersessional meeting, held on 22 and 23 February 2021, the Conference held four panel discussions on the following topics: (a) “Sustained political commitment: special session of the General Assembly against corruption, an opportunity to reinforce our commitments against corruption” and “After 15 years since the entry into force of the Convention, what is our way forward?”; (b) beneficial ownership transparency and the role of the private sector in supporting anti-corruption efforts, including through better compliance with anti-money-laundering standards, collective action initiatives and supporting measures for self-regulation; (c) measures to address impunity, including by strengthening the independence, transparency and integrity of the judiciary and enhancing the role of oversight bodies, such as State audit institutions; and (d) harnessing the full potential of education and technology in efforts to prevent and combat corruption.⁴

11. Furthermore, in accordance with Assembly resolution 74/276, and in order to ensure an inclusive preparatory process, a website was established (www.ungass2021.org), which functions as a repository for all relevant information relating to the special session. The website has been updated on a continuing basis to reflect the progress made by the Conference in the preparatory process for the special session. Relevant organs, entities and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, relevant international and regional organizations, civil society, academia and

² All the documentation in connection with this meeting is available at <https://ungass2021.unodc.org/ungass2021/en/meetings/session1.html>.

³ All the documentation in connection with this meeting is available at <https://ungass2021.unodc.org/ungass2021/en/meetings/session2.html>.

⁴ All the documentation in connection with this meeting is available at <https://ungass2021.unodc.org/ungass2021/en/meetings/session3.html>.

other relevant stakeholders were invited to submit written contributions, all of which were made available on the website.

12. In that same resolution, the General Assembly further requested the Conference of the States Parties to report to the General Assembly at its special session on the preparations undertaken by the Conference for the session.

II. Elaboration of the political declaration

13. Following the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution [73/191](#), the extended Bureau of the Conference of the States Parties, in October 2019, invited Member States to submit contributions for consideration in the preparation of the draft political declaration.

14. In accordance with paragraph 7 of Assembly resolution [74/276](#), the extended Bureau developed and, on 20 May 2020, approved an initial workplan and timeline on the understanding that it would be adjusted as required throughout the preparatory process. In view of the impact of circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic on the schedule of meetings in Vienna and the preparatory process for the special session, the co-facilitators for the informal consultations on the draft political declaration, the permanent representatives of Peru and the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations (Vienna), proposed to the extended Bureau a revised workplan and timeline, which were approved on 24 July 2020.

15. On 17 August 2020, the co-facilitators circulated to Member States a “zero” draft of the political declaration, together with a compilation of all the contributions received from States parties to the Convention. Subsequently, multiple rounds of informal consultations were held starting on 14 September 2020.

16. In accordance with resolution [74/276](#), in which the General Assembly requested the Conference of the States Parties to hold a special session for the purpose of approving the political declaration for subsequent transmittal to the General Assembly for adoption at its special session against corruption, the Conference held a special session on 7 May 2021. At that special session, the Conference approved by consensus the political declaration⁵ and recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of that political declaration at its special session to be held from 2 to 4 June 2021 (see CAC/COSP/S/2021/2).

⁵ A/S-32/2/Add.1.