



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

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Draft report

Rapporteur: Germán Andrés Calderón Velásquez (Colombia)

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 58/4, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The Convention entered into force on 14 December 2005. In article 63, paragraph 1, of the Convention, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption was established, to improve the capacity of and cooperation between States parties to achieve the objectives set forth in the Convention and to promote and review its implementation.

II. Organization of the session

A. Opening of the session

2. The Conference held its eighth session in Abu Dhabi, from 16 to 20 December 2019. The Conference had resources at its disposal to provide for 20 meetings with interpretation into the official languages of the United Nations.

3. An opening ceremony was held before the formal opening of the Conference, with the participation of the Deputy Ruler of Dubai and Minister of Finance of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the President of the State Audit Institution of the United Arab Emirates, Harib Saeed al-Amimi, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

4. The Executive Director of UNODC conveyed a message to the Conference on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in which the Secretary-General, *inter alia*, referred to the need for the international community to unite against corruption in order to stop the drain of resources caused by illicit financial flows, as the international community was entering the Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals. The Secretary-General referred to the first-ever special session of the General Assembly against corruption, to be held in 2021, and urged the Conference to take decisive action to make the fight against corruption a priority. He noted that large-scale corruption was only possible because of enablers in the global financial system and loopholes that allowed assets to be moved across borders and public funds to be laundered, and that international cooperation to address this issue was fundamental.



5. The President of the State Audit Institution of the United Arab Emirates welcomed delegations to the eighth session of the Conference and said that his Government was keen to cooperate with the international community in preventing and combating corruption and recovering stolen assets, and to enforce national legislation against corruption offences. He emphasized the importance of preventing the negative impact of corruption on development, stability and security and, in that regard, also referred to corruption in the public sector, which affected the level of services provided to citizens. He noted that corruption was a transnational crime, which disrupted stability, peace and political and social infrastructures. He emphasized the importance of the Convention as an international legal and strategic framework aimed at preventing and combating corruption and strengthening cooperation and coordination among States. He noted that the Conference provided a forum that allowed States to undertake joint efforts in tackling and preventing corruption and referred to the forthcoming preparations for the special session of the General Assembly against corruption. He also noted the need to improve cooperation between State audit institutions and anti-corruption authorities and, in that regard, referred to the memorandum of understanding signed between the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions and UNODC.

6. During the formal opening, the outgoing President of the Conference, María Consuelo Porras Argueta (Guatemala), made an opening statement.

7. The President of the Conference at its eighth session, Harib Saeed al-Amimi (United Arab Emirates), also made an opening statement.

8. The Executive Director of UNODC emphasized that combating corruption offered a key to unlocking progress towards ending poverty and inequality, protecting health and the planet and strengthening justice and the rule of law, and he noted the role of the Conference in advancing efforts to achieve those global goals. He noted that the Convention represented a primary weapon in fighting corruption, including through its Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which had contributed to strengthening cooperation and coordination among countries. The Executive Director stressed that the Conference would further strengthen anti-corruption efforts in areas ranging from prevention and asset recovery to measuring corruption, harnessing technology and engaging stakeholders. He referred to the forthcoming preparations for the first special session of the General Assembly against corruption, to be held in 2021, and noted that the special session would provide the opportunity to agree on new approaches and seek innovative solutions in addressing threats posed by corruption to States. Moreover, the Executive Director noted that UNODC would contribute to further advancing the global action against corruption during the period leading up to the special session, including through the United Nations system-wide task force established by the Secretary-General. The Executive Director also paid special tribute to Dimitri Vlassis, who had led the Corruption and Economic Crime Branch of UNODC for many years.

B. Election of officers

9. At its 1st meeting, on 16 December 2019, the Conference elected by acclamation Harib Saeed al Amimi (United Arab Emirates) as President of the Conference.

10. At the 1st meeting and at the 8th meeting, on 19 December, the following Vice-Presidents and Rapporteur were elected by acclamation:

<i>Vice-Presidents:</i>	Vivian N.R. Okeke (Nigeria)
	Ondrej Gavalec (Slovakia)
	Christine M. Cline (United States of America)
<i>Rapporteur:</i>	Germán Andrés Calderón Velásquez (Colombia)

C. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

11. Also at its 1st meeting, the Conference adopted the following agenda for its eighth session:

1. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Opening of the eighth session of the Conference;
 - (b) Election of officers;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work;
 - (d) Participation of observers;
 - (e) Adoption of the report of the Bureau on credentials;
 - (f) General discussion.
2. Review of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.
3. Technical assistance.
4. Prevention.
5. Asset recovery.
6. International cooperation.
7. Special session of the General Assembly against corruption.
8. Other matters:
 - (a) Implementation of article 63, subparagraphs 4 (c) and (d), concerning cooperation with relevant international and regional organizations and mechanisms and non-governmental organizations and appropriate use of relevant information produced by other international and regional mechanisms for combating and preventing corruption, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of work;
 - (b) Status of ratification of and notification requirements under the Convention;
 - (c) Any other matters, including consideration of the venue for the tenth session of the Conference.
9. Provisional agenda for the ninth session.
10. Adoption of the report.

D. Attendance

12. The following States parties to the Convention were represented at the eighth session of the Conference: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal,

Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

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

14. The following observer State was also represented: Tonga.

15. The following Secretariat units, United Nations entities, funds and programmes, institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system were represented by observers: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Resident Coordinator Office (United Arab Emirates), Basel Institute on Governance, International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy, International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

16. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented by observers: African Development Bank Group, African Union, Asian Development Bank, Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, Council of Europe International Anti-Corruption Academy, International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and World Customs Organization.

17. The following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were represented by observers: Afri Network for Env. & Econ. Justice Ltd/Gte, Article 19: International Centre against Censorship, Centre for Civil and Political Rights, Centre for Democracy and Development, Earth (Empathetic Activism Related to Humanity), Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption, Global Witness, HEDA Resource Centre, International Bar Association, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, Peace Worldwide, Organization of the Families of Asia and the Pacific, Social Watch/Contrôle citoyen au Bénin, Transparency International, World Justice Project and World Wide Fund for Nature International.

18. In accordance with rule 17 of the rules of procedure, the Secretariat circulated a list of relevant non-governmental organizations not having consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that had applied for observer status. Invitations were subsequently sent by the Secretariat to relevant non-governmental organizations. The following other relevant non-governmental organizations were represented by observers at the eighth session of the Conference: Advance South Sudan, African Institute of Corporate Citizenship, Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Centro de Estudos em Administração Pública e Governo, Coalition contre la corruption en Mauritanie, Construisons ensemble le monde, Endale Edith Foundation, Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, International Fishermen Development Trust, International Forum on Crime and Criminal Law in the Global Era, Libyan Transparency Association, Local Community Development Association, Macedonian Center for International Cooperation, Society for Human Rights and Prisoners' Aid, The Bulletin of Anti-Corruption Expert Review, Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan, Transparency International Zimbabwe, UNCAC Coalition and World Economic Forum Partnering against Corruption Initiative.

19. Following a recommendation by the Bureau, on 20 December 2019, the Conference decided, in line with past practice, to uphold the objection received to the participation of the Kurdistan Organization for Transparency, based on the reason provided, namely that the NGO was not in compliance with domestic legislation. At the same meeting, also following a recommendation by the bureau, the Conference decided not to uphold the objections received to the participation of the following organizations: (a) British Institute of International and Comparative Law (Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law) (b) Queen Mary University of London, International State Crime Initiative (c) Expert Forum Association (Romania) and (d) Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency. The decision was based on the fact that these NGOs were not based on the territory of the objecting State and that the States parties where the NGOs were based had raised no objections to their participation. Moreover, the Conference decided that a process commence, under the guidance of the extended Bureau of the Conference, to develop further guidance on this matter to the Conference at its future sessions.

E. Adoption of the report of the Bureau on credentials

20. Rule 19 of the rules of procedure provides that the Bureau of any session shall examine the credentials of representatives and submit its report to the Conference. Rule 20 provides that, pending a decision of the Bureau upon their credentials, representatives shall be entitled to participate provisionally in the session. Any representative of a State party to whose admission another State party has made objection shall be seated provisionally with the same rights as other representatives of States parties until the Bureau has reported and the Conference has taken its decision.

21. The Bureau informed the Conference that, of the 156 States parties represented at the eighth session, 152 States were in compliance with the credentials requirements. Four States parties, namely, Chad, Malawi, Rwanda and South Sudan, were not in compliance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure. The Bureau emphasized that it was the obligation of each State party to submit the credentials of representatives, in accordance with rule 18, and called on those States parties that had not yet done so to provide the Secretariat with original credentials as soon as possible but not later than 13 January 2020.

22. The Bureau reported to the Conference that it had examined the written communications received and found them to be in order.

23. The Conference adopted the report of the Bureau on credentials at its 11th meeting, on 20 December 2019.
