



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

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Open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the United Nations Convention against Corruption

Vienna, 6–10 September 2021

Draft report

Addendum

III. Implementation of chapter IV of the United Nations Convention against Corruption: lessons learned, good practices and challenges

1. A representative of the secretariat provided an update on the implementation of the mandates emanating from the Conference resolutions and previous expert meetings. He referred to a note by the Secretariat entitled “Progress in implementing the mandates of the open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the United Nations Convention against Corruption” ([CAC/COSP/EG.1/2021/2](#)) and addressed four issues.

2. He introduced the commitments relating to international cooperation in the political declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its special session against corruption, which contained a specific section on international cooperation. In the political declaration, Member States committed themselves to making full use of the Convention and other legal instruments to advance international cooperation, affording one another the widest measures of mutual legal assistance and technical assistance, and addressing challenges and barriers hindering relevant cooperation and deficiencies in domestic regulatory regimes. In addition, Member States called for enhanced inter-agency coordination and better utilization of various networks to facilitate international cooperation in the prevention and combating of corruption.

3. The representative of the secretariat also provided information on the establishment of the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GlobE Network), which was officially established in June 2021 under the auspices of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The Network is aimed at providing a quick, agile and efficient tool for facilitating transnational cooperation in combating corruption and strengthening communication exchange and peer learning between anti-corruption law enforcement authorities while complementing and coordinating with existing international cooperation platforms. Membership in the Network is open to specialized authorities falling under article 36 of the Convention from the States Members of the United Nations and States parties to the Convention. At the time of the meeting, the Secretariat had received 27 requests for membership from 18 States. Furthermore, UNODC had issued the first



quarterly newsletter to keep members up to date on the work of the GlobE Network and cross-border cooperation to end corruption and had launched a dedicated website for the Network. UNODC was planning to organize the first meeting of the Network in October 2021 and continued to put in place the necessary infrastructure and resources for the Network.

4. The representative of the secretariat also provided updates on the online directory of competent national authorities and the Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge (TRACK) portal. He indicated that as at August 2021, the directory contained information on the following: central authorities for mutual legal assistance in 133 States parties; prevention authorities in 120 States parties; asset recovery focal points in 86 States parties; central authorities on extradition in 32 States parties; and focal points for international cooperation in the use of civil and administrative proceedings in 35 States parties. In addition, UNODC was finalizing the migration of the TRACK portal to a new platform in preparation for its relaunch and was updating the information contained in the legal library.

5. He also referred to progress made in the delivery of technical assistance and other activities relevant to international cooperation. He highlighted that UNODC, including through the joint UNODC/World Bank Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative, continued to provide tailored capacity-building and advisory services at the national, regional and global levels, participate in meetings and conferences aimed at promoting international cooperation among States parties and engage with relevant stakeholders in the delivery of technical assistance.

6. In an effort to enhance the exchange of information and synergies between the open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the Working Group on International Cooperation established by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, a representative of the secretariat provided an overview of the salient outcomes of the deliberations of the Working Group on International Cooperation at its twelfth meeting, held in Vienna on 25 and 26 March 2021. At that meeting, the Working Group continued to consider the topics of the use and role of joint investigative bodies in combating transnational organized crime and international cooperation involving special investigative techniques, and adopted pertinent recommendations on both topics for further endorsement by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh session, to be held in October 2022. Building on past discussions at its previous eleventh meeting, held in July 2020, the Working Group had once again focused its attention on the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the effectiveness of international cooperation in criminal matters and adopted relevant recommendations for endorsement by the Conference.

7. The representative of the secretariat also provided the dates of the back-to-back meetings of the Working Group on International Cooperation and the Working Group on Technical Assistance to be held in 2022, with a joint thematic discussion on the application of the Organized Crime Convention for preventing and combating transnational organized crimes that affect the environment, in accordance with resolution 10/6 of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Further information was provided on plans to further promote synergies between the open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the Convention against Corruption and the Working Group on International Cooperation established by the Conference of the Parties to the Organized Crime Convention through possible joint or back-to-back meetings in 2023. The representative of the secretariat also informed the participants about a forthcoming UNODC publication, entitled “Digest of cases of international cooperation in criminal matters involving the Organized Crime Convention as a legal basis”, to be released in the last quarter of 2021.

8. In the ensuing discussion, several speakers highlighted the importance of international cooperation in the fight against corruption, including for the purpose of

asset recovery. Some speakers referred to challenges they encountered in seeking assistance from other States and called for enhanced measures in facilitating international cooperation, in particular pursuant to the political declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its special session against corruption. The challenges highlighted by speakers included the lack of simplified procedures for mutual legal assistance, burdensome evidentiary requirements and the inability to provide specific measures such as the return of assets. Some speakers noted that those challenges might be overcome through enhanced transparency in the return of assets, the strengthening of the role of central authorities, and early and direct communication and coordination.

9. In addition, one speaker indicated that his country had concluded a number of bilateral agreements to facilitate mutual legal assistance, which incorporated the use of special investigative techniques, joint investigative teams and videoconferences. Another speaker introduced measures taken by his country to promote the exchange of information in line with article 48 of the Convention against Corruption.

10. Several speakers also reported on steps taken by their countries to strengthen existing domestic and international coordination, noting the usefulness of communication platforms to expedite proceedings and ensure the success of the multidirectional collaboration necessary for the compensation of victims of corruption. Some speakers provided examples of the electronic systems set up in their jurisdictions for the purposes of facilitating the processing of requests and for gathering data on such requests.

11. Several speakers noted the importance of the spontaneous transmission of information and the electronic transmission of mutual legal assistance requests. Some speakers highlighted the importance of using online resources, such as the TRACK portal and the legal library, to promote timely access and the exchange of information and called upon States parties to communicate changes in their legislation to the secretariat with a view to keeping the legal library up to date. Those tools were seen as particularly important for facilitating international cooperation in the light of the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international cooperation.

12. Some speakers emphasized the importance of law enforcement networks such as the recently established Globe Network, INTERPOL and similar regional initiatives in providing a platform to facilitate direct contact and build trust among anti-corruption law enforcement practitioners and support practitioners in cases of serious and transnational corruption crimes, and they called upon States to utilize such networks to enhance their efforts in international cooperation.
