



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

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Implementation Review Group

First resumed tenth session

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Draft report of the Implementation Review Group on its first resumed tenth session, held in Vienna, 2–4 September 2019

Addendum

VII. Technical Assistance

1. At its meetings held jointly with the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption on 4 September 2019, the Implementation Review Group considered item 4 of its agenda, entitled “Technical assistance” and sub-item 2 (b) of the agenda of the Working Group on Prevention, entitled “Other recommendations”. The joint meetings were held in line with resolution 6/1 of the Conference, in which the Secretariat was requested to structure the provisional agendas of the Implementation Review Group and the other subsidiary bodies established by the Conference in such a way as to avoid duplication of discussions, while respecting their mandates, and pursuant to the workplan agreed for the period 2017–2019.¹

2. A representative of the secretariat presented an oral update to the note by the Secretariat on technical assistance in support of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, including analysis of technical assistance needs emerging from the country reviews (CAC/COSP/IRG/2019/5). To this end, she shared information on the technical assistance needs that had been identified in the executive summaries of the 27 reviews published during the second cycle of the Implementation Review Mechanism. The representative of the secretariat underscored that, taking into account the seven additional executive summaries published since the presentation of the note, the needs for technical assistance expressed with regard to articles contained in chapter II (Preventive measures) of the Convention had surpassed those indicated in relation to chapter V (Asset recovery) of the Convention. The need for capacity-building, in particular aimed at enhancing the skills and substantive knowledge of staff, continued to be the most prevalent need for technical assistance highlighted in the finalized executive summaries, followed by legislative assistance and institution-building. Within chapter II of the Convention, many of the cross-cutting technical needs identified touched upon the development

¹ Information on the panel discussion on technical assistance provided in relation to articles contained in chapter II of the Convention, which was held during the joint meetings of the Working Group on Prevention and the Implementation Review Group, is contained in the report of the tenth session of the Working Group on Prevention.



of preventive anti-corruption policies and practices. Furthermore, in line with the trend of States expressing a need for greater cooperation, the importance of sharing good practices and enhancing inter-agency coordination, including at local levels of government, was highlighted. In this regard, the need to enhance States' public outreach capacity as well as engagement of the public as a preventive measure in line with article 13 on the participation of society was noteworthy.

3. To facilitate the Group's discussion, and in line with the thematic focus of the first resumed tenth session, a panel was held on technical assistance required in relation to chapter II of the Convention.

4. A panellist from Côte d'Ivoire informed the Group of the awareness-raising activities the High Authority for Good Governance had carried out to strengthen the capacities of the national stake-holders involved in the prevention of corruption. In this regard, she highlighted the establishment, monitoring and evaluation of local integrity committees and anti-corruption platforms, indicating that the local integrity committees were constituted of civil society organizations working voluntarily on the prevention and reporting of corruption in their area. The panellist referenced an intervention at an earlier session of the Group on a similar model of local integrity committees and indicated her intention to seek to exchange experiences with that State party to further improve this model. The panellist also shared information on the organization of awareness-raising campaigns in the public administration and in the population, and the design, production and distribution of awareness-raising materials and TV spots. She noted the organization of workshops to develop and introduce elements on the fight against corruption in the syllabus of primary, secondary and tertiary level education in her country. However, she concluded that despite these efforts, much remained to be done, in particular concerning the processing and monitoring of asset declarations, the preparation of declarations of interest and the management of conflicts of interest, the regulation of matters related to gifts, and asset recovery. The panellist welcomed the technical assistance provided by UNODC, including through the joint UNODC-World Bank Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative, and other development partners on a national level and requested its extension throughout the West African subregion. In concluding, the panellist opined that also Chapter VI (Technical assistance and information exchange) of the Convention merited being reviewed and suggested this should be considered when looking at the second phase of the Review Mechanism.

5. A panellist from the State of Palestine highlighted the positive impact of technical assistance received from UNODC which had so far included training workshops on financial investigations, sharing good practices in investigating corruption cases, strengthening access to public information, asset management and an assessment of the anti-corruption strategy. He noted how the assistance provided had contributed to building the capacity of national experts to reflect advanced international standards and comply with the requirements of the Convention. The panellist underscored how the assistance provided had enhanced the participation of society in the preparation, follow-up and assessment of the national anti-corruption strategy and had led to the amendment of the bill on the right to access information. He also noted the importance of the assistance provided for the development of a financial disclosure system and for building national capacity in asset management. In closing, the panellist noted that more assistance was still needed to continue the efforts underway.

6. A panellist from the Republic of Korea presented the international cooperation activities related to the prevention of corruption carried out by the Korean Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC). She noted that ACRC shared its experiences with other countries through memoranda of understanding, which allowed for the sharing of information with counterparts in the region and worldwide. The panellist underscored that the ACRC also provided technical assistance to partner countries through the policy centre of the United Nations Development Programme located in Seoul, thus ensuring close cooperation with other technical assistance providers. Furthermore, the panellist informed the Group that anti-corruption

capacity-building programmes were organized every year for approximately 15 individuals recommended by the heads of anti-corruption agencies from around the world. The panellist concluded her presentation by highlighting the three measures related to the prevention of corruption which elicited the most interest by other countries, namely, the integrity assessment, the anti-corruption initiative assessment, and the corruption risk assessment.

7. A panellist from Paraguay shared information on the legal framework against corruption and corruption prevention mechanisms established in the public sector of Paraguay. In this regard, he informed the Group that the National Anti-Corruption Secretariat as the institution in charge of integrity and transparency had launched an online “Reporting portal”, which citizens could use to report alleged acts of corruption. He noted that the portal aimed at promoting open government by providing citizens with access to information, facilitating active participation and bolstering accountability to strengthen the proper use of public resources. The panellist noted that among the incidents most reported in the portal were the improper collection of fees, passive bribery, embezzlement, and diversion of property. In concluding his presentation, the panellist indicated that the main challenges faced in relation to the portal were the need to give due attention to all complaints and providing a timely response to them, the limited jurisdiction of the National Anti-Corruption Secretariat, which did not extend to local government entities, and the lack of reports regarding cases of so-called grand corruption.

8. In the ensuing discussion, many speakers shared information on assistance their countries had received in the implementation of the Convention, in particular in response to needs identified in the country reviews in the framework of the Implementation Review Mechanism. While expressing their gratitude to the providers of assistance already received, speakers also highlighted additional needs for technical assistance to further the implementation of the Convention, in particular related to the building of capacities and institutions, financial investigations, forensic accounting and the protection of reporting persons. Some speakers noted that legislative frameworks, while providing the basis for solid anti-corruption regimes, in themselves were not sufficient to combat corruption and that continuous oversight mechanisms forcing institutions to share information were key in the fight against impunity.

9. Several speakers underscored that, for technical assistance to be effective, recipient countries must demonstrate political will to fight corruption at all levels and have sound public policies against corruption. In this respect, one speaker shared a recent commitment made by a number of donors to continue supporting the achievement of anti-corruption initiatives by her Government and indicated that these donors had pledged to, inter alia, continue providing wide-ranging assistance and support for efforts to combat corruption and to be responsive partners in the seizure and return of assets obtained from corrupt practices, ensuring assets are returned to her country. Another speaker informed the Group that, as a result of training on the protection of reporting persons, public confidence in the reporting mechanisms and the use of hot lines for reporting had increased from 2017 to 2018. Several speakers highlighted the importance of fostering public private partnerships in the fight against corruption. In highlighting the usefulness of the outcome of the implementation reviews with respect to guiding technical assistance, one speaker urged both States parties under review and reviewing States parties to respect the timeframes for the completion of the reviews. He further lent his support to the efforts of the Secretariat to consult the other review mechanisms regarding their experiences when considering the future follow-up process of the Mechanism.

10. Several speakers noted that technical assistance should be country-based and country-led, focus on the needs of developing countries, respect the wishes expressed by them and assist in building capacities without imposing conditions. In this regard, the benefits of encouraging South-South cooperation were emphasized. One speaker explained how his country’s framework for cooperation with Africa had resulted in the organization of multiple seminars. Another speaker informed the Group that her

country had established a knowledge bank, i.e. a database that contained information on areas of technical expertise where her country could provide technical assistance, such integrity in institutions, natural resource management and gender equality. In response to this statement, several speakers noted their interest in receiving such assistance and in consulting the knowledge bank.

11. One speaker while expressing his appreciation for the initiative to hold the meetings of the Group related to technical assistance jointly with the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Prevention, thereby offering an opportunity for policy-makers to exchange views directly with practitioners asked the panellists for their views as to which areas of preventive measures could be considered by the Working Group. In response, one panellist considered articles 7 and 12 of the Convention to be a priority. She noted that international banking regulations had in many instances forced the private sector to make greater progress in preventing corruption than the public sector had made, and hence exchanging experiences with the private sector could be fruitful.
