

**Ninth Session of the  
Assembly of Parties  
of the  
International Anti-Corruption Academy**

Online Format Assembly of Parties

Statement by the Dean and Executive Secretary  
of the International Anti-Corruption Academy

**Thomas Stelzer**

30 November 2020

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mister President,  
Mister Chairperson of the Board of Governors,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is my honour to welcome you all to the ninth session of the Assembly of Parties of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), the first online session of the Assembly.

Allow me to thank the outgoing Bureau of the Assembly, offer my congratulations to the incoming Bureau and reaffirm the Secretariat's full support for its work.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Board of Governors, and its Chairperson, Mr. Alexey Konov, and Vice Chairperson, Mr. Guo Yong, for the continued support to the Academy.

I would also like to thank the International Senior Advisory Board and International Academic Advisory Board for their valuable input regarding IACA's ongoing work and its future potential.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you know this is my first Assembly of Parties as Dean of IACA. I was honoured to take up my role in March this year, but at that time I could never have imagined the circumstances we would find ourselves in as we approach the end of the year.

Two weeks after becoming Dean, the first Covid-19-related lockdown in Austria came into effect. While this dramatically altered my plans to meet face-to-face with all IACA's stakeholders, it also acted as a catalyst for change at the Academy.

Covid-19 has changed the world and IACA was forced to adapt. Given the financial constraints and understaffing at the organisation, I believe the Academy has performed outstandingly well during 2020.

While some face-to-face events had to be cancelled, including the Regional Summer Academy which was due to take place in Africa this year, our adaption to the new circumstance was swift. In a matter of weeks, we moved all our academic courses from face-to-face and hybrid formats to fully online delivery without any delay or loss of quality. We also initiated the development of a range of new open online courses and began to deliver our tailor-made-trainings online.

These adaptations have catapulted IACA forward in terms of its e-learning capabilities and enabled us to reach a much wider audience. Extending IACA's reach in this manner is crucial to our success going forward, even after the Covid-19 pandemic has passed.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Academy currently has a community of 3100 alumni from 161 countries and jurisdictions which it has built up over the last decade. While this is admirable, I believe we can expand this number dramatically. My long-term vision is that all future managers of the international system and of our economies will have at least a basic education in anti-corruption. I believe that this is not only something to strive for but is a necessary step towards tackling corruption

comprehensively. Before I talk about how we aim to get there and challenges in our path, let me quickly brief you on some of our accomplishments since last years AoP in Nur Sultan:

- IACA'S Constituency currently comprises 80 Parties, following the accession of Myanmar and Kenya.
- The MACS and IMACC programmes started on 19 October for the in-take 2020 – 2022 with their first live session on 9 November 2020.
- IACA's Summer Academy, our largest open-enrolment training, has so far welcomed more than 650 professionals from about 120 countries. This year it was delivered fully online for the first time and so our largest ever group of participants, numbering 98.
- Tailor-made trainings (TMTs) keep enjoying strong demand. This year several were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But others were delivered online. These included trainings for the Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission of the Kingdom of Thailand, Schweighofer Industries, and for the Law Enforcement and Border Control Officers of the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine.
- IACA has also organised seven substantive webinars with the aim of reaching out to highly dedicated professionals. Focusing on relevant topics in regard to the fight against corruption, these events also intensively promoted IACA trainings and academic programmes.
- An IACA Alumni Reunion also took place this year in an online format, gathering our alumni network for a week of discussions, regional updates, multi-stakeholder webinars, and presentations.
- As I mentioned already, we have been working hard on developing new online courses this year. IACA's first series of professional online courses will start in January 2021. The first courses will cover topics related to Anti-Corruption Compliance, Corporate Investigation, Ethical Leadership, Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Corruption Project Planning, Auditing, and Doing Academic Research and Writing in Anti-Corruption and Compliance. The courses will be delivered in different languages. We will start with English, Spanish, Russian, and Portuguese.
- With regard to scholarships, IACA has provided a total of 22 full and partial scholarships to MACS and IMACC students in 2020 for the whole duration of the programmes. IACA has also supported open trainings participants with a total of 74 tuition waivers between October 2019 and September 2020.
- IACA is proud to announce that Siemens Integrity Initiative will continue to support IACA activities under the Third Funding Round, with 1,5 million USD in the next five years. IACA's Project Proposal, the ultimate goal of which is to put theory and knowledge into practice with real impact, was selected among 140 project proposals with activities in over 50 countries, and the Funding Agreement was signed in February this year.

Feedback on our programmes and trainings is as positive as ever and reflects the high quality of the education we provide. Impact stories and testimonials to the quality of our courses can be read on the Academy's website, including in IACA's 2019 Annual Report.

IACA continues to manage its resources to the highest standards of accountability and under several layers of scrutiny, including an independent and Party-owned independent audit. The Independent External Auditors positively evaluated the way IACA has been conducting its

financial business in the course of the last year. At the same, the Independent External Auditors observed that despite the fact that the year 2019 was closed with a net profit, IACA continues to be at risk of insolvency, particularly due to the insufficient amount of received contributions. Furthermore, External Auditors advised that the Academy should diversify its revenue sources. This advice has been taken on board and reflected in the Work Programme 2021-2024 as well as in the Budget 2021 document.

Distinguished delegates,

IACA has come far in its ten years, but I believe we can accomplish a lot more. The Work Programme 2021-2024, which I hope you will adopt today, will guide us towards enhanced levels of outreach by strengthening old partnerships and building new ones. We have already begun this process. We are engaging with parties to address their needs in anti-corruption on a more in-depth level and have initiated cooperation on joint activities with UN entities such as UNITAR, and not to mention our closest partner UNODC. IACA will also develop new capabilities in research with the aim of becoming a global centre and repository for anti-corruption research. Perhaps most importantly, the new Work Programme aims to help stabilise IACA financially. Later today we will talk more in detail about these issues.

As you know IACA has been on unsustainable financial ground since late 2018, when it very nearly reached a point of illiquidity. The generosity of some of our parties has kept us operational since that time. I would particularly like to thank those Parties who donated to IACA over the last year. These are: Chile, China, Cyprus, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Republic of Austria, Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation. We are also grateful to OMV and Siemens for their contributions. While these contributions are very much appreciated, the resources coming in are simply not sufficient for the Academy to meet its potential.

While the IACA has achieved a lot in the face of serious challenges this year, the situation cannot continue without greater financial support from the Parties. IACA is currently dramatically understaffed. Our team is made up of 15 staff members, including 1 seconded, 2 individual contractors, 6 Interns and 1 visiting professional. Without their dedication and hard work we would not be here today. To ensure we will be able to continue our important work I would ask each of you to consider contributing to our general budget. If every party gave a small annual contribution this would certainly help IACA find its way onto more stable ground. IACA is an undervalued commodity at the moment, so I believe now is the time to invest in its important work.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the coming years, anti-corruption as a development issue and its place on the agenda of the UN will only grow in significance. With the UN General Assembly Special Session Against Corruption (UNGASS 2021) taking place next year a new international anti-corruption architecture will start to take shape. IACA has a potential to, and with your support can, play an important role in that architecture.

I believe that IACA has a bright future. With your help we can end IACA's difficulties which have hampered our work for the last two years. Next year, on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly of Parties, I hope to be able to speak to you all face to face and hold a much more substantial session. I aim to bring IACA into its second decade as healthy and robust organisation which is a key player in global anti-corruption efforts, and I count on your close collaboration to make that goal a reality.

I look forward to a productive, if short, Assembly today. IACA is in your hands and at your disposal.

Thank you.