



# The Federal President of the Republic of Austria

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Heinz Fischer

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Federal President of the Republic of Austria, I take great pleasure in extending a warm welcome and sincere greetings to all delegates of the Fourth session of the Assembly of Parties of the International Anti-Corruption Academy / IACA.

I am particularly pleased to welcome this important intergovernmental gathering back to Vienna after the Assembly successfully convened in Bangkok, Thailand, two years ago, and in Baku, Azerbaijan, in 2014. I would like to convey my appreciation to both Thailand and Azerbaijan for so generously hosting these events.

As host country, Austria closely follows the promising development of IACA. When I last visited the organisation in November 2012, I had the honour of witnessing the signing of the formal Cooperation Agreement between the International Anti-Corruption Academy and the United Nations, represented by the Director-General of the United Nations Office in Vienna, Yury Fedotov.

The Fourth session of IACA's Assembly of Parties here at the Vienna International Centre is further evidence of the excellent cooperation between these two international organizations, in addition to many concrete activities such as joint training programmes and co-sponsored conferences.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there have been several important global gatherings and summits this year of significant relevance to the international anti-corruption agenda and beyond: the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Doha, the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, the

Sustainable Development Summit in New York in September, and the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption in St. Petersburg, to name just a few, to all of which, I note with appreciation, IACA contributed; and finally now, the Academy's own Assembly of Parties in Vienna.

The unanimous adoption of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development at the end of September in New York, where more than 150 Heads of State and Government along with 1800 delegates met to help pave the road towards achieving sustainable answers to some of the most pressing issues of our times, was a major event with great importance for years to come. As I mentioned in my speech at the Summit, at which I had the honour of representing Austria, the 2030 Agenda provides us *“with the opportunity to make sustainable development a reality; but it also gives us significant responsibility to implement, follow-up, and review the progress made towards achieving the goals we have set for ourselves”*.

Having said that, we should not forget that all SDGs run the risk of being substantially challenged by the scourge called corruption, that corruption poses a serious threat to the stability and security of societies, undermining the values of democracy, peace and social cohesion, equality and justice, and jeopardizing the rule of law.

As Federal President of the Republic of Austria, I have on many occasions and in different contexts voiced my concerns about the detrimental effects of corruption on societies around the world and highlighted the importance of preventing and combating this phenomenon with all available means.

I therefore give my full support to IACA's dictum that a strong and unwavering approach against corruption, with leadership from the very top, both nationally and internationally, both in the political and in the corporate world, is essential for realizing this sustainable and promising development Agenda.

And I am confident that IACA will contribute further to the successful implementation of this Agenda and to the vision and goals of its mandate. In order to do so, IACA

needs the full support of and strong ownership by its broad and growing constituency, both politically as well as regards its resources.

In this respect, let me conclude by extending to you my best wishes for productive and fruitful deliberations and a successful outcome of this session of the Assembly of Parties in all respects.

And – especially to those delegates coming from capitals around the globe – have a wonderful time in beautiful Vienna!

*John Kaim Trosky*