

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

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Statement by the Dean of IACA and
Executive Secretary to the Assembly of Parties

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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

It is an honour and pleasure to welcome all of you here today to the fifth session of the Assembly of Parties of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA).

I am very happy to see more than 250 distinguished delegates from around 70 national and institutional delegations in this room. You represent all regions of the world, and a large number of you have come from your capitals to be with us here in Vienna. I am deeply honoured by your commitment to IACA, the organization I have the privilege to lead in its daily operations, and I am strongly encouraged by your determination to fight the global scourge of corruption.

Let me express my sincere gratitude to the outgoing and incoming Bureaus of the Assembly and the distinguished Chairpersons of the Regional Groups, all members of IACA's Board of Governors and its most capable Chairperson, Mr. Eduardo Vetere, the Academy's International Senior Advisory Board and International Academic Advisory Board, respectively, as well as the Permanent Missions to IACA in Vienna and beyond. Furthermore, my particular thanks go to all IACA's staff for their tireless efforts throughout the year and in preparing for this session.

I am also sincerely grateful, of course, to the United Nations Office in Vienna for making this excellent venue available for our deliberations over the next two days.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In these remarks let me highlight serious, immediate impediments, challenges, and threats to a sustainable future – for the World, for us, and also for IACA. And let me, with your permission, emphasize what we shall do collectively to address them.

The global situation remains uncertain, challenging, and often dangerous, with extremism on the rise in many regions, frequent terrorist attacks, growing tensions between major

powers, further waves of refugees fleeing wars and terror, worsening social divisions and divides in many societies, and a lack of trust in the ability of leaders and elites at all levels to deal with these issues.

Our best hope for a brighter global future is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, unanimously adopted by all United Nations Member States in New York in September 2015 and developed by a most inclusive and broad process of participation and involvement of all sectors, including civil society and the business world. Its 17 goals embrace, among others, no poverty, zero hunger, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, and quality education. Goal 16, on “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”, includes the explicit target to “*substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms*”.

It is crucial that we meet this target, because corruption is one of the biggest single threats to the entire 2030 Agenda. If we don’t, corruption will further undermine political, economic, and social stability. It will destroy even more lives, wreck even more nations, and shatter our hopes of a promising future.

As I have said before – and knowing that I repeat myself here – investing in anti-corruption education and empowerment is the smart way towards sustainable development, safeguarding human rights, and strengthening the rule of law on the road to 2030 and beyond.

IACA is, in all modesty, proud of the role it played in contributing to the Post-2015 Development Agenda process. And, as a global centre of excellence empowering professionals around the world in the fight against corruption, the Academy can make an important contribution towards implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Unfortunately, however, IACA’s own sustainability also faces serious challenges and threats. These come from its critical financial situation and in particular the lack of stable, predictable, and planable funding for its general budget.

Although this distinguished forum unanimously adopted IACA’s last three budgets, the Academy received less than 10% of the funds that our constituency thinks we need.

I am sorry to say, Ladies and Gentlemen, that this situation is not sustainable.

The lesson, for both the 2030 Agenda and for IACA’s own prospects, is clear: we cannot prevent and fight corruption, and create a more sustainable future, with good intentions

alone. We need a shared sense of ownership, with verbal commitments and expressions of support being backed up by real financial resources.

Distinguished Delegates,

IACA celebrated its fifth anniversary on 8 March this year, and it was a pleasure to welcome many of you to our campus in Laxenburg on this festive occasion. Let me remind and update you briefly on what IACA has already achieved in the organization's first five and a half years, even with very limited resources.

- We have built a global constituency of 68 Parties, which will become 69 later this month when the Kingdom of Bahrain's accession enters into force, as well as a worldwide network of partner institutions.
- We offer the unique Master in Anti-Corruption Studies (MACS), now welcoming its fourth class, and we will offer a new master's programme for private sector professionals starting in 2017; we have delivered two IACA Regional Summer Academies in Argentina and Uganda in the past 12 months, along with the regular annual international event in Laxenburg/Vienna and numerous other programmes and activities; and we constantly receive new requests from Member States and organizations for our customized "tailor-made" trainings. We will give a fuller report on our Programmes and Activities under a later agenda item and a special side-event during this Assembly.
- To ensure the broadest participation and geographical diversity, IACA was able – courtesy of donor funds – to support more than 20% of its students, coming from LDCs and other ODA areas, by way of full scholarships or full tuition fee waivers.
- Our work has received extensive international recognition, including explicit tribute in three separate UN resolutions within the last two years, but equally important, it led to lots of promising impact stories from practitioners on the ground and continuing excellent overall feedback from our students.
- To exemplify on mutual events, last month we hosted the 17th Conference of International Investigators, a major annual gathering that attracted senior representatives of almost 50 international organizations and generated exceedingly positive feedback.

- And we now have an alumni network of over 1,000 anti-corruption and compliance professionals, along with hundreds of additional participants from various other IACA activities, from more than 140 countries. They are ambassadors for the Academy and act as multipliers in the common cause of fighting corruption.

Let me also emphasize that IACA manages its limited resources extremely carefully and under several layers of scrutiny, including an independent and MS-owned external audit body. In this context, I would like to thank those volunteering Parties that nominated candidates for the collegium that audited IACA's financial statements for 2015 – i.e. Indonesia, Pakistan, and the Russian Federation.

However, there are also many things that we have simply not been able to do because of severe financial constraints.

For example, we have been unable to develop many new open trainings and additional forms of capacity-building and technical assistance, activities that we were invited to develop; to deliver new joint seminars and workshops with partners; to offer more scholarships for participants from Least Developed Countries; or to use IACA's Observer Status with the UN General Assembly, ECOSOC, and the Council of Europe/GRECO more fully. Nor have we been able this year to convene meetings of our two Advisory Boards, which would have provided valuable input on our present work and future possibilities.

In addition, we are currently not in a position to, e.g., hire the personnel envisaged in the Work Programme 2014 – 2016 or even to fill some of the vacancies that stem from employment contracts having ended, to enhance and maintain our existing ICT system, to contract necessary repair and maintenance works at our premises, and to further expand and develop the IACA library.

All of this means that IACA will not be able to fully implement its current Work Programme.

On the other hand, I am of course extremely grateful to all the States – *in concreto* Austria, Azerbaijan, Chile, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Mongolia, Romania, and the Russian Federation – and other donors that have made financial contributions to IACA in the past year. Your commitment and generous support is greatly appreciated and is vital to our work.

As you are aware, IACA and its organs – and let me in this context respectfully pay my humble tribute to the members of the Board of Governors for their firm and unwavering

commitment and dedication – have been looking for some time at ways of putting the Academy's finances on a more sustainable footing so that it can fulfil its mandate more completely and comprehensively. At the fourth session of the Assembly in 2015, also here in Vienna, we presented a proposal on Additional Alternative Ways of Funding that contained another seven possibilities for generating further financing for the Academy.

Although IACA will continue to seek general budget funding from the private sector and other potential donors, this will not close the huge 90% gap. IACA is owned by its members, and Member States have generally agreed on a shared responsibility for financial ownership. As we may all agree, eventually it is also the organization's independence and impartiality that is at stake and needs to be further ensured.

In this regard I would like to highlight the draft Resolution on shared ownership and financial stability and sustainability of the Academy's general budget allocation. Related to this is the importance of in-depth discussions and deliberations regarding the preparation of IACA's next Work Programme. Regarding the latter, the Secretariat has – further also to relevant discussions and decisions in the Board of Governors – distributed a short survey to Parties to kindly seek your concrete proposals and relevant substance areas thereon.

Let me therefore invite and encourage all Parties to deliberate and provide a way forward on these vital and closely linked issues.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, in closing I would like to reiterate that we are entering a critical period in many contexts, and also for the organization. By coming together and taking clear, decisive actions in the coming days, weeks, and months, we can take important steps along the road to a more sustainable future; along an avenue of human, social, economic, and political prosperity; and along a path that enables IACA to further implement its mandate in *empowering professionals* around the globe.

I am confident that we can rise to this challenge in a spirit of partnership and shared ownership, and I look forward to a productive two days here in Vienna.

Thank you.