

**Sixth session of the  
Conference of the States Parties to the  
United Nations Convention against Corruption**

**High-Level Segment**

Statement by

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to address this sixth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and share the International Anti-Corruption Academy's (IACA) perspective on this important event.

A little over a month ago we witnessed a turning point in history as more than 150 world leaders, along with 1800 delegates, adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda – a transformative vision with a blueprint for a better future. The universal agenda's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated targets came not only at the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UNCAC becoming effective, but also as a result of the most inclusive process since this global organization opened its doors. IACA is honoured and happy to have had the opportunity to contribute to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The unprecedented agenda recognizes anti-corruption as bedrock of progress, with targets to “substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all its forms”, “promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and ensure equal access to justice for all”, as well as “develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels” under Goal 16.

It shines a light on corruption's role in inciting and perpetuating violence, insecurity, and inequality – beacons of a downward spiral for societies. At the same time, it acknowledges anti-corruption as a common denominator for achieving the SDGs and keeping our promise to transform the world into a better place over the next 15 years.

However, let us also be frank. All the universal Goals run the risk of being severely undermined by corruption. So the question is – how can we make sure that doesn't happen?

There is global consensus that there are no quick-fixes to eradicate corruption, but the UNCAC goes a long way in providing the strongest possible framework for addressing this global scourge. The UNCAC, with its Review Mechanism, is a key ingredient for the fulfillment of the SDGs.

The Convention has reached nearly universal ratification, but lacks universal implementation. And although we have made a robust leap forward, a long road still lies ahead of all of us. We need to work harder, and we need to work together in order to fully implement it.

In this context and in a time of economic uncertainty, the “let crime pay” principle, enshrined in Article 62 (2) c of the UNCAC and endorsed by an IACA Resolution of the second session of its Assembly of Parties in Bangkok, Thailand, can serve as a means to an end.

Your Excellencies,

We live in a rapidly changing world where knowledge, skills, and values are a major driver of development. Education can help create the conditions for securing a sustainable future for all societies, for all peoples of this world; or, as Malala Yousafzai, the 2014 Nobel Peace laureate from Pakistan, said at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September, “Education is hope. Education is peace”.

Anti-corruption education can strengthen individuals in their ethical decision-making and contribute to understanding and civically monitoring the activities of those entrusted with upholding the rule of law. Empowered societies spark change on a larger scale through collective action. They contribute to a non-tolerance of corruption and pave the way for strengthening human rights, equity and equality, prosperity and development.

Transformation in values and actions can only occur if societies are equipped and empowered to drive it. In the words of United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, “empowerment is the most effective development tool”. And this is exactly where anti-corruption education and training enter the equation.

These activities must aim to promote a deeper understanding of the intricacies of corruption, engage all sectors of society, including the corporate business world, build knowledge, and provide hands-on skills to prevent and combat it in practice. They must seek to reshape behaviours, raise awareness, and promote ethics so as to stimulate legitimate individual and collective efforts and actions.

This is what IACA, an international organization and post-secondary educational institution, is all about.

Advancing the goals of the UNCAC is at the very heart of our work. We empower professionals and provide technical assistance to states and other stakeholders seeking to strengthen their anti-corruption and compliance regimes. In fact, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the guardian of the Convention, was one of the driving forces behind IACA’s establishment more than four years ago.

The growing number of Parties and other stakeholders that stand behind IACA speaks for itself of the global significance of its work. With a constituency of 64 Parties, IACA brings

together two thirds of the world population. We work with our Parties and partners to strengthen international cooperation, to break down dogmatic barriers, and ultimately, to ensure a more coordinated prevention of and fight against corruption.

IACA's education and training portfolio has steadily evolved over the years. We have remained at the spearhead of anti-corruption through the development of new and re-enforcement of existing programmes. We have strengthened dialogue between the public and private sectors and we have empowered professionals from around 140 countries – professionals who pass these lessons on and act as multipliers.

IACA brings together professionals from around the world, introducing them to a variety of subject areas, offering a combination of theoretical and practical tools, and guiding them in finding durable solutions which fit their specific scenarios. This is what we call our holistic approach. We connect government officials with business leaders, media with academia, and act as a catalyst for the formation of alliances and benchmarks in the field.

In our Master in Anti-Corruption Studies (MACS) we equip working professionals with the knowledge and the necessary tools to change misconceptions, to address sector specific vulnerabilities, and to build sound anti-corruption strategies. This renowned programme saw its first class graduate in 2014 and welcomed its third intake this October. Next year, we will introduce a second Master programme, centered on compliance, private sector anti-corruption, and collective action.

Our annual Summer Academy celebrated its fifth year this July. The Summer Academy alone has strengthened the capacities of close to 400 professionals to act as agents of change, to mitigate corruption risks, and to develop integrity measures. Modelling on its success, we launched a regional spinoff for Latin America this year and a similar programme for East Africa will follow suit in 2016.

In addition, through tailor-made programmes, we assist to states and other stakeholders in improving their risk areas. And among others, we have also paired up with UNODC to reinforce civil society's capacities with regard to the Review Mechanism and to promote public-private partnerships.

These efforts did not go unnoticed. Just this summer, the Human Rights Council of the United Nations General Assembly, through Resolution 29/11, noted with appreciation the capacity-building activities and specialized curricula developed by relevant institutions, such as the UNODC and IACA, in recognizing the negative impact of corruption on human rights and sustainable development, and the significance of anti-corruption education.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I often like to quote Nelson Mandela, who once said that “education has the power to change the world”. In our context, it is fair to argue that anti-corruption education has the power to help us implement the UNCAC and achieve the SDGs. If societies are to move forward with the UNCAC and the SDGs, states must multiply their efforts to support anti-corruption education and empowerment at all levels, and make such programmes an integral part of their anti-corruption strategies. IACA stands ready to support you in this endeavor and we encourage you to take advantage of our activities.

On a last note, I would like to draw your attention to the fourth session of IACA’s Assembly of Parties, taking place in Vienna, Austria from 9 to 11 December, and invite all states, both Parties and Observers, to partake in this important gathering.

Mr. President, investing in anti-corruption education and empowerment is the smart way towards sustainable development, safeguarding human rights, and strengthening the rule of law. IACA therefore pledges its full support to this conference and also to the next cycle of the Review Mechanism.