

# UNCAC CoSP10

## Atlanta Civil Society Declaration

— 15 December 2023, Atlanta, USA —

As the 10th Session of the Conference of the States Parties (CoSP10) to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in Atlanta, USA, is concluding, we, over 110 civil society organizations, having participated in the Conference as observers:

- Welcome that States Parties, through a historic first-ever vote, lifted objections against the participation of leading non-governmental organizations and allowed all registered observer organizations to participate in the Conference;
- Appreciate efforts by the United States as the host to facilitate an inclusive Conference by involving non-governmental stakeholders from all sectors, including by co-organizing the first-ever Civil Society Forum ahead of a CoSP in cooperation with civil society and UNODC, and call on future hosts of the Conference to take all efforts to promote a safe and enabling environment for civil society participation, ensuring no discrimination against any representatives based on their nationality or background, including by providing easy access to visas and financial resources;
- Recognize efforts by a number of States Parties to advance UNCAC commitments by proposing resolutions or text for resolutions, including on the transparency of public procurement and political finance, beneficial ownership transparency, recognizing and promoting the role of civil society in anti-corruption efforts, addressing gendered aspects of corruption, strengthening whistleblower protection, the links between organized crime and the need to develop synergies between the implementation of the UNTOC and the UNCAC, the need to tackle environmental crime and corruption, and the measurement and prevention of corruption;
- Remain concerned that negotiations on the resolutions take place behind closed doors with observers not being able to attend – which is practice in other UN fora – shielding States Parties from independent scrutiny on the positions they take;
- Convey disappointment that some States Parties appear to have taken advantage of the consensus-based nature of negotiations to block progressive anti-corruption commitments, placing geopolitical interests above upholding the spirit of UNCAC;
- Acknowledge that, while they were not always able to reach consensus on ambitious measures needed to advance the implementation of the Convention, some progress was achieved as States Parties agreed on a number of new collective commitments that go beyond their previous pledges.

We call on States Parties to improve legal frameworks and practice on the following:

- Protect and promote **civic space**, a safe and enabling environment for **citizens, and active civil society participation** at the local, national, regional and global levels – including in UNCAC fora, such as the UNCAC implementation reviews, the CoSP, and its subsidiary bodies (IRG and working groups). Governments should eliminate any impediments in law and practice that constrain civic space, which contradict the letter and spirit of the UNCAC, and that do not adhere to international human rights standards. States need to step up efforts to **protect and defend all those who report on and uncover corruption**, including journalists, whistleblowers, human rights defenders and anti-corruption activists, and release those who have been arbitrarily and unjustly detained for their anti-corruption work, such as Gubad Ibadoghlu who should have been here with us in Atlanta;
- Recognize the **detrimental impact corruption has on the enjoyment of human rights**, in particular those of individual and collective victims, that corruption fuels and exacerbates wars and conflicts, that it undermines society as a whole, and thus insist on the mutual obligations to respect, protect and fulfill human rights;
- Recognize the importance of victim participation and reparation, **adopt a victim-centered approach to anti-corruption**, and allow for strategic litigation as a means to hold governments and the private sector accountable. Use and establish legal frameworks to enable and facilitate the participation of victims of corruption in all stages of criminal, civil, forfeiture, and administrative proceedings, and grant relevant non-governmental organizations legal standing to represent the interests of individual and collective victims and social harm in any legal procedure, ensuring their right to access justice and compensation in accordance with Article 35 of the UNCAC and international human rights instruments. Provide reparation (material, psychosocial and symbolic), in a cultural and gender-appropriate manner, at the earliest possible stage of both individual and collective damage, including when cases are resolved through settlements or linked to transnational corruption;
- **Advance beneficial ownership transparency through standardized, central registers** that are directly accessible to a range of stakeholders within and outside government to better prevent, detect, and combat corruption. Ensure access to beneficial ownership data is based on the needs of data users, such as relevant domestic and foreign authorities, civil society, the media and other relevant actors in the fight against corruption. Use recognized data standards to facilitate the collection, publication and use of the data and support greater impact;
- Promote the use of **user-friendly electronic procurement systems that ensure full transparency** and open data at all stages of the contracting cycle from their planning to their delivery, involving the private sector and civil society to monitor for corruption risks and improve the quality of public service delivery to citizens, as well as granting oversight authorities and civil society access to utilize procurement data.

Governments should also have clear provisions in law and practice to promote open tendering and fair criteria for awarding contracts and to prevent conflicts of interest;

- **Promote and advance public access to information**, in general, to enhance transparency and accountability of public services and governance by adopting comprehensive access to information laws that align with international standards, and ensure their effective implementation by, among other things, removing any barriers to filing requests, establishing or strengthening independent oversight bodies, and ensuring proactive publication of information relevant to anti-corruption efforts by public bodies;
- Take proactive steps to **advance the implementation of Article 7.3 of the UNCAC on transparency in the funding of political parties and election campaigns** by adopting a legal framework for the regulation of political financing that includes but is not limited to (1) regulation on donations, (2) regulation on expenditures, (3) accountability of political parties, (4) addressing the (mis-)use of administrative resources for electoral campaigns, and (5) strengthening of oversight by independent competent bodies;
- Implement comprehensive **whistleblower reporting and protection** laws aligned with international best practices and full implementation of Article 33 of the UNCAC, establishing secure internal and external reporting systems for receiving and investigating corruption and retaliation complaints, and ensuring that whistleblower disclosures are protected and that whistleblowers are supported;
- Recognize the triple-planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, and urgently commit to bolstering UNCAC implementation to prevent and tackle the linkages between **environmental crime and corruption**, including by strengthening transparency and accountability across the value chain in relevant sectors, and by strengthening international cooperation to investigate and prosecute environmental crimes. Foster **transparency and accountability in climate-related finance mechanisms** in order to effectively address corruption risks;
- Intensify efforts to advance the **return of stolen assets** in a transparent, participatory, and accountable manner, including by facilitating the involvement of civil society stakeholders in the country of origin and the country of destination; by releasing timely data and documents related to asset recovery actions and communicating these efforts to publics in the involved countries; and by organizing a UNCAC CoSP Special Session before CoSP11 focused on challenges and good practice approaches on asset recovery that includes the participation of non-governmental stakeholders and works towards overcoming barriers in the recovery and return of stolen assets;
- Emphasize the linkage between **gender and corruption**, adopt a human-rights-based and inclusive approach to anti-corruption abiding by other international conventions on the topic; recognize and combat gender-specific corruption by criminalizing it and enhancing prevention measures; mainstream gender equality and inclusion into all

relevant anti-corruption frameworks and efforts; and provide gender-disaggregated data on corruption and anti-corruption efforts;

- Advance the inclusion and **participation of civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders in technical assistance** being provided under the UNCAC, both as providers of technical assistance in areas as well as beneficiaries, to advance UNCAC implementation and ensure effective and sustainable reforms;
- Adhere to Article 13 of UNCAC and facilitate the **meaningful participation of civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders in national UNCAC reviews and follow-up actions**, in line with good practice;
- Encourage additional States Parties to **sign the UNCAC Coalition’s Transparency Pledge** and the United Kingdom’s IRM initiative, and voluntarily commit to higher standards of transparency and inclusion of civil society in national UNCAC reviews and follow-up efforts;
- Enable inclusive discussions and swiftly agree on the **next phase of the UNCAC review mechanism**, seeking to improve the effectiveness, transparency and inclusiveness of the review mechanisms, and to ensure that it evaluates progress made in meeting UNCAC commitments and includes follow-up on previous UNCAC review recommendations;
- Intensify efforts to **promote inclusiveness** and the meaningful participation of all stakeholder groups in future Conferences, strengthening the attendance of women and youth and marginalized groups;
- Take swift action to advance the **implementation of the resolutions adopted at CoSP10** at the national level and provide financial support to UNODC to support follow-up actions.

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## Endorsements

*The statement remains open for additional endorsements by civil society organizations that participated in the UNCAC CoSP10. Please email your endorsement (name of organization, country, name of the representative, email of the representative to [cosp10@uncaccoalition.org](mailto:cosp10@uncaccoalition.org))*

No.	Organization	Country
1	UNCAC Coalition	Global
2	Whistleblowers Of America	Global
3	Al-Nahrain Foundation for Supporting Transparency and integrity	Iraq

4	The Institute of Social Policy and Research (ISPR)	South Sudan
5	ARTICLE 19	Global
6	Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)	Namibia
7	Action pour l'Education et la Promotion de la Femme (AEPF-Tchad)	Chad
8	Expert Forum	Romania
9	Observatoire Citoyen des Droits et lutte contre la Corruption en Rdc (OCIDC-RDC)	DRC
10	AEPF-Tchad	Chad
11	Mexiro	Mexico
12	Humanity For The World (HFTW)	France
13	AWTAD Anti-Corruption Organization	Yemen
14	Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI)	Pakistan
15	Cameroon Anti-Corruption Youths Movement (CACYM)	Cameroon
16	Forum for Protection of Public Interest (Pro Public)	Nepal
17	Transparency International Anticorruption Center	Armenia
18	Armavir Development Center	Armenia
19	Children and Young People Living for Peace(CYPLP)	Nigeria
20	News Guide Africa	Ghana
21	Ghana Integrity Initiative	Ghana
22	Community Focus Group ( CFG)	Kenya
23	Women in Democracy and Governance ( WIDAG)	Kenya
24	Transparency International - Russia	Russia
25	Progressive Impact Organization for Community Development (PRIMORG)	Nigeria
26	Asociación Chilena de Voluntarios RQQ	Chile
27	Organization for Responsible Governance	Bahamas
28	Libera. Associazioni, nomi e numeri contro le mafie	Italy

29	Open Data Charter	Global
30	PROMAD	Nigeria
31	Fundación Ciudadanía y Desarrollo - TI Ecuador	Ecuador
32	OPEN DRC	DRC
33	Fundación Espacio Cívico	Panama
34	Tripla Difesa Onlus Guardie Sicurezza Sociale ed Eco Zoofila	Italy
35	Global Human Rights Organization	France
36	Joy Acheron	Philippines
37	Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC)	Ghana
38	Bahrain Transparency Society	Bahrain
39	Center for Fiscal Transparency & Integrity Watch	Nigeria
40	Citizens WatchApp (Tenera Magna Initiative)	Zambia
41	Building Bridges for Youth Initiative	Nigeria
42	Organisation Tchadienne Anti-corruption (OTAC)	Chad
43	Thai Youth Anti-Corruption Network	Thailand
44	Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	Pakistan
45	Network of University Legal Aid Institutions (NULAI)	Nigeria
46	Rural and Urban Aid for Youth Development Initiatives (RUAYDI)	Nigeria
47	Transparency Initiative Seychelles	Seychelles
48	Article 19 Senegal & West Africa '	Senegal
49	Civil Society ADvocacy Group (CSBAG)	Uganda
50	Dialogue and Research Institute (DRI)	South Sudan
51	Asociación Civil por la Igualdad y la Justicia	Argentina
52	Transparency International Macedonia	North Macedonia
53	Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime	Switzerland

54	Pakistan Rural Workers Social Welfare Organization (PRWSWO)	Pakistan
55	Transparency International Uganda	Uganda
56	Avocats sans frontières Canada	Global
57	Freedom of Information Center of Armenia (FOICA)	Armenia
58	Transparency International Madagascar	Madagascar
59	Publish What You Pay Madagascar	Madagascar
60	Transparency International Brazil	Brazil
61	Association Maçons de l'Education	Niger
62	African Centre for Media & Information Literacy (AFRICMIL)	Nigeria
63	CLCT - Integrity Fiji	Fiji
64	Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ)	Nigeria
65	Bureau Pour la Croissance Intégrale et la Dignité de l'Enfant " BCIDE"	RDC
66	Spotlight on Corruption	UK
67	Accountability Network	Mexico
68	Semillas para la Democracia	Paraguay
69	Transparency International Zambia	Zambia
70	21st Century Community Empowerment for Youth and Women Initiative	Nigeria
71	Transparency International Ireland	Ireland
72	Public -Private Integrity	Gambia
73	Transparency International Canada	Canada
74	Partnership for Transparency	USA
75	Iniciativa Para la Recuperación de Activos Venezolanos (INRAV)	USA/Venezuela
76	Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU)	Africa

77	Open Contracting Partnership	Global
78	Central Asian Research Institute on Corruption and Money Laundering	Kyrgyzstan
79	Forum du Justiciable (FJ)	Sénégal
80	Jordan Transparency Center	Jordan
81	Integrity South Sudan	South Sudan
82	Transparency International Kenya	Kenya
83	Mid-western Region Anticorruption Coalition	Uganda
84	The Meluibe Empowerment Foundation	Nigeria
85	Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI)	Georgia
86	Transparency International Georgia	Georgia
87	Due Process of Law Foundation	Western Hemisphere
88	Open Ownership	International
89	Environmental Investigation Agency	International
90	Transparency International UK	United Kingdom
91	African Center for Governance, Asset Recovery and Sustainable Development	Nigeria
92	Integrity Initiatives International	Global
93	Civic IDEA	Georgia
94	Transparencia Venezuela	Venezuela
95	National Whistleblower Center	United States
96	Transparency International	Global
97	CiFAR - Civil Forum for Asset Recovery e.V.	Global
98	Transparency International France	France
99	HEDA Resource Center	Nigeria
100	Impunidad Cero	México
101	Nationwide Movement Yuksalish	Uzbekistan



102	Improve Your Society Organization	Yemen
103	Federation of Environmental and Ecological Diversity for Agricultural Revampment and Human Rights (FEEDAE & HR)	Cameroon
104	Transparency International Defence & Security	Global
105	Ágora	Mexico
106	Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo - TI El Salvador	El Salvador
107	Transparency International Germany	Germany
108	YWCA &GIN	India
109	Center for Civil Communications	North Macedonia
110	Macedonian Center for International Cooperarion	North Macedonia
111	Wildlife Justice Commission	Global
112	Transparency International EU	European Union
113	Transparency Serbia	Serbia
114	Access Info Europe	Europe
115	Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia-Tajikistan	Tajikistan
116	Transparency International EU	EU
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