

# 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 to 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 – contrary to the 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    |

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| 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 | Participación Ciudadana  | Dominican Republic |
| 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              |

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| 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 | Transparency International EU                                  | EU              |
| 35 | Global Human Rights Organization                               | France          |
| 36 | Government Watch (G-Watch)                                     | 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      | Austria         |
| 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     |

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| 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        |

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| 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 | Club Ohada Thies  | Senegal            |



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| 102 | Improve Your Society Organization   | Yemen           |
| 103 | Federation of Environmental and Ecological Diversity for Agricultural Revampment and Human Rights (FEEDAR & 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 Cooperation   | 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 | Observatoire de la lutte contre la corruption et les malversations économiques (OLUCOME)                        | Burundi         |
| 117 | GoodGovPH   | Philippines     |
| 118 | Foundation for Peace and Development Organization - FPDO  | South Sudan     |
| 119 | Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change  | Nigeria         |
| 120 | Réseau Nigérien Anti-Corruption (RENAC)   | Niger           |
| 121 | Amalna (Our Hope) South Sudan   | South Sudan     |
| 122 | Policy Alert  | Nigeria         |
| 123 | National Campaign for Sustainable Development Nepal   | Nepal           |
| 124 | Government Accountability Project   | USA             |
| 125 | Peace and Justice Alliance  | Canada          |

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| 126 | Global Association of Human Trafficking Scholars (GAHTS)                                    | Global     |
| 127 | Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI)  | Global     |
| 128 | Nationwide Movement Yuksalish   | Uzbekistan |
| 129 | Plateforme Démocratie, Paix, Élections et Développement Durable en Guinée (Plateforme DPEG) | Guinea     |
| 130 | Professionals for Humanity (PROFOH)   | Global     |