



European Union
EU Statement on
Agenda item 3: Technical Assistance

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United Nations Convention against Corruption

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Sharm el-Sheikh, 13-17 December 2021

Mr Chair, distinguished delegates, dear colleagues,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: [Turkey[§], the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia*, Albania*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Iceland*, Liechtenstein*, Norway*, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino].

Mr Chair,

Corruption is increasingly recognised as **one of the main obstacles** that impedes economic growth and development.

According to United Nations estimates, the amount lost by developing countries to corruption and bribery, theft and tax evasion each year exceeds several times the amount of **Official Development Aid (ODA)** funding. Corruption leads to a waste of public resources and donor funds, hampers the efficient management of public finances, reduces the provision of welfare, disproportionately affects the poor, undermines citizen trust, poses a threat to stability, and can lead to environmental degradation. Corruption undermines the business climate, acts as a non-tariff barrier to trade, raises transaction costs and reduces foreign investment.

The new **European Consensus on Development** recognizes the negative effects of corruption and money laundering in derailing sustainable development, and promotes accountable institutions, equal access to justice, and transparent funding. The direct link between sustainable development, accountable institutions, and the

[§] Candidate Country

* Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are members of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

fight against corruption is also recognized in SDG 16, which specifically calls for the reduction of corruption and bribery in all their forms.

For all these reasons, the European Union is committed to the fight against corruption, intervening at global, regional and country level, both on the preventive and curative side. The EU fights corruption in its **external actions** in a holistic approach through targeted instruments that include:

- Support to establishing a robust legal framework in line with international standards on preventing and fighting corruption.
- Support to public administration reform and sound public financial management, including the development of integrity and accountability frameworks;
- Support to civil society, the media, whistle-blowers, human rights defenders, as well as Supreme Audit Institutions and Parliaments in exercising their oversight and control functions.

Under the thematic **Programme on Human Rights and Democracy**, the European Commission invests EUR 5 million to improve democratic accountability of public institutions globally, by empowering civil society to demand systemic change to address accountability and anti-corruption deficits in 21 countries over 36 months.

The Commission also plans to support a project to foster inclusive co-creation and implementation of action plans, with a focus on anti-corruption and key themes related to open governments. The project will also enable cross-country learning and exchange.

From 2014 to 2020, support to anti-corruption by the EU totalled EUR 770 million. This support has been **steadily increasing** over that period. For the period 2021-2027, the European Commission plans to support work on anti-corruption in 50+ partner countries in which anti-corruption is a main focal area in the multi-annual indicative programmes. Last but not least, the EU and its Member States contribute 35% to UNODC's budget, a large part of which goes towards technical assistance programmes, including for anti-corruption.

Mr Chair,

The **Covid-19 pandemic**, has had a tremendous impact on everything, including technical assistance delivery. Let me assure you that the European Union will remain a reliable partner of UNODC in these challenging times and will continue to support its technical assistance efforts both financially and programmatically.

Thank you, Mr Chair.