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**Implementation Review Group**

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**Statement submitted by the Centre for Human Rights and  
Climate Change Research, a non-governmental  
organization in consultative status with the Economic and  
Social Council\***

The following document is being circulated in accordance with paragraph 1 (i) of resolution 4/6 of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and rule 17, paragraph 3 (b), of the rules of procedure for the Conference.

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## **CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH**

### **SUBMISSION OF THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH TO THE AUGUST 2024 SESSION OF UNCAC IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW MECHANISM**

The Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research in collaboration with the Alliance for Implementation of Multilateral Agreements made up of multi-stakeholders make this submission to the August Session of the Implementation Review Mechanism of UNCAC. We emphasize that continuous review of the implementation of the Convention is key to achieving its objectives, commend the Implementation Review Mechanism of the United Nation Conventions Against Corruption (UNCAC) and applaud States and stakeholders that are participating in this process.

The Implementation review process affords all stakeholders the opportunity to assess what has been achieved, identify the challenges to implementation and promote cooperation in seeking collective solution that leaves no individual or nation behind. We therefore request that all submissions be put into consideration in the review process, for that is one way to reflect true inclusion that ensures that all voices are heard and that no one is left behind with the ultimate goal of achieving a common vision aimed at strengthening action.

#### **Preventive Efforts**

It has been right noted that corruption, whether financial or sexual, has far-reaching consequences for gender equality, sustainable development and democratic governance. We note the initiatives by several States to ensure that action to prevent participation of citizens in the fight against corruption is participatory. Several studies show the difference in impact of corruption on male and female whether children, teenagers or adults yet in several countries the rate of women and youth participation in political affairs and anti corruption discuss and action is still very low.

There is need for more investment by States to investigate the gender impact of corruption. There must be deliberate efforts to encourage participation of society in preventing and fighting corruption. The IRM must serve as an accountability mechanisms for creating oversight to ensure reviews reflect this recommendation. Reviews should reflect States commitment on gender and actual action in implementation programmes, more gender disaggregated data to reflect participation of women and youth in capacity building initiatives around anti-corruption, how diverse voices were integrated. Good practices should reflect the role of women and youths in whistle blowing activities. civil society actors including association and NGOs working with/on Youths and women should be actively consulted in reviews and empowered to participate in the review process.

We recognize the key role of technical assistance in corruption prevention and commend global action to strengthen and expand assistance to Member States for identifying and returning stolen public assets, assessing technical assistance for nations to fight corruption across borders and request for strengthening of programmes aimed at providing and making Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and digitization accessible through development of capacity and expansion of technical assistance flow.

While poverty is not an excuse for corruption. It seems that there is need to link poverty intervention models to corruption prevention initiatives. This is because poverty driven corruption exist within broader economic, environmental, social and political problems and unsustainable development frameworks and interventions. David in the Bible prayed God to not make him poor so that he will not steal. We also encourage more commitment to action to prevention corruption in procurement at various government levels and the investment in developing capacity for more effective use of ICT to prevent, detect, deter and counter corruption in procurement.

### **Measurement of Corruption, Criminalization and Law Enforcement Performance**

Existing corruption measurement models, newspaper/internet articles and public opinion align that corruption is thriving across the world. While some countries remain stagnant in respective of new efforts to prevent corruption, some are in decline. We commend international, regional and national initiatives to measure corruption. Also, identifiable causes of increased trans-border crimes include porous borders, political corruption, and compromised security system.

We commend the commitments of States to putting in place specialized law enforcement authorities to deal with the issue of corruption within and across borders. We emphasize for these institutions to be truly independent and to provide more resources including technical capacity building for the institutions to function effectively. There is need to ensure that States are investing in mutual training and mutual empowerment and mutual planning and developing strong framework for mutual whistle blowing and pathways for law enforcement across borders.

Judicial corruption is now recognized as more of a global problem not restricted to any particular jurisdiction or country or continent. It is not restricted to a specific country or region. Within the review process, there is need to track State action to strengthen judicial integrity and independence and to develop an international financing framework to ensure financial backup and technical assistance to anti-corruption agencies and the judiciary globally.

### **Strengthening International Cooperation**

International corruption cooperation between states have been fraught with several exigencies. There is need to take more action to strengthen international cooperation and coordinate all parts of the anti-corruption ecosystem. The outcome of the Open-ended intergovernmental expert meeting to enhance international cooperation under the United Nations Convention against Corruption should put into perspective civil society voices. Actual participation and engagement in expert meetings of this kind will afford the opportunity to present CSO position if they are given a seat Anti corruption cooperative models should be assessed based on international recognized principles and values of international cooperation.

### **Procedural matters and Topic “Public participation, inclusive decision-making processes, role of non-governmental stakeholders, journalists, media”.**

Technicality can not be used to defeat procedural rights. Where the duration of the session will promote procedural rights such as the right to participation in order to respect, fulfill and promote human rights which is greatly affected by the world corruption problem. The topic is timely and ripe for focus. Public participation, stake holder engagement and inclusive decision making processes is key to identifying the complex components of the problem of corruption. There is no better time in history to deep dive into this burning agenda.

## **Integrated Approach to Corruption**

The combination of corruption and other transboundary crimes including drug trafficking has created a complex and terrible cycle of criminality across board. Corrupt practices among a lot of officials manning various control agencies, weak governance structures, and the exploitation of porous borders have provided fertile ground for drug cartels and criminal syndicates to thrive. This partnership between corrupt elements and drug traffickers perpetuates a network that not only undermines the rule of law but also erodes the very fabric of our societies.

To effectively tackle this complex issue, a multifaceted approach is indispensable as the challenge of combating corruption and drug trafficking requires collaborative effort on a global scale, international cooperation, information sharing, and joint operations among nations are crucial in disrupting the intricate web of criminality that spans across continents. Strengthening institutional frameworks, empowering law enforcement, enhancing judicial systems to combat corruption and drug-related offenses are urgent imperatives. Investment in border security, intelligence-sharing mechanisms, and capacity-building initiatives for law enforcement agencies are essential to disrupt the flow of illicit drugs and dismantle criminal networks.

Finally, we also call on member states as to continue to build synergy in planning, action and financing for cooperation to support future more coordinated action and strengthen weaknesses revealed in several assessments and reports. We can collectively address the menace posed by a global culture of corruption by promoting education and research for a culture of anti-corruption and lawfulness, creating and supporting ethical values in line with anti-corruption, creating economic opportunities which are indispensable in addressing underlying drivers like poverty and prioritizing the issue of addressing corruption on the global agenda and committing resources, expertise, and cooperation to monitoring of compliance with relevant laws, whistleblowing protection, promoting development and implementation of policies and laws aimed at new standards, promoting the role of Civil Society Organizations, investing in research, advancing youth role in implementation and promoting international cross boundary law enforcement cooperation on asset recovery and drug trafficking prevention and law enforcement.

We implore you to stand in solidarity and take decisive action to address the pressing issue of corruption. Let us work together to support our nations, strengthen global partnerships, and foster a future where justice, integrity, and prosperity prevail across our continents. This can be achieved together by adopting a multi-stakeholder approach that promotes partnerships in which global leaders take the lead and ensure that academic, youth, civil society and private sector do not fall off the partnership circle bound by respect for humanity and the values of multilateralism as we together strengthen the United Nations to continue the foster peace and development.