



## **Solomon Islands Written Submission**

**UNCAC Secretariat for the Implementation Review Group, First Resumed  
Fifteenth Session,  
Vienna, Austria, 28<sup>th</sup> August – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

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### **1. Salutation**

Madam Chair,

Distinguished Heads of Delegates

I bring greetings to this August body on behalf of the Government and the people of Solomon Islands.

Let me begin by congratulating you on your election as Chair. We also recognised and appreciate the hard work undertaken by the UNCAC Secretariat in the preparation stage of this meeting and their important role to support you in the smooth facilitation of the First Resumed of the Fifteenth Session to discuss the next phase of the Implementation Review Mechanism.

### **2. Overview and Update of Solomon Islands' commitment to combatting corruption and implementing the UNCAC.**

Corruption continues to be a plague that all countries around the world face. It hinders economic development, erodes public trust and undermines government's ability to effectively serve their citizens. Government has the responsibility to combat corruption with every tool at their disposal.

Madam Chair, Solomon Islands acknowledges that we have face many challenges when it comes to addressing corruption, including the Covid 19 Global Pandemic. However, Solomon Islands commitment to addressing corruption remains steadfast. As a State Party to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, it is our duty to fight corruption at all cost.

Solomon Islands has completed both reviews for the first cycle in 2014 and the second cycle in 2022; the reports are published in the UNCAC Website.

The Convention requires States parties to take measures both to prevent corruption and punish those who commit corrupt acts. It provides a roadmap for achieving these results, which the Solomon Islands Government has followed in developing its National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017-2019. The recommendations from the first cycle review exercise was also embedded in our National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017 – 2019.

The National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017 - 2019 was instrumental in the enactment of the Anti-Corruption Act and the Whistle Blower Protection Act in 2018 and the establishment of the Solomon Islands Independent Commission Against Corruption (SIICAC).

Madam Chair, I wish to inform you that Solomon Islands Independent Commission Against Corruption(SIICAC), Commissioners has already been appointed in 2019. We have also welcomed the appointment of our inaugural Director General of the Commission in 2020. The Commission's Regulations was also being Gazetted and the Commission has entered into a framework arrangement with other national integrity and enforcement agencies to maximize the experience, expertise, sharing of knowledge and information between these agencies to better combat corruption in Solomon Islands.

In June 2024, Recruitment of 27 staffs including the Directors responsible for Prevention, Investigation and Prosecution Unit, has already advertised and appointment will be formalised in the coming months. On the regional front, Solomon Islands Independent Commission Against Corruption (SIICAC) has signed an MOU with the Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption (FIICAC) on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023, with the overall objective of mutual and collaborative understanding and sharing common knowledge and continuous capacity building between the two agencies in the fight against corruption.

Solomon Islands is however aware that successful fight against corruption requires more than a series of initiatives targeted at different sectors and addressing different challenges. It requires an inclusive and integrated approach to tackling corruption. Our efforts should then be constantly assessed and reassessed as conditions change and new challenges arise. On this connection, I wish to inform that the newly elected Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Hon Jeremiah Manele has recently launched the revised National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2024- 2027 on June 21<sup>st</sup> 2024. The revised Strategy will ensure that Solomon Islands develop and implement an effective, coordinated anti-corruption policies and periodically evaluate relevant legal instruments and administrative measures with the view to determining their adequacy to prevent and fight corruption. The revised Strategy will replace the previous one and also take into account the recommendations from the two cycles of reviews of Solomon Islands' efforts to implement the Convention.

It is also worth noting that periodically reviewing of the Anti-Corruption Strategy is mandatory task under the Anti-Corruption Act of 2018.

On the Convention Peer Reviews, Solomon Islands has review Tuvalu Implementation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle Review and a country visit together with Fiji was done in April 18<sup>th</sup> 2023. Solomon Islands also review New Zealand together with Iceland. A desktop review has been completed and a country visit is schedule for May 2025.

Madam Chair, these are notable progress in our collective effort to combat corruption and the implementation of requirement under the Convention.

### **3. Solomon Islands comment on the UNCAC Implementation Review Group, for the next phase of the Implementation Review Mechanism.**

Madam Chair, for the next phase of the Implementation Review Mechanism, we would like to register our contribution to the discussion at hand with the following comments;

#### **1. The next phase should focus on Effective follow-up and compliance of the recommendation made in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Review of Country's Report;**

- a) A comprehensive checklist template should be develop to gather information and update on the progress achieved in relations with the convention in the previous country review reports. The first phase focuses more on the need to have Anti-Corruption legislations frameworks and policies without showing the impact of their application on the ground.
- b) Technical assistant should be grounded on baseline survey, to foster evidence based approach as an instrument in the development and refinement of national anti-corruption policies/strategies. So that state party can measure the effectiveness and impact of its review mechanism implementation.
- c) The follow-up review exercise must clearly identify emerging needs for technical assistance.
- d) Also, the follow-up review exercise must consider new developments in the implementation of the provision of the convention, that are outside the scope of the recommendation made the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle review reports.
- e) Agree and support the general consensus for the next phase to follow the same scope and thematic sequence as it was in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle review. Two cycle follow-up review, starting with 1<sup>st</sup> cycle (chapter 3 & 4) and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle (chapter 2 & 5).

**2. In the next phase of the Implementation Review Mechanism, we would want to see timely report and a well define timeframe;**

- a) We support the call made by the state of Qatar for Report(s) to be made and organized with specific dates according to the lottery system and placed with a calendar announced on the UNODC Website.
- b) Report must be precise, concise and short.
- c) Report are made according to specific templates.
- d) Reports are to be published and shared to ensure transparency.
- e) Recommendations must be made according to the degree of obligation and the mechanism for addressing these recommendations.
- f) We also support the call made by other state parties, that report must consider the development and updates in the implementing of all the provisions of the convention, as well as emerging needs for technical assistance.

**3. The next phase must be conducted in such a manner and within the confines of the Guiding principles and characteristics of the UNCAC Review Implementation Mechanism;**

- a) Non adversarial/ non punitive/ no rankings
- b) Opportunity to share good practices and challenges
- c) Assist States in implementing the Convention
- d) Balanced geographical approach
- e) Technical/ Intergovernmental nature
- f) Complement existing review mechanisms
- g) Diversity of legal systems and levels of development
- h) Confidentiality

**Concluding Statement**

Madam Chair, as a country Solomon Islands has greatly benefited from all the expertise, technical assistant and support the UNCAC secretariat has provided to our national anti-corruption effort over the years even in the most challenging time brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic.

The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle review of the country's UNCAC implementation mechanism and its related undertakings has benefitted us greatly in our country's endeavour to fight corruption. Among other factors, unless we are accessed, we will not be able to determine how much progresses we have made in this fight to minimising corruption – that has

deprived our country of economic progress and a fair access to government goods and services for the people of Solomon Islands.

Madam Chair, I wish to therefore convey on behalf of the Solomon Islands Government, our deepest appreciation to UNODC and UNDP including other relevant stakeholders for their continuous support in terms of providing the relevant experts and resources to help us develop sound strategic policies and adopt legislative reforms that are geared towards our national anti-corruption efforts.

We look forward for continuous working relationship with the UNCAC secretariat and stand ready to support the outcome of the next phase of the Implementation Review Mechanism of Convention.