



FIFTH INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORKING GROUP ON ASSET RECOVERY, 25-26 AUGUST 2011, DELIVERED BY H. E. AMBASSADOR ALI ASGHAR SOLTANIEH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE IR OF IRAN

Mr. President,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. I would like to congratulate you for your election as the Chairperson. The Group wishes to express its thanks to the Secretariat for the documentation prepared.

Mr. President,

2. The Group takes note of the report of the Fourth Intersessional Meeting, which was held on 16-17 December 2010.

3. Return of assets is a fundamental principle of UNCAC as enunciated in Article 51, and States Parties are expected to cooperate and assist in this regard. The diversion of national wealth from public budgets and its transfer abroad seriously compromises the potential for the development of the country of origin. The return of those funds to the country of origin and the elimination of safe havens for looted assets in the world are, therefore, viewed as one of the high priorities in the fight against corruption. The Group believes that international cooperation between law enforcement authorities is of absolute essence.

4. Obstacles faced in recovering stolen assets have shown that more needs to be done to streamline the process and facilitate requesting states in their efforts. The G-77 and China is of the view that technical assistance in preparing a case, enhanced capacity of the criminal justice system, as well as enhanced international commitment, mutual confidence and cooperation in facilitating asset recovery and eliminating safe havens for looted assets are very important for the success of current and future efforts. The Group emphasizes that in order to promote the implementation of the UNCAC, States Parties should afford one another the widest measure of technical assistance, especially for the benefit of developing countries and their efforts to apply the Convention.

5. The Group wishes to re-emphasize the need for the effective implementation of the provisions of the asset recovery chapter of the Convention, in particular, the mechanism established in Article 57 for the return of assets. The Group, therefore, urges all States, in the spirit of the Convention to facilitate the quick return of assets and to assist the requesting states to build required capacity in tracing, confiscation and recovery of assets as well as capacity for the establishment of appropriate legislation, to minimize the costs for the requesting State.

6. While recognizing that Chapter V of the Convention would be reviewed during the second cycle of the Implementation Review Mechanism, the Group stresses the importance of preparing States parties for the review of implementation of that chapter and structuring its work accordingly;

7. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China assures you of its entire support and will fully contribute in a constructive manner to ensure the success of this meeting.

I Thank you, Mr. President.