



STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA AT THE 7TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION, VIENNA, AUSTRIA, 6-10 NOVEMBER 2017 DELIVERED BY H.E AMBASSADOR REZA NAJAFI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

VIENNA, 6 NOVEMBER 2017

1. Madam President,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, it is my pleasure to felicitate you on your election, by acclamation, as President of the seventh session of the Conference of the States Parties, as also to the other elected members of the Bureau.
2. I wish to express the Group's appreciation for the outgoing President of the Conference for his able stewardship.
3. The Group commends the Secretariat for making timely preparations for the Conference, including useful background documents made available.
4. The Group welcomes those States Parties that have acceded to the Convention since the last Conference held in St. Petersburg.

Madam President,

5. The phenomenon of corruption continues to be one of the major challenges to security and stability, rule of law, and sustainable socioeconomic development of our societies.
6. The Group, therefore, reiterates the need for preventing and eradicating corruption more effectively by further promoting the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption.
7. The Group underlines the critical role of the Conference of the States Parties in this regard.
8. The Group also takes note of the ongoing efforts at different levels to implement the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, including its Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16. Such efforts would reinforce comprehensive approach to substantially reducing corruption in all its forms, including measures to address its root causes.
9. The Group wishes to recall that in the 'Doha Declaration' adopted by the UN Crime Congress in April 2015, the international community committed itself also to making every effort to tackling corruption, including through implementing measures aimed at enhancing transparency in public administration and promoting the integrity and accountability of our criminal justice systems, in accordance with the Convention. The implementation of Doha Declaration should be brought under sharper focus. In this regard, the Group welcomes the launch of the Global Programme to implement the Doha Declaration by UNODC with the support of the State of Qatar, aimed at assisting countries to achieve a positive and sustainable impact on corruption prevention, crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law.
10. Prevention, criminalization and law enforcement, asset recovery, and international cooperation are vital aspects of anti-corruption efforts at different levels.

11. The Group reiterates the importance of developing and promoting effective policies and practices aimed at prevention of corruption, and in this regard stresses the need to enhance efforts in accordance with chapter II (on Preventive Measures) of the Convention. The Group underlines the importance of the "Marrakech Declaration on the Prevention of Corruption" (Resolution 4/3) in encouraging the integration of prevention in anti-corruption national strategies. The Group also welcomes the Resolution 6/6 entitled "Follow-up of the Marrakech Declaration on the Prevention of Corruption".

12. The Group takes note with appreciation of the progress made by States Parties, particularly in the areas of awareness raising, anti-corruption education and promotion of good practices in preventing corruption. In this regard, the Group particularly commends the initiatives aimed at mobilizing youth, to promote anti-corruption awareness, including in educational settings.

13. Madam President, the Group regrets deeply that despite the very explicit articles of the Convention, barriers and challenges in the asset recovery process appear to be on the increase. The Group therefore underscores that the return of assets is a fundamental principle of the Convention as stated in its article 51, and States Parties shall afford one another the widest measures of international cooperation, in particular regarding implementing that article.

14. The Group expresses its serious concern that lack of political will, unnecessary delays, procedural complexities, bureaucratic hurdles and legal barriers in requested States as well as high cost of asset recovery continue to impede effective international cooperation in the area of asset recovery. The Group, therefore, stresses the need for enhanced political will and simplified and efficient procedures to ensure meaningful and concrete international cooperation in this regard in compliance with the relevant provisions of the Convention.

15. The Group welcomes resolution 6/2 entitled: "Facilitating international cooperation in asset recovery and return of proceeds of crime", adopted by the last session of the Conference and urges all States, in the spirit of the Convention, to facilitate expeditious return of stolen assets, including assets that have not been accounted for and that are found in safe havens, to countries of origin and assist the requesting States in identification, tracing, freezing, seizure and recovery of assets and to minimize the costs for the requesting State. Furthermore, the Group also requests the Secretariat to provide technical assistance, upon request in this field to countries of origin.

16. The Group calls on the States Parties, at the present session of the Conference, to commit to accelerating the development of international cooperation, in the area of asset recovery, with the view to ensuring speedy return of stolen assets to countries of origin.

17. The Group also urges all States Parties to remove barriers associated with implementing article 46 of the Convention, which is on mutual legal assistance, in order to speed up asset recovery proceedings and render them more successful, in the spirit of the Convention and international cooperation.

18. The Group considers that the use of civil and administrative proceedings is also a very effective tool for combatting corruption and recovering stolen assets. The use of this tool should thus be strengthened.

19. The Group recognizes the ongoing work of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference, notably the intergovernmental working group on prevention, the intergovernmental working group on asset recovery, the intergovernmental expert group meeting for international cooperation and the Implementation Review Group in promoting the implementation of the Convention.

20. The Group is of the view that the subsidiary bodies of the Conference should continue, in accordance with their respective mandate, to facilitate, inter alia, exchange of experiences, good practices, lessons learnt as well as international cooperation and technical assistance. The Group also stresses the need for regular

follow-up on the recommendations of those subsidiary bodies.

21. The Group notes with satisfaction that the Implementation Review Mechanism under the Conference is functioning well in accordance with the laid down Terms of Reference. The resolution 3/1, especially the Guiding principles and characteristics of the Mechanism, constitutes the backbone of the Mechanism, which should be fully and consistently complied with throughout the review process.

22. The Implementation Review Mechanism, under the first cycle, has supported the efforts of States Parties in implementing the Convention, notably Chapter III on Criminalization and Law Enforcement and Chapter IV on International Cooperation. States Parties should be assisted, upon request, in meeting the technical assistance needs identified during the first cycle.

23. The Group expresses satisfaction that, following the launch of the second cycle in St. Petersburg, the Implementation Review Mechanism is focusing on reviewing the status of implementation of Chapters II on Preventive Measures and Chapter V on Asset Recovery. The Group believes that the second review cycle has created a unique opportunity for States Parties and UNODC to identify laws and regulations, gaps, challenges, practical cases, best practices and good experiences in order to facilitate asset recovery, return of stolen assets and more and effective international cooperation.

24. The Group remains of the firm view that Implementation Review Mechanism requires sustainable and predictable funding to ensure its efficient, continued and impartial functioning. Therefore, the Group reiterates its position that the Mechanism should be funded from the regular budget of the United Nations in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

25. Technical assistance is a crosscutting issue, and is crucial for effective and efficient implementation of the Convention, and thus needs to be given special attention. The Group calls for sufficient and stable funding to develop and implement programs and projects for the purpose of capacity-building and technical assistance of States Parties, upon request.

26. The Group appreciates the role of the UNODC/Secretariat in providing, within its mandate and upon request, tailor-made technical assistance activities at the global, regional and national levels.

27. In conclusion, the Group calls upon all States Parties to avoid unilateral actions and sanctions that might weaken the international cooperation framework and States Parties' capabilities to fight against corruption.

Madam President,

28. The Group looks forward to fruitful outcome of the present session.

Thank you.

CLOSING STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA AT THE 7TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR REZA NAJAFI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

VIENNA, 10 NOVEMBER 2017

Madam President,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I congratulate you for leading the Conference to successful conclusion.

2. Thanks to the contributions made by the States Parties and other participants, we had a rich discussion under different agenda items. The Group commends the sponsors as well as the delegates for their constructive approach during negotiations on the draft resolutions, which led to their adoption by consensus.

3. The Group would like to see effective follow-up on the outcome of the present session.

4. The Group is hopeful that the implementation of the fresh resolutions adopted by the Conference, including on prevention and 'asset recovery', would result in enhanced international cooperation, and pave the way for concrete technical assistance, upon request, to developing countries.

5. The Group stresses the importance of concerted efforts at all levels for the purpose of preventing and eradicating corruption, in accordance with the Convention.

I thank you, Madam President.