G-77 and China statement during the Tenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, Atlanta, United States of America , 11-15 December 2023,
delivered by H.E. Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan

Mr. President,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, it is my pleasure to congratulate you on your election as President of the 10th Session of the Conference of the States Parties, and to the other elected members of the Bureau. The Group thanks the outgoing President, Egypt, and the other members of the Bureau, for their excellent leadership during the last 2 years;

2. The Group also thanks the government of the United States for hosting this Conference in Atlanta.

3. The Group commends efforts of the Secretariat for making timely preparations for the Conference, including useful background documents made available.

4. The Group welcomes those State Parties that have acceded to the Convention since the previous Conference of States Parties.

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. On the occasion of the twentieth year anniversary of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), the Group reiterates the need for preventing and combatting corruption more effectively by further promoting the full and effective implementation of the UNCAC and underlines the critical role of the Conference of the States Parties in this regard.

6. The Group recognizes that preventing and countering illicit financial flows and recovering and returning confiscated assets, in accordance with the UNCAC, can contribute to effective resource mobilization, poverty eradication, sustainable development and the enjoyment of all human rights, and we will step up our efforts in this regard.

7. In this regard, the Group appreciates all initiatives and efforts of its Member States, in promoting the implementation of the Convention, including through tabling of resolutions.

8. The Group takes note with appreciation of the ongoing efforts at different levels to achieve the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, including its Sustainable Development Goals. Such efforts reinforce the comprehensive approach to substantially reducing corruption in all its forms and at all levels, including measures to address its underlying causes.

Mr. President,

9. The Group recalls the Political Declaration "Our common commitment to effectively addressing challenges and implementing measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation" adopted at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session against Corruption in 2021.

10. The Group wishes to recall the ‘Kyoto Declaration” adopted by the 14th UN Crime Congress in 2021, in which Member States reaffirmed their commitment to develop, adequately resource and implement effective policies and measures, to analyze corruption and strengthening the integrity, transparency and accountability of public institutions, to prevent, detect, investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate corruption in a holistic manner for ending impunity.

11. In this regard, the Group welcomes the follow-up processes on those outcome documents.

Mr. President,

12. The Group reiterates the importance of developing and promoting effective measures, policies and practices aimed at prevention of corruption, and in this regard stresses the need to enhance efforts in accordance with Chapter II of the Convention.

13. The Group deeply regrets 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 under Article 51, and States Parties shall afford one another the widest measures of international cooperation in the recovery and return of assets in accordance with the Convention and their domestic law.

14. The Group emphasizes that the management, administration, and utilization of returned assets is solely the responsibility of the requesting State and that recovered assets shall be returned without conditionalities and in full respect of the sovereign rights of the states of origin and the Convention.

15. The Group calls on the States Parties, at the present session of the Conference, to commit to accelerating the development of international cooperation, in asset recovery, and urges all States Parties to remove barriers associated with implementing Article 46 of the Convention, on mutual legal assistance.

16. The Group remains strongly convinced that upholding multilateralism, including supporting an effective United Nations development system and to avoid promulgating and imposing any measures and actions on developing countries in contravention of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is essential to improve solidarity, international cooperation framework and reinforce States' capabilities to prevent and combat corruption. In this regard, the Group reiterates its serious concern over the ranking of Member States in all forms and levels in criminal matters as well as barriers and challenges that are still encountered by States Parties on international cooperation and urges all States Parties to adhere to Article 4 of the Convention and uphold the principles of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States as well as non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other States.

17. The Group also calls upon all State Parties to avoid unilateral actions and sanctions that weaken the international cooperation framework and impede States Parties’ capabilities to prevent and fight against corruption.

18. The Group takes note of the Report of the High-Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. President,

19. The Group emphasizes the importance of the effective functioning of the Implementation Review Mechanism of the Convention, in accordance with its Terms of Reference set out in Resolution 3/1, UNGASS Declaration OP76 and OP77 which should be fully and consistently respected throughout the review process. In addition, the Group reiterates its position to consolidate and maintain the guiding principles and characteristics of the Mechanism, including its intergovernmental nature.

20. 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.

21. Technical assistance, capacity-building, material support and transfer of technology, where applicable are crosscutting issues and are crucial for effective and efficient implementation of the Convention, and thus needs to be given special attention. The Group appreciates the role of UNODC in providing, within its mandate and upon request, relevant technical assistance activities at national, regional, and global levels based on the needs and priorities of State Parties, including those identified during the Review Process. The Group calls for sufficient, predictable and sustainable funding to develop and implement programs and projects for the purpose of capacity-building and technical assistance.

22. In conclusion, the Group looks forward to fruitful deliberations during the current session.

I thank you Mr. President.