

UNCAC Coalition Briefing note

Who we are

The UNCAC Coalition is a global network of more than 350 civil society organisations (CSOs) in over 100 countries, committed to promoting the ratification, implementation and monitoring of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Established in August 2006, it mobilises civil society action for UNCAC at international, regional and national levels.

The Coalition's work is based on two central beliefs. First, that UNCAC provides the main guiding framework for coordinating globally the action needed to combat corruption, as well as providing a key international forum for discussing progress made and obstacles faced. Second, that the success of UNCAC and of anti-corruption efforts generally depends not only on governments, but also on engaged CSOs, as well as the private sector and the greater public. Civil society has vital substantive contributions to make to the anti-corruption agenda, as well as performing an essential independent watchdog function. And it can perform its role only with sufficient transparency and access for civil society in both global and national UNCAC processes.

The Coalition is open to all CSOs and individuals interested in joining forces against corruption on national and international level. The wide cross-section of groups united in the Coalition are from all regions and work on issues ranging from human and labour rights, governance and economic development to the environment and private sector accountability. The Coalition is governed by a Coordination Committee and the secretariat is provided by Transparency International, one of its founding members.

What we've done

The Coalition's strategy from 2006 onwards has focused on three key objectives:

- Achieving a transparent, inclusive and effective UNCAC review mechanism through national and global advocacy.
- Advancing national level UNCAC implementation, with a special emphasis on enforcement, via support to informed and constructive CSO contributions to national UNCAC review processes and other CSO dialogue with governments.
- Improving government performance in anti-money laundering and asset recovery through targeted national and global advocacy.

Activities of the UNCAC Coalition have included:

- Coordinating the development of joint messaging and strategy via working groups, including one on civil society participation and another on asset recovery. Both of these have drafted Coalition statements.
- Coordinating CSO participation in the four successive sessions of the Conference of States Parties (COSPs). The Coalition has informed CSOs about the COSPs and organised their attendance; briefed and coordinated the work of participating CSOs; and conveyed key messages to

About the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)

The UNCAC is a comprehensive global treaty providing a framework for collective action against corruption. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2003 and signed by 163 states, it includes provisions calling for government transparency and accountability, for regulation of the private sector and for improved civil society participation.

Governments are also required under UNCAC to criminalise corruption offences including bribery and money laundering and to work together in cross-border law enforcement. One of the convention's most noteworthy aspects is that it elaborates an asset recovery framework for the first time on a global basis, covering countries in the north and south. The UNCAC also calls on states to provide technical assistance in the field of anti-corruption to countries needing it.

A review mechanism for the UNCAC was created in 2009 and started its first 5-year review cycle in 2010, focusing on criminalization, enforcement and international cooperation.

government delegations via statements, meetings with government representatives, workshops, a daily newsletter, press releases and on-site actions.

- Coordinating CSO participation in the Implementation Review Group's first briefing for CSOs in June 2012, at which almost 30 CSOs presented information on their experience of the UNCAC review process and their assessments of national UNCAC implementation regarding the enforcement topics covered in the first 5-year review cycle.
- Building CSO capacity to access information, analyse and advocate about country UNCAC compliance through specially-designed online templates and guidance materials.
- Assisting CSOs in contributing to the UNCAC review process via in-person trainings jointly organised with UNODC as well as online guidance materials, including two collections of training videos. In total, over 100 CSOs representatives attended three in-person trainings in Austria and South Africa.
- Providing coaching and other support, including arranging pro bono legal assistance, to 16 CSOs for the production of country CSO review reports on criminalisation and enforcement issues covered in the first review cycle. This has enabled CSO inputs to national review processes and to global UNCAC meetings. Executive summaries of these reports were accepted as official UN documents at the 4th COSP and the latest IRG meeting.
- Organising statements and letter-writing in support of Coalition members under threat.

The Coalition Coordination Committee holds monthly meeting to plan strategy and oversee the secretariat's work. In addition, to support regional-level cooperation, the Coalition is piloting three regional coordinators for the Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and MENA regions. This approach has proved successful and the Coalition is planning to extend it.

Coalition members share information largely via a Listserv email community as well as via a quarterly newsletter. In addition, for outreach to a wider public about UNCAC and the work of the Coalition, the Coalition's website features member's articles, press releases and blog posts, as well as a range of resources about UNCAC and its processes. The Coalition also manages social media outlets

What we're planning for 2013 and beyond

Having seen the establishment in 2009 of a review mechanism with insufficient transparency and civil society participation in both national and global processes, the UNCAC Coalition's strategy has evolved to focus on the following objectives:

- **Achieving increased transparency and participation** in the UNCAC review process and in national-level UNCAC implementation efforts generally, through activities at national level and jointly in international fora.
- **Advancing national-level enforcement efforts** through further support to national CSO monitoring and dialogue with governments, as well as contributing to discussions in international fora, including on technical assistance issues.
- **Improving asset recovery and anti-money laundering efforts**, including through contributing to decisions on concrete steps to take at the 5th COSP in Panama in 2013.
- **Contributing to improved prevention efforts** through proposals for the next Conferences of States Parties, including about the second 5-year review cycle, as well as support to national CSO monitoring and dialogue with governments.

The UNCAC's potential will take time and prolonged effort by governments, the UNODC, civil society and other stakeholders. The UNCAC Coalition is committed to continuing its work for genuine UNCAC implementation.