

Press release

Hundreds of NGOs push for anti-corruption action at UN meeting

239 civil society organizations from 73 countries call for effective monitoring of anti corruption promises worldwide.

25 August, 2009 – 239 organizations from 73 countries are calling on the 136 states parties to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) to adopt a transparent, accountable and effective system to monitor progress in implementation of anti-corruption commitments. The UNCAC is the most comprehensive global legal instrument to prevent and fight corruption.

The [Statement](#) includes specific recommendations on how best to monitor implementation of the Convention and was submitted today to governments meeting at the UN in Vienna for a last round of negotiations prior to the UNCAC's crucial Third Conference of States Parties to be held in November 2009.

Experience with other anti-corruption monitoring systems shows that without a strong review mechanism the UNCAC will receive only lip-service from many governments and will be followed by uncoordinated and often feeble anti-corruption efforts. Though the need for a review mechanism was agreed upon by governments involved in 2006, the adoption of a strong mechanism is far from assured due to opposition from a small but vocal group of countries, blocking an otherwise wide consensus.

Current state of play indicates that, although transparency and civil society participation are called for in the Convention itself (UNCAC Article 13) a small group of government representatives is against such guarantees in the review mechanism of this landmark anti-corruption convention. "Blocking the progress of monitoring is unacceptable if countries truly do want to implement standards and requirements to prevent, detect, investigate and sanction acts of corruption", said Gillian Dell, Conventions Programme Manager for Transparency International. "Such tactics are also contrary to common practice established in other international anti-corruption, human rights and environmental conventions, to which these countries are also parties," added Dell.

The statement was promoted by the UNCAC Coalition, a network of civil society organisations supporting the implementation of the UN Convention. It calls for a monitoring system that is:

- supported by a well-resourced secretariat;
- assisted by a group of independent experts;
- based on tested review methods, including peer review and country visits;
- participatory, involving civil society organisations and other stakeholders;
- transparent, resulting in published country reports with recommendations;
- carried out in coordination with regional review mechanisms;
- funded from the regular UN budget or assessed contributions, supplemented as needed by voluntary contributions.

Some of the organisations that have signed the statement, including non Coalition members are:

Access Info Europe, African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC), Amnesty International, Anti Slavery International, Arab Freedom of Information Network (AFOINET), Article 19, CAFOD, Christian Aid, CIVICUS, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Commonwealth Lawyers' Association, Concern Worldwide, EURODAD, European Network on Debt and Development, European Youth Forum, Financial Intelligence Council, GAATW - Global Alliance against Traffic in Women, Global Witness International, Greenpeace International, HELIO International, Human Rights Watch, IANSA - International Action Network on Small Arms, International Federation of Journalists, International Law Association, UK, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Oxfam International, Tax Justice Network, Tiri, Transparency International, World Vision International