

UNCAC CoSP 8
Statement to the plenary session on the UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS)
on Corruption 2021
by David Banisar, UNCAC Coalition Chair

20 December 2019

Thank you Mr. President,

the UNCAC Coalition welcomes the decision of the UN General Assembly to convene a special session on fighting corruption in 2021. We call on the members to take this opportunity to take bold moves to revitalize the UNCAC and the fight against corruption.

We recognise that this is a unique event to further the fight against corruption which should be taken full advantage of, rather than sticking to the traditional, often timid, efforts we see in the bi-annual CoSPs. Let us embrace the New York State of Mind, rather than the Vienna Spirit.

We call on the UNGASS to take strong measures to examine and update the Convention and its processes in its outcome document.

An open process. The Coalition appreciates the delegations that have emphasised the importance of Civil Society in this process. We call on delegations and the UNODC to ensure that CSOs are fully engaged in the preparatory meetings and the main event itself. But beyond that, the discussions should be open and all submissions should be public. Fighting corruption in secret is counter-intuitive and counter-productive. States do not have a monopoly on good ideas. Let us all work together, as the Convention itself recognises.

Grand Corruption. In substance, we believe that the UNGASS should be the opportunity to review the text of the Convention itself. Of particular importance, are new measures, possibly in a protocol, how grand corruption is fully addressed.

A Bold Vision

We believe that the sole purpose of the UNGASS should not be on the outcome document, but be an opportunity for states to make new and innovative commitments to fight corruption. States should take advantage to showcase and promote new technologies and new measures. The commitments should have a follow up process such as was done for the UNGASS on drugs.

We also believe that this is an opportunity to better embed anti-corruption into the Sustainable Development Goals. SDG 16 was reviewed this year at the HLPF, and anti-corruption only was a limited focus of discussion in both the HLPF and in preparatory meetings. This needs to change to both meet the SDGs and the fight against corruption.

Thank you,