

# UNCAC Coalition Guide for Governments:

## Supporting Meaningful Civil Society Participation and Contributions Around the UNCAC CoSP

This Guide provides a set of actions and measures that governments can take to facilitate and support the meaningful participation of civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders in the Conference of the States Parties (CoSP) to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and its subsidiary bodies. Governments should lead by example, replicate good practice approaches, and demonstrate their support for a truly inclusive UNCAC through their actions and practices.

### Before the CoSP:

- Engage with relevant national civil society organizations (CSOs), ideally through a call or meeting, to raise awareness about the upcoming CoSP.
- Solicit input and feedback from civil society experts on good practices and challenges in the implementation of the UNCAC and previous CoSP resolutions, national priorities for the upcoming CoSP, and the country's position on the next phase of the Implementation Review Mechanism.
- Update national civil society on the status of your UNCAC country review or your follow-up actions to past reviews.
- Collaborate with civil society experts on bilateral and multilateral anti-corruption initiatives (e.g., advancing specific UNCAC articles or cross-cutting issues, asset recovery cases, strengthening the UNCAC review mechanism, etc.).
- Encourage the in-person participation of national CSOs in the CoSP.
- Provide financial support for the in-person participation of civil society representatives (from your own country and/or internationally) in the CoSP.
- **Special (side) events:** Organize events jointly with civil society organizations or invite a civil society expert to join a panel at a CoSP event in which you are involved.
- Offer to include one or several civil society experts (possibly nominated by a national CSO coalition) in your country's delegation and utilize CSO expertise during the negotiations of resolutions.<sup>1</sup> Consider allowing those experts to participate in informal negotiations from the start.
- Consult with CSO experts on the development of draft resolutions you are involved in.
- Take advantage of the expertise of civil society experts to solicit feedback and input for resolutions during informal negotiations before the CoSP.
- Take into account substantive input on resolutions and other policy initiatives shared by national and international civil society organizations.
- Use diplomatic leverage to defend CSOs that have been objected to receiving observer status and try to resolve the objection bilaterally and by coordinating with

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<sup>1</sup> At least 11 States Parties from all geographic regions included civil society experts in their UNCAC CoSP10 delegations, others have included CSO representatives in their delegations to recent CoSP subsidiary body meetings.

other like-minded countries, – in particular, if a CSO from your country has been the target of an objection.

- Take part in meetings of the *Group of Friends on Multistakeholder Participation in UNODC Matters* and jointly consider action to defend and promote CoSP civic space.
- Discuss your priorities and plans with the UNCAC Coalition and explore ideas for possible collaboration.

#### **At the CoSP:**

- Join the civil society-led preparatory and networking event held the day before the CoSP begins.
- Consult written submissions made to the Conference by civil society organizations.
- In your CoSP plenary interventions, highlight your support for civil society participation and provide concrete examples of how, in practice, you include civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders in anti-corruption efforts in a meaningful way (including in national UNCAC implementation reviews). Highlight the impact of this inclusive approach.
- Solicit input and feedback on ongoing resolution negotiations with civil society experts present at the CoSP.
- Encourage members of your delegation, particularly anti-corruption officials and practitioners, to engage and network with civil society experts (e.g., to discuss cases and experiences, explore opportunities for partnerships, etc.).
- If necessary, support a vote to overturn unwarranted, politically motivated objections to the participation of non-governmental organizations in the CoSP.
- Attend and engage with civil society-led side events at the CoSP.

#### **Meetings of CoSP subsidiary bodies:**

- Respond to calls for input from the Secretariat, including by providing concrete examples of good practices, lessons learned, data on implementation and enforcement actions, and other relevant evidence and statistics that strengthen the evidence base for anti-corruption efforts, taking into account information provided by civil society.
- Partner with CSOs to organize events on the margins of subsidiary body meetings.
- Include CSO experts in your delegation to enable civil society participation in subsidiary body meetings, from which civil society observers remain excluded.
- Suggest civil society and other non-governmental experts as panel speakers for CoSP subsidiary body meetings.
- Initiate and support efforts to make the UNCAC more inclusive, including by ending the exclusion of all civil society observers from CoSP subsidiary bodies.

#### **Contact us**

If you would like to discuss any of these approaches, or if the UNCAC Coalition can otherwise help support civil society participation and contributions to the UNCAC CoSP, don't hesitate to get in touch:

Yonatan Yakir

UN Affairs Lead and Program Manager, UNCAC Coalition

[yonatan.yakir@uncaccoalition.org](mailto:yonatan.yakir@uncaccoalition.org)