

Statement by Gillian Dell, Transparency International

Mr. President, distinguished delegates.

Good afternoon and greetings again from Berlin. Thank you for the opportunity to speak for Transparency International on prevention issues.

We welcome the advances made on prevention in the UNGASS political declaration - including the commitments relating to

- the role of independent supreme audit institutions
- the role of parliaments
- open contracting
- asset declarations
- beneficial ownership transparency and
- the need to protect journalists

to name a few examples. why it is so important to have robust follow-up to the UNGASS declaration, a subject being discussed at this conference. That follow-up should include building on and strengthening the declaration's commitments, in line with the request made to the UNCAC CoSP by the UN General Assembly.

Regarding asset declarations, we encourage states to sign up to the international treaty on exchange of data for the verification of asset declarations that is the subject of a conference room paper submitted to this conference by the Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative.

On the prevention - and detection - of money laundering, which is so key to national and international anti-corruption efforts, some of the implementation gaps and gaps in international frameworks are well-known by now. This is thanks to the information revealed by enforcement activity, as well as the investigative work of journalists and NGOs.

A key component of anti-money laundering is well-resourced public registers of beneficial ownership accessible to the public and well-verified.

This conference has been debating a resolution on beneficial ownership transparency and the difficulties in reaching agreement show that we are not yet where we need to be and that countries are not yet giving sufficient weight to getting this right. In the meantime, proceeds of crime continue to exit the countries where they are needed most, resulting in great suffering to the people there, as well as disrupting the lives of people in destination jurisdictions, for example through the impact on real estate prices.

The role of enablers of money laundering also needs to be specifically addressed, including the various professionals like lawyers, accountants and other service providers. Interestingly some of those enablers are specifically named in the Prevention section (Article 31) of the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, while that language was left out of UNCAC.

Last but far from least, in the area of civil society participation, we are a long way from where we should be. In fact, we are facing a worldwide emergency of shrinking civic space, with civil society activists and journalists in many countries facing threats and censorship, imprisonment and even murder for their efforts to expose and speak out against corruption.

The plenary session yesterday morning discussing one country's objections to participation of eight non-ECOSOC NGOs in this conference provided an example of the problems faced

by respected civil society organisations in many countries in their anti-corruption work. We very much regret that our colleagues from Transparency International Georgia and those from other excluded NGOs cannot be here with us today.

Regarding the application of UNCAC Article 13, we encourage this conference to liaise with relevant UN human rights bodies to seek their support in interpreting and monitoring that article.