

## **Statement by the UNCAC Coalition (Mathias Huter)**

Thank you, President, and thank you to the panellists for the insightful presentations!

I represent the UNCAC Coalition, a global network of more than 350 civil society organisations.

I would like to highlight that transparency and access to information are essential when it comes to using technology to advance anti-corruption efforts.

We hope that the UNGASS Political Declaration will result in substantive progress on a number of transparency issues. Yesterday and today, we have seen some very interesting examples of how transparency can be promoted using innovative approaches:

First, we hope to see central registers of beneficial ownership that are accessible to the public, allowing the public and all stakeholders, including the private sector, the media, and civil society to use this information and link it to other data, for example to a database on public procurement.

Second, we see the urgent need for States to open up their public procurement and contracting information, and to make all relevant data and documents of the contracting process accessible to the public.

Third, we also call on States to require the release, as well as the verification, of data from asset and interest declarations of public officials.

And, fourth, we call on all States to adopt and improve their legal frameworks on the right of access to information, as well as to establish independent bodies overseeing the implementation of these laws, to ensure timely and effective access to information by citizens.

I would also like to share with you that there is strong interest from civil society in the UNGASS and its preparations. We recently briefed more than 50 civil society organizations the UNGASS, and evermore organisations are closely following the UNGASS and hope that you will agree on a bold and forward-looking political declaration.

You can also see this strong interest in many detailed written submissions to the UNGASS process from civil society organisations.

In the coming days and weeks, the UNCAC Coalition will release a set of briefing papers on several anti-corruption issues that have been discussed these intersessional meetings, and we will also host a number of webinars for delegates and anti-corruption experts in capital to continue some of the interesting discussions that have started in the context of these intersessional meetings.

3rd intersessional meeting, 23. February 2021

Finally, I would like to pose a question to the panellists, in particular to the expert from Slovenia:

- Have you been able to estimate the financial value that your open data and transparency efforts create?
- And have you seen innovative approaches in regards to how other actors use the information and data you publish?

Thank you very much!