

Annex A: G20 Call to Action on Corruption and COVID-19

1. **Corruption poses a threat to both our immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic and our longer-term recovery efforts.** Corruption can harm the medical response, diverting critically needed resources and potentially costing lives, as well as reduce the effectiveness of broader actions taken to counter the economic slowdown, multiplying financial pressures, extending economic hardship and delaying the return to growth.
2. **Given the global effects of COVID-19 and the associated corruption risks, a coordinated, international response, prioritizing the wellbeing of all of our citizens, is imperative.** The pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability that can result from our interconnectedness and interdependence. It has also shown that while our governments have been required to act quickly and decisively to protect citizens, there remains a need to ensure that appropriate controls remain in place to uphold the integrity of governments, institutions and the private sector.
3. **We, the G20 Ministers with responsibilities for preventing and combating corruption, commit to continued collective and coordinated action in the spirit of solidarity to combat corruption in the COVID-19 response and recovery.** In particular, we commit to three core areas of action as set out below. We also commit to exploring the possibility of strengthening our individual and collective anti-corruption efforts to build upon the *G20 Good Practices Compendium on Combating Corruption in the Response to COVID-19*, and in line with international organizations' recommendations¹, where appropriate and possible, on mitigating corruption risks associated with COVID-19.

Commitment 1: Promote transparency in the COVID-19 Response

4. **We commit to promoting transparency in our response to COVID-19**, and collectively resolve to:
 - a. Promote the implementation of open data requirements, in accordance with the relevant G20 Principles and applicable data protection laws, with a particular emphasis on the publication of data, where data is available and publication appropriate, related to public procurement, extraordinary fiscal support to citizens and businesses, and the beneficial ownership of entities awarded contracts or receiving public support;
 - b. Maintain and strengthen mechanisms for the prevention, identification and management of conflicts of interest, such as periodic interest and asset disclosure systems for public officials, with special attention to those with relevant and high corruption risk positions, all in a manner consistent with G20 Principles and applicable data protection rules; and
 - c. Adopt clear, objective and transparent criteria for the qualification of beneficiaries of measures supporting businesses and citizens and optimize outreach and communication efforts to build public support.

Commitment 2: Maintain sound governance and enhance oversight

5. **We commit to maintaining sound governance across the public and private sectors to enhance integrity in our response to COVID-19, and note the critical role of audit**

¹ Such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank Group (WBG), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

processes and oversight institutions in bringing corruption to light. We collectively resolve to:

- a. Reinforce integrity across the public sector, including through training and education, and urge enterprises and other business entities to act in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, providing for effective corporate liability in line with relevant G20 High-Level Principles, as well as giving necessary guidance and assistance, in accordance with the legislation, regulations and policies in force in each country where organizations operate;
- b. Limit the use of emergency powers to the minimum necessary, and ensure clear 'sunset' clauses are in place for such powers, where appropriate;
- c. Continue to support domestic accountability and oversight bodies, in accordance with the fundamental principles of our legal systems, and where appropriate, maintaining their independence and capacity;
- d. Strengthen, where appropriate, audit, assurance and oversight mechanisms and provisions in monitoring COVID-19 expenditures and in the allocation of public resources, apply appropriate controls in program design, and ensure the objective and independent audit of public policies for crisis management as part of a holistic approach to anti-corruption, in accordance with the fundamental principles of our legal systems;
- e. Promote the development and usage of corruption risk assessments to ensure the deployment of adequate anti-corruption measures relating to COVID-19;
- f. Embed timely anti-corruption checks in public procurement processes to identify red flags of corruption in procurement, and continue law enforcement efforts when required;
- g. Ensure safe whistleblowing channels and adequate whistleblower protections, in line with relevant G20 High-Level Principles;
- h. Promote the active participation of civil society and media, and provide spaces for civil action and participation, without prejudice to national law;
- i. Promote the use of existing frameworks and resources, produced by international organizations, to enhance accountability and integrity in emergency financial and economic rescue package; and

Commitment 3: Foster integrity in the longer-term recovery

6. We commit to promoting integrity throughout our recovery as we strengthen our anti-corruption systems and institutions, using lessons learned from the pandemic to foster stable economic growth and development in the future. In line with this, we collectively resolve to:

- a. Fully implement the obligations of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), engage in its Implementation Review Mechanism and use the UNCAC provisions to strengthen our existing checks and balances;
- b. Encourage the effective implementation of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Standards particularly to tackle the laundering of the proceeds of crime and transparency of the beneficial ownership of legal persons and arrangements;

- c. Recognize the role of the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions in strengthening the global fight against corruption in the context of COVID-19;
- d. Consider, where appropriate, the need for voluntary participation in discussions on transnational aspects of corruption in IMF bilateral surveillance.
- e. Facilitate the coordination of all dedicated bodies involved in the fight against corruption, fraud and related criminal activities at the national and, where appropriate, international level;
- f. Lead by example in international cooperation to counter corruption challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, facilitating information exchange, parallel or related investigations, and mutual legal assistance (MLA) cooperation on transnational corruption cases, including through the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and other measures in accordance with relevant G20 High-Level Principles;
- g. Review and, where appropriate, strengthen guidelines and procedures for emergency public procurement measures in times of crisis, based on lessons learned from COVID-19, and encourage continued efforts regarding digitization, transparency and the proactive publication of data and information on procurement processes;
- h. Encourage, taking into account national circumstances, the use of digitization and ICT-based solutions to better target economic stimulus and other relief funding to its intended recipients in line with relevant G20 Principles;
- i. Maintain sufficient capacity and resourcing to empower anti-corruption authorities and enable full execution of anti-corruption policies across our institutions; and
- j. Review the *Good Practices Compendium on Combating Corruption in the Response to COVID-19* in the future, as part of the work of the G20 ACWG, with the benefit of additional hindsight.