

## Ministerial Communiqué

- 1. We, the G20 Ministers with responsibilities for preventing and combating corruption, met on 22 October 2020 under the Saudi Presidency, to discuss our commitments as G20 members as we continue to lead by example in the global fight against corruption.** This year marks the tenth anniversary of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG), established to make comprehensive recommendations for consideration by leaders on how the G20 could continue to make practical and valuable contributions to international efforts to combat corruption and lead by example. We acknowledge the contributions made by all member countries and international organizations, and we thank previous presidencies for their leadership.
- 2. In a context of unprecedented global social and economic fragility caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we stress the heightened threat from and serious impact of corruption on economic growth, sustainable development, quality investment and innovation, and trust between governments and citizens.** Emergency measures are essential in times of economic crisis and recovery but may create the risk of misappropriation, fraud and other forms of corruption. We individually and collectively commit to strengthening our anti-corruption engagement and, in particular, we look forward to contributing to both the upcoming special session of the United Nations General Assembly against corruption, the 14<sup>th</sup> United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the 9<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. To this end, we note the essential role of multilateral action in the fight against corruption, particularly through the implementation and monitoring of our international commitments and norms, and in the exchange of information and good practices while recognizing that this must be achieved without prejudice to national sovereignty, domestic law and the fundamental principles of human rights.
- 3. We stress the importance of the existing international anti-corruption architecture,** particularly the obligations and commitments outlined in the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions and related instruments, and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Standards. These instruments collectively comprise a strong set of measures which countries should put in place to prevent and combat corruption, money laundering and other related serious economic crimes. Accordingly, we pledge to more effectively implement our existing obligations and commitments and we recognize that these instruments should serve as the foundation for future efforts to expand international cooperation and coordination against corruption and related challenges.

## 2020 Anti-Corruption Priorities

### COVID-19 crisis

- 4. We express our deepest sympathies for the tragic loss of lives and wider suffering resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.** The pandemic has revealed the potential direct and disproportionate impact of corruption on vulnerable populations, as legitimate trade, the integrity and transparency of public procurement and public finances, global health,

safety, and security are all more vulnerable than ever to corruption at this time of crisis. We commit to collaborate in delivering a global response to this crisis in the spirit of solidarity, and in line with the G20 Extraordinary Leaders' Statement published on 26 March 2020.

5. **We acknowledge that although the crisis has necessitated rapid action, the speed and scale of the economic support provided in response to the crisis may increase the risk of corruption, fraud and misappropriation.** This could in turn hamper the effectiveness of relief efforts, undermining trust in public institutions and ultimately harming the well-being of our citizens. Anti-corruption measures should be embedded within national and international crisis response programs to ensure transparency and integrity; we commit to continued collective and coordinated action to combat corruption in the wake of COVID-19 we accordingly endorse the *G20 Call to Action on Corruption and COVID-19* ([Annex A](#)), developed by the ACWG as an outline of the key areas of focus for these efforts. To support countries further in developing and implementing such measures, both during this crisis and in preparation efforts for any future events, we also welcome the *G20 Good Practices Compendium on Combating Corruption in the Response to COVID-19* ([Annex E](#)), which provides an initial view of good practices in preventing and combating corruption in the health sector and the delivery of emergency support (aid, stimulus and relief).

## Riyadh Initiative for Enhancing International Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Cooperation

6. **We acknowledge, bearing in mind article 48 of UNCAC, the need to further strengthen cooperation between anti-corruption law enforcement authorities, particularly in the preliminary stages of investigations.** In this respect, with the aim to facilitate international cooperation, including mutual legal assistance, we welcome Saudi Arabia's initiative towards the creation of a Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities. This will complement existing platforms and networks for informal international cooperation, such as the OECD Global Law Enforcement Network (GLEN) and the OECD Working Group on Bribery Law Enforcement Officials (LEOs) and the INTERPOL/StAR Global Focal Point Network, and should foster, in an inclusive manner, the direct contact between anti-corruption law enforcement authorities. In this regard, we welcome the Riyadh Initiative ([Annex B](#)).

## 2020 High-Level Principles

7. **In line with the G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan 2019-2021, we endorse the High-Level Principles developed under the 2020 Presidency:** the *G20 High-Level Principles for the Development and Implementation of National Anti-Corruption Strategies*, the *G20 High-Level Principles for Promoting Public Sector Integrity through the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)*, and the *G20 High-Level Principles for Promoting Integrity in Privatization and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)*. These documents will provide guidance to countries that wish to (i) revise, develop or implement national anti-corruption strategies; (ii) effectively and safely leverage ICT for the prevention, detection and fight against corruption, with respect to personal data protection rules; and (iii) engage the private sector in the process of privatization or PPPs while minimizing corruption risks ([Annex C](#)).

## Accountability and Transparency

8. **We commit to the delivery and implementation of our shared commitments towards greater accountability and transparency.** The various G20 Anti-Corruption High-Level, Guiding and Common Principles represent our key recommendations as endorsed by our

leaders, developed in line with international law and without prejudice to sovereign laws. We resolve to ensure effective implementation of previously endorsed deliverables, as well as to follow up on our pending commitments and wider objectives, as set out in the *G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan 2019–2021*. Additionally, in line with the Action Plan, and as a key mechanism to reflect our individual and collective progress in implementing our shared commitments, we welcome the reformed approach to the *G20 Anti-Corruption Accountability Report (Annex D)*, which for the first time provides an in-depth review of our collective progress on international cooperation and asset recovery and would inform potential future areas of work in these areas. This approach may be built upon by future presidencies and the ACWG will publish accountability reports on an annual basis going forward. In doing so, we will improve the accessibility of G20 ACWG outputs and facilitate the engagement of individuals and groups outside the public sector, including civil society, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, academia, media, the private sector, and other stakeholders.

## Ongoing Anti-Corruption Priorities

### International Cooperation and Asset Recovery

- 9. We recognize that international cooperation is essential to the investigation and prosecution of transnational corruption cases, including those involving the recovery of proceeds of crime; we therefore commit to enhancing case investigation, communication and experience-sharing in this area.** We accordingly commit to acting in accordance with previously endorsed deliverables regarding asset recovery. Effective efforts in this area require all countries to take domestic action and engage in international cooperation. We pledge to work together to trace, freeze and confiscate proceeds of crime as well as to ensure such confiscated assets are returned or disposed of in an effective and transparent manner, as appropriate, and in a manner consistent with our domestic laws and international obligations, such as UNCAC. We also pledge to approach asset return in a spirit of partnership between transferring and receiving countries, other prior legitimate owners and as appropriate, civil society. To this end, we welcome the *Scoping Paper on International Cooperation Dealing with Economic Crime, Offenders and the Recovery of Stolen Assets*, prepared by the OECD in collaboration with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Secretariat, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Bank Group (WBG) for the G20 ([Annex E](#)). Building upon this paper, we endorse the *G20 Action on International Cooperation on Corruption and Economic Crimes, Offenders and Recovery of Stolen Assets (Annex E)*.

### Beneficial Ownership Transparency

- 10. We commit to effectively implementing, and as necessary, take additional measures to prevent the misuse of legal persons and arrangements for money laundering or terrorist financing, including where corruption is the predicate offence.** We will redouble our efforts to lead by example in implementing measures to identify the ultimate beneficial owners of legal entities and arrangements.

### Denial of Safe Haven

- 11. We commit to acting collectively to deny safe haven to persons who have committed offences established in accordance with UNCAC, and to the proceeds of their crimes, in a manner consistent with our domestic laws.** We pledge to prevent such offenders

from evading justice, regardless of their rank, position or status, curb the cross-border concealment of the proceeds of corruption, and pursue the criminalization and prosecution of corruption offences and the recovery and return of confiscated stolen assets, where appropriate, consistent with our domestic laws and international obligations under UNCAC. We further commit to strengthening information exchange and case investigation cooperation, and considering, as may be necessary, the possibility to conclude bilateral and multilateral agreements or arrangements on extradition and mutual legal assistance, as appropriate.

## Criminalizing Bribery

- 12. We commit to ensuring that each G20 country has a national law in force to criminalize bribery, including bribery of foreign public officials and to bolster efforts to effectively prevent, detect, investigate, prosecute and sanction domestic and foreign bribery.** The fight against corruption in international trade and investment, as a key dimension to promote a level playing field, remains a top priority of the G20. We encourage countries to promote cooperation with the private sector on this topic and we encourage enterprises of G20 countries to take appropriate measures to raise awareness of corruption risks and deploy effective mitigation and compliance systems. We will strive to foster a regulated, law-based and clean business environment based on international consensus exemplified by UNCAC. We further welcome the deepening of our engagement with the OECD Working Group on Bribery. We will demonstrate concrete efforts by 2021 towards criminalizing foreign bribery and enforcing foreign bribery legislation in line with article 16 of UNCAC, and with a view to possible adherence by all G20 countries to the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. The ACWG will review and provide an update on this progress in 2021.

## Public Sector Integrity

- 13. We commit to enhancing public sector integrity and efficiency by guaranteeing the transparency of, and access to, public procurement information, acting in line with previously endorsed High-Level Principles.** We commit to promoting inclusive, sustainable and equitable growth for all, built upon the principles of sound governance, by promoting fairness, integrity and transparency in public procurement and public budgets. To this end, we welcome collaboration between anti-corruption bodies and supreme audit institutions, amongst others. We also stress the need to promote the wider participation of the private sector and of civil society as part of a holistic approach to preventing corruption and we recognize that improved procurement laws, regulations, internal and external audits, policies and procedures can foster the trust that this requires.

## Private Sector and NGO Integrity

- 14. We commit to promoting integrity in cooperation with the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).** To achieve this, we will encourage the adoption of adequate anti-corruption ethics and compliance programs and codes of conduct by relevant private entities as well as sports organizations. We recognize the important role that civil society can play in fostering a culture of integrity and in supporting the effective implementation of relevant previously endorsed High-Level Principles, consistent with our domestic laws and international obligations.

## Stakeholder Engagement

- 15. We commit to taking and promoting a multi-stakeholder approach to preventing and combating corruption by strengthening our partnerships with international organizations, individuals and groups outside the public sector, including civil society,**



**non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, academia, media and the private sector.** We acknowledge that our shared goals cannot be achieved without a collective effort from all groups of society. We also welcome efforts to deepen our collaboration with other G20 workstreams.

## Way Forward

- 16. In the face of a rapidly changing global environment, we commit to individually and collectively pursuing a comprehensive and holistic anti-corruption agenda, with due regard for the fundamental principles of the rule of law and human rights.** We recall our stance of “zero tolerance towards corruption, zero loopholes in institutions and zero barriers in action.” Leading by example, we welcome potential future work on topics such as gender and corruption, corruption in times of crisis, the measurement of corruption, the protection of whistleblowers, and new and emerging avenues of corruption, as well as all other areas referenced in the *G20 Anti-Corruption Action Plan 2019-2021*. In addition, we will endeavor to improve our technical assistance and capacity-building efforts for developing countries over the coming years.
- 17. We thank the Saudi Presidency for its leadership through a particularly challenging year and for convening the inaugural Anti-Corruption Ministerial Meeting. Ten years after the creation of the ACWG, this meeting represents the enduring commitment of G20 members to build a culture that rejects corruption in all its forms and ensures G20 members continue to play a leading role in combating corruption.** We invite future presidencies to periodically reconvene this Ministerial Meeting as appropriate to this end as well as to support the delivery of commitments made under previous Leaders’ Declarations and set the direction of the ACWG’s future work.