



Regional Meeting Africa

Gaborone, Botswana

Monday, 8 October 2018

Title of sessions:

Plenary discussion panel on AU Theme of the Year: Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Objective(s):

This session will discuss the issue of corruption (the African Union theme of the year) as a serious stumbling block on the path to development through a moderated panel. The panel will also stress how Africa has/can leverage(d) its partnerships in the fight against corruption and illicit financial flows and how that can create additional financing for development.

Expected Results:

- Better understanding of the state of anti-corruption measures in Africa and factors that influence progress
- Identification of initiatives and opportunities to contribute to an enhanced general framework of anti-corruption, focused on improved governance, political dialogue and engagement of civil society and other stakeholders in accountability mechanisms

Background:

During its 30th Assembly of Heads of State and Government, from 22 – 29 January 2018, the African Union launched 2018 as the African Anti-Corruption Year. All relevant actors, including the African Union, Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Civil Society Organizations and Local Authorities embarked on a common enterprise to address the urgent need to curb corruption. Most actors recognize corruption as a major problem linked to and hampering democratic governance, socio-economic transformation, peace and security, and the enjoyment of human rights in Africa.

The estimated cost of illicit financing flows (including corruption) in Africa is about US\$ 100 billion (lost annually)¹, which is the double of development aid the continent receives annually (ODA net disbursement to Africa averaged of US\$ 48 billion between 2010 and 2015). Commercial money through multinational companies (tax evasion and trade and services mispricing) constitute the largest component of illicit

¹ see United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA): Illicit Financial Flows, Issue paper, Sept. 2014

financial flows, followed by proceeds from criminal activities - money laundering, drug trafficking, racketeering, counterfeiting, dealing in contraband goods and terrorist financing and corruption.²

While the continent has seen sustained economic growth over the past two decades, public confidence has been eroded by a concentration of corruption practices that too often leave young people worse off than their parents. AU Member States, together with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Union, have adopted various regulatory and other institutions to combat corruption in Africa, most notably the AU Convention on Preventing and Combatting Corruption (AUCPCC), adopted in 2003. Established in 2006, the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption (AUABC) has a mandate to promote and encourage the adoption of measures and actions by states to prevent, detect, punish and eradicate corruption. The AUABC must also follow-up on these measures and submit regular reports on the progress made by each state. The African Union has also adopted other instruments aimed at fostering a culture of democracy and ensure good governance and the rule of law, which complement the AUCPCC, namely:

- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance: adopted on January 30, 2007- Article 2 (9);
- African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration: adopted on January 31, 2011- Article 12;
- African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development: adopted on June 27, 2014; Article 14.

In Transparency International (TI)'s 2017 Corruption Perception Index (CPI)'s list, 20 of the 30 countries perceived as the world most corrupt, are in Africa. Five African countries, namely Botswana, Seychelles, Rwanda, Cabo Verde, Namibia, scored above the medium scale of 50.

This session offers the opportunity to all stakeholders to exchange views about one of the most pressing aspects in the African agenda and look more in detail at some relevant questions: What is the progress made since the adoption of AUCPCC, 15 years ago? Are there successful institutional approaches to combating corruption? Is it possible to bridge the gap between norm-setting and norm-implementation through appropriate measures at local, national, regional and continental levels? Is the private sector active in supporting anti-corruption measures? And how are civil society voices active in supporting anti-corruption and keeping governments on track?

Methodology:

- A moderated panel where some of the key features of the Fight against Corruption: A sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation will be briefly discussed;
- The floor will open to the participants for further interventions and
- Wrap up of the session

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