

**Remarks by the UNODC Executive Director
Closing Ceremony of the 7th Annual Conference
and General Meeting of International Association
of Anti-Corruption Authorities
Panama City, 24 November 2013**

**Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Thank you for inviting me to address you today, on the eve of the 5th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the UNCAC. I would also like to thank our hosts for holding this important event.

IAACA provides essential support for the UNCAC as well as the COSP.

I welcome the adoption of the Panama Declaration by the IAACA at this conference and general meeting, and I can assure you of UNODC's full support for the Association and the implementation of the Declaration.

The theme of this conference and general meeting, "the rule of law and anti-corruption", is very timely and insightful.

Efforts to prevent and combat corruption can only be effective if there is a transparent, fair, efficient and humane criminal justice system based on the rule of law.

Prosecution authorities, the judiciary and other law enforcement bodies upholding the rule of law are essential to the success of the fight against corruption.

There has also been a growing realization that governance and anti-corruption must be an integral part of global commitments on development.

The recent report by the Secretary-General on advancing the UN development agenda, “A Life of Dignity for All”, emphasizes the importance of “effective governance based on the rule of law and transparent institutions” as both an outcome and enabler of development.

The UNCAC, as the only global legally binding instrument against corruption with almost universal adherence, provides the means for addressing major development challenges such as improving governance and enhancing accountability and transparency.

Asset recovery is another issue of high priority addressed by the Convention that has a great deal of relevance for development, particularly in countries where public assets have been looted.

Ten years after the adoption of the Convention, we have an important chance to ensure that anti-corruption and accountability receive the attention they deserve in the post-2015 development agenda.

We rely on your support in this, as well as in efforts to further enhance the effective implementation of the UNCAC, the review mechanism and the recommendations of the CoSP.

At the 4th CoSP in Marrakech two years ago, we consolidated the successes achieved in Doha with the adoption of the peer review mechanism under the UNCAC.

The Marrakech Declaration on the prevention of corruption reiterated that the promotion of a culture of integrity, transparency and accountability is a responsibility to be shared by all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, while recognizing that the implementation of the UNCAC is the responsibility of States parties.

The Declaration emphasized the importance of engaging the business community in preventing corruption; raising public awareness; promoting the participation of civil society, NGOs and community organizations in the fight against corruption; and supporting education.

It is my hope that this work to promote stronger cooperation and involve all stakeholders to fight corruption will be further developed here in Panama City.

UNODC has produced a number of guides to support this, including a handbook on safeguarding against corruption in the context of sporting events and other major public events, as well as a guide for businesses on establishing an effective anti-corruption ethics and compliance programme.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to reiterate UNODC's support for IAACA's efforts to seek ways to establish closer collaboration with the CoSP in order to maximize IAACA's contribution to the effective implementation of the CoSP recommendations.

We will also continue to rely on your support as we work towards the second cycle of the UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism.

I urge you to carry on with your commendable work to support the preparation and conduct of the second cycle based on the lessons learned during the first cycle. This includes ensuring that the best practices identified during the first cycle are shared and applied by the IAACA members.

I also hope we will continue to seek ways to enhance cooperation between IAACA and UNODC to facilitate the provision of technical assistance to the States Parties based on the first cycle results.

IAACA has already made very useful contributions through the implementation of its own work plan, and I am confident that our joint efforts to prevent and fight corruption will be further strengthened in the days to come.

Thank you.