



STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES (COSP) TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION (UNCAC) ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGAINST CORRUPTION (UNGASS)

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Mr. Chairman,

On the occasion of the Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) on the Preparations for the Special Session of the General Assembly against Corruption (UNGASS), the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Conference on today's significant milestone of reaching consensus on the draft Political Declaration against corruption.

This occasion, however, is marked by the ongoing tragedy and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, notwithstanding which, the preparatory process for UNGASS has been nearly completed. In view of the new corruption risks and challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, this achievement is perhaps all the more significant, stark, and symbolic. On the one hand, the finalization of the Political Declaration demonstrates that our collective and shared commitment to progress in the fight against corruption has not waned, and has even been spurred on by these new challenges. On the other, advancing the practical realization of the Political Declaration's ambitious agenda has become ever more challenging in light of the many new burdens the international community now faces—in building back better, while seeking to redress the progress lost towards reaching the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

IDLO, as the only global intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to advancing the rule of law as a catalyst to sustain peace and sustainable development, is firmly committed to continuing its support for the UNGASS process following the anticipated adoption of the Political Declaration.

We stand ready to lend our on-the-ground experience and strategic emphasis on people-centered justice and the promotion of transparency and accountability, to help key institutions responsible for safeguarding societies from and responding to corruption—such as judiciaries and specialized anti-corruption bodies, which themselves have been hard-hit by the fallout from the pandemic—in taking up the challenge of implementing the ambitions of the Political Declaration in practice.

We note and welcome the Political Declaration’s recognition of the role of anti-corruption bodies and specialized authorities and the importance of their independence, integrity, and accountability; the emphasis on the central role of judicial bodies and judicial systems, and the importance of their independence, transparency, and integrity in the fight against corruption; the recognition of the importance of innovative and digital technologies in the field of anti-corruption; the emphasis on ensuring transparency of the whole cycle of public procurement; the commitment to building capacities of justice sector institutions, including special anti-corruption authorities to effectively investigate and prosecute corruption offenses; the appreciation of the significance of international cooperation and technical assistance to strengthen national capacities in the prevention and fight against corruption, founded on donor coordination and in line with national anti-corruption strategies and priorities.

These, and many other provisions of the Political Declaration, are at the heart of IDLO’s programmatic work and strategic priorities.

We echo the UNGASS commitment to working across sectors, through coordinated, multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approaches, to pave the way forward in the fight against corruption, and towards the 2030 Agenda, especially Goal 16— which is so closely linked to the ambitions of UNGASS. It is unsurprising, that in deliberations during the SDG 16 Conference held just last week by IDLO, in collaboration with the UN Department for Social and Economic Affairs (UN/DESA) and the Government of Italy, corruption was amongst the most frequently cited fault lines exposed in our collective social contract by the pandemic.

We therefore urge to ensure, as we proceed towards the practical work to realize the promise of UNGASS, that we work together consciously, in a spirit of entrepreneurship and partnership, equality and non-discrimination, gender-sensitivity and inclusion, to pave the way forward to a renewed social contract, through real progress in the fight against corruption.