



AUABC

African Union Advisory
Board on Corruption

OUTCOME STATEMENT OF THE 5TH ANNUAL AFRICAN ANTI-CORRUPTION DIALOGUE

REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES: CRITICAL ACTORS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION CONVENTION ON PREVENTING AND COMBATING CORRUPTION

HELD VIRTUALLY FROM 9-11 NOVEMBER 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

The African Union Advisory Board on Corruption (AUABC) has in 2021 focused on promoting stronger collaboration and harmonization of efforts among and with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) through enhanced cooperation and promoting synergies around anti-corruption interventions on the continent. The 2021 African Anti-Corruption Dialogue was thus convened virtually through a webinar under the theme: **“Regional Economic Communities: Critical Actors in the Implementation of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption”**.

The three-day Dialogue brought together representatives of Member States, International Organizations, National Anti-Corruption Agencies (NACAs), Civil Society, Academia and other actors. Detailed presentations and reports were submitted and rich discussions among participants held on the status of the fight against corruption at the RECs level, anti-corruption frameworks, policies and laws adopted at the RECs and country levels. NACAs exchanged on best practices in fighting corruption at national level and collaboration across borders at the sub-regional level and Non-State Actors (NSAs) jointly reflected with the Board on how to strengthen their collaboration.

A. ENHANCING THE COORDINATION BETWEEN RECS AND NACAS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION CONVENTION ON PREVENTING AND COMBATING CORRUPTION

The discussion centred on how the coordination between RECS and National Anti-Corruption Authority can be enhanced. The following recommendation were made;

- i. Member States must strive to fully comply with the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC) as well as other normative frameworks of the African Union that promotes the fight against corruption.
- ii. The AUABC must work with Member States who have not signed and ratified the Convention in order to encourage them to become State Parties to AUCPCC.
- iii. Member States encouraged to cultivate political will as a necessary precondition to a successful fight against corruption as there is a strong correlation between strong leadership and good governance and winning the war against corruption.
- iv. Recommends that States must ensure policy consistency in the fight against corruption for greater coherence in the promoting the combating of corruption.
- v. Member States were urged to emulate the collective action in other regions that are visibly firm on enforcement and compliance with policy decisions by all Member States.
- vi. Member States are urged to actualize the role defined for Central Banks in the Common African Position on Asset Recovery in addressing IFFs and related corrupt practices in the financial sector.
- vii. There must be a cross learning on implementation and reporting on treaties between the AUCPCC and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in order to harness support for the monitoring and implementation of the AUCPCC.
- viii. RECS and other actors should put efforts in building capacity among the NACAs such as training of NACAs and key anti-corruption practitioners and particularly on asset tracing and recovery including investigations on IFFs through trade, taxation and money laundering.

B. REFLECTIONS ON THE STATE OF ANTI-CORRUPTION IN AFRICA

Representatives of NACAs from various countries shared their experiences including successes challenges and innovations in executing their mandates to fight against corruption. Presentation of country reports from Algeria and Mozambique on the state of play in the fight against corruption prefaced similar updates shared by representatives of NACAs in Sierra Leone, Mali, Senegal, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Seychelles and Botswana.

The following were the recommendations

- i. The AUABC is urged to further strengthen the monitoring mechanism under AUCPCC by clarifying the reporting obligation by NACAs and providing technical support on the process to promote compliance.
- ii. Member States should capitalise on and expand the reach of online payment platforms for public services as experience in some States shows that reduced cash transactions significantly lower corruption incidences.
- iii. Prevention is a major pillar in the fight against corruption and NACAs should continue investing in long-term interventions that will address root causes of corruption such as

inculcating anti-corruption messaging in the curricula of educational institutions at all levels.

- iv. NACAs should promote corruption risk assessments as standard practice in public and private institutions as they have proven to be an effective corruption mitigation tool through creating awareness on corruption and informing appropriate response measures.
- v. Member States and their judiciaries are urged to devise strategies, including through legal reforms, to address deliberate delaying of corruption cases by those charged with corruption offences through interlocutory applications and other procedural technicalities.

C. NON-STATE ACTORS FORUM

The third and final webinar for the Dialogue was dedicated to joint reflections between Non-State Actors (NSAs) and the AUABC on how their cooperation currently looks like, best practices on NSAs engagement in fighting corruption at the national level, possible models of engagement between the AUABC and NSAs and recommendations on the way forward. The following were key recommendation from the discussions;

- i. Non-State Actors to reinvigorate collaboration with the Board after the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and to capitalise on online platforms to expand the number of NSAs engaging with the Board.
- ii. The AUABC and NSAs to consult and agree on the most appropriate framework to adopt for consistent and vibrant collaboration.
- iii. The AUABC should sustain existing MoUs with CSOs and pursue new ones with organisations that have not previously partnered with the Board.
- iv. The AUABC should explore ways of strengthening and expanding membership of the Multi-Sectoral Working Group on Combating Corruption in Africa. Deliberate efforts would be made for greater participation of trade unions, youth and women organisations and the media.
- v. Development partners to support CSOs in building capacity to monitor implementation of the AUCPCC and for the Board to provide technical support to CSOs on requirements and provisions of the Convention.