AFRICAN UNION ADVISORY BOARD AGAINST CORRUPTION

CONSEIL CONSULTATIF DE L'UNION AFRICAINE CONTRE LA CORRUPTION

CONSELHO CONSULTIVO DA UNIÃO AFRICANA CONTRA A CORRUPÇÃO

الاستشاري للاتحاد الأفريقي لمكافحة الفساد.

P.O Box 6071, ARUSHA, TANZANIA -Tel: +255 27 205 0030- Fax: +255 27 205 0031
Email: auabcregistry@africa-union.org *Website: www.anticorruption.au.int

Introduction

The African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC) was adopted in Maputo, Mozambique on 11 July 2003 and came into force in 2006. To date, the Convention has been ratified by 47 Member States of the African Union. Since adoption of the Convention, African Union Member States have made significant efforts in the fight against corruption including the establishment of national laws and the creation of anti-corruption agencies. In recognition of the vast progress that has been made and cognizant of the need to continually reflect on approaches to end corruption, the African Union designated 11 July as the African Anti-Corruption Day.

This year marks the sixth (6th) edition of the African Anti-Corruption Day and will be commemorated under the theme: **'Strategies and Mechanisms for the Transparent Management of Covid-19 Funds'.** Since the pandemic started, media has been awash with news of corruption, theft and mismanagement of funds as governments responded to Covid-19. These were related to lack of adherence to transparency and accountability measures in procurement processes, instances of waste, mismanagement in procurement of Covid-19 supplies and other reliefs such as safety nets and cash transfers. The neglect of transparency and accountability norms may have impacted on countries that were already facing governance challenges thereby contributing to the further weakening of the fight against corruption.

Literature has shown that the Covid-19 pandemic is not just a health, humanitarian or socio-economic crisis but it is also governance issue as countries' resilience on accountability have been tested and hence the need for a rethinking of roles of accountability and transparency promoting institutions and mechanisms so that they effectively support societies during pandemics. As countries are now moving from not just dealing with the pandemic but also recovering from the effects of the pandemic, a lot of resources are being provided to countries to support the recovery efforts. It is therefore imperative that Member States put in place strong strategies and mechanisms that will promote transparency and accountability in the management of funds earmarked for management and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The proceedings of the day will therefore set the stage for what should be a great discussion on why it is important for Member States to get back to the drawing board – and work towards restoring public trust with efficient and effective evaluation mechanisms of Covid-19 Funds. They will lead to a reflection of the role of youth, women, RECS, NACAs and the general public in the anti- corruption crusade especially in the wake of emergencies such as the pandemic.

Member States, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, the media and citizens across the continent and in the diaspora are called upon to join forces in commemorating the

day. The African Union Advisory Board on Corruption shall lead the celebrations on behalf of the African Union.

How to Participate

You can participate in the celebration of the African Anti-Corruption Day by:-

- Organizing creative activities in your community to mark 11 July;
- Urging your country to ratify, implement and report on its compliance with the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption;
- Raising awareness on the negative impact of corruption in your community;
- Reporting cases of corruption within your respective Countries to the relevant Anti-Corruption Agencies;
- Promoting anti-corruption champions and publicizing stories of success in fighting corruption;
- Using the communication tools on publications and at events;
- Sending a message to your networks about the campaign;
- Tweeting about the day using the hashtag #AfricaAgainstCorruption and tagging @AUABC_; and
- Committing to an accountable and transparent lifestyle.

Methodology

The event will be held in a hybrid format in Dar es Salaam, in conjunction with key stakeholders such as the Prevention and Combating Corruption Bureau (PCCB) of Tanzania. In attendance will be various other stakeholders including the youth – because we believe that they have the power and responsibility to change the culture for better management and utilization of resources in Africa. Prior to the physical event, an online campaign beginning 4th July to scale up advocacy calling for transparent management of Covid-19 resources will be mounted.

Key Messages

- There was and continues to be widespread corruption in Covid-19 related procurement and contracting. Member States needs to do more to regain the trust of the Public;

- There has been widespread data manipulation and lack of transparency in how Member States have dealt with resources for Covid-19 funds. Opening up and publishing data going forward would work towards governments regaining public trust;

- Many African young peoples' livelihood and education were affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Tailored approaches are needed to inform the youth of the dangers of corruption but also most importantly, their role in fighting corruption;

- Member states need to promote accountability and transparency measures in procurement

- RECs play an important role in working to reverse the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on health and development of Member States;

- Endemic corruption happening before Covid-19 set in endangered a lot of African livelihoods and continues to do so;
- There is need to work with the Civil Society and to support their work in monitoring Member States spending and delivery of health services to citizens; and

- Technology is a very important tool that should be harnessed to improve transparency and help reduce opportunities for corruption. E- procurement systems, digitized budgets go a long way in building the citizens trust.