

Anti-Corruption Commission
Hashemite Kingdom of
Jordan

Regional Bureau for
Arab States

Under the Patronage of His Excellency the Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Mr. Samir Al Refai

CONFERENCE ON

"BUILDING STRATEGIC ANTI-CORRUPTION PARTNERSHIPS IN THE ARAB REGION"

Amman, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

26-27 October 2010

PROGRAMME

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I. BACKGROUND

1. The first decade of the new millennium witnessed significant transformations in the Arab region. During those years, Arab countries sought to respond to emerging challenges in a number of ways, including various efforts to strengthen good governance practices and address related institutional needs, based on the recognition that good governance is critical to the achievement of human development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Until recently, however, attempts to confront corruption, which is a result of malfunctioning governance institutions in the public and the private domains and a root cause in the misuse of financial and human resources in development efforts, have remained quite limited. In fact, corruption was treated as a taboo, nearly banned from public policy debates and averted in governance reform processes for many years in the Arab region; this situation, however, has gradually changed with several governments expressing a will to support the integration of anti-corruption in their national policies and programmes.

2. This important change of course may be tracked back to the Dead Sea Conference in 2005, where Prime Ministers and Ministers from 18 Arab Countries, issued a milestone declaration that marked the launch of the Good Governance for Development (GfD) in the Arab Countries Initiative. The Dead Sea Declaration[1] recognized that "*implementing good governance and accountability measures ... constitutes a basic element for combating corruption, reducing poverty and paving the way for an environment conducive to achieving sustainable development ...*" and resolved to "*increase the efforts of acceding, ratifying and implementing the UN Convention against Corruption*" (UNCAC). In pursuit of the Declaration, high-level officials from Arab countries became engaged in a vibrant region-wide dialogue on the best means to address the challenges of corruption, while taking into consideration the different circumstances that exist in their own countries. The dialogue culminated in another historic juncture three years later, in 2008, also at the Dead Sea where ministers and high-level representatives from 19 Arab countries expressed "*their awareness that corruption is a major*

[1] http://www.pogar.org/publications/agfd/deadseaconf/declaration-e.pdf.

obstacle to human development and economic progress and that it conflicts with the bases and values of the Arab culture, erodes the wealth of their countries, stifles investment, decreases the quality of basic services to citizens, obstructs the rule of law and threatens societies' stability and security".[2] More importantly, they outlined concrete steps for the establishment of an interactive and inclusive regional mechanism for capacity development, knowledge networking, and policy dialogue in the area of anti-corruption. Seven months later, on the 30th of July 2008, and after extensive regional and national consultations, the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET) was established with the support of UNDP's Programme on Governance in the Arab Region and in cooperation with a number of regional and international partners including the League of Arab States (LoAS), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Since then, and in a very short period of time, ACINET became a leading platform in its field, contributing to knowledge development and sharing, and providing channels for multi-stakeholder interaction that has helped advance innovative ideas and identify common challenges and possible solutions in the area of anti-corruption.[3]

3. Indeed, over the last few years, the space for public debate on corruption has grown significantly, and governments have become more engaged in related reform initiatives. So far, 16 Arab countries have committed themselves to implement the UNCAC.[4] Some of them have already adopted a series of legal reforms to prevent and punish corrupt practices, simplified administrative procedures, established specialized anti-corruption bodies, and developed and started implementing national anti-corruption strategies. Those positive developments, and others, can be considered the beginning of a long and challenging journey in an increasingly demanding environment that is affected by growing internal and external pressures to achieve concrete anti-corruption results, and popular pessimism about the effectiveness of existing mechanisms and the proposed solutions. Indeed, as noted by the former ACINET's Chair, H.E. Dr. Abed SHAKHANBEH, on the first anniversary of the Network "[*the*] *road ahead is still long and filled with challenges; we must be ready to step up our efforts and persist in our cooperative endeavours*."[5]

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[2] http://www.pogar.org/publications/agfd/GfDII/corruption/deadsea/declaration-en.pdf.

[3] http://www.pogar.org/resources/ac/.

[4] Arab countries that are State Parties to UNCAC are Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Qatar, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Comoros, KSA, Sudan, and Syria have only signed the Convention and are yet to become State Parties. Oman and Somalia have not signed the Convention yet (http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/signatories.html). The Palestinian National Authority has also committed to implement the UNCAC in a statement addressed to the UN Secretary General in 2005 (http://www.aman-palestine.org/uncac/palestine.htm).

[5] ACINET Press Statement, 30 August 2009, issued by the Chairmanship in commemoration of ACINET's first anniversary; for the complete text of Statement, please visit http://www.pogar.org/publications/agfd/acinet/first-anniversary/pressrelease-ar.pdf.

4. Supporting the effective implementation of the UNCAC, and mainstreaming integrity standards and practices in traditional public administration reforms and in sectors that deliver basic public services, present major challenges, not only for Arab countries, but also for countries across the world. Those challenges, however, are exacerbated in the context of the region, which suffers from a multiplicity of regulatory and capacity gaps that undermine effective and sustainable actions to mitigate the risks of corruption and respond to its different manifestations in government, business and society. This situation threatens to weaken ongoing reform efforts in many Arab countries, and to decelerate the overall drive towards political, social and economic development. On the other hand, the increasing awareness of decision-makers about the need to address corruption, and the emerging readiness to engage in public-private partnerships and collective action create new opportunities to move forward, building on past achievements and lessons learned.

5. UNDP has accompanied the progress made on the anti-corruption agenda in the Arab region since the beginning of this decade. It was among the first actors to respond to the increasing demand on anti-corruption cooperation, and continues to be a major partner of Arab countries in this area. Among other things, UNDP is currently supporting the work of ACINET through its Programme on Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR). It is also working through its Country Offices with governments, judiciaries, parliaments and non-governmental actors to support the achievement of concrete results in more than eight countries that are at different developmental levels, including Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco and Yemen. The success of past cooperation and the increasing demand on the side of Arab countries have provided UNDP with the main building blocks for a new regional anti-corruption project (2011-2014), which builds on the results of previous regional activities that have started in the context of the GfD Initiative and continued to grow in the framework of ACINET. The new regional project, which is based on a series of priorities identified in consultation with anti-corruption stakeholders across the Arab region, will aim at providing decision-makers and practitioners in Arab countries with specialized knowledge and tools to advance the anti-corruption agenda into a second decade characterized by additional achievements and better developed national capacities in the area of anti-corruption.

6. The regional Anti-Corruption and Integrity in the Arab Countries (ACIAC) Project is conceived as an instrument that will promote cooperation and collective action against corruption in Arab countries and add value to related bilateral and multilateral efforts. It will engage stakeholders from all Arab countries in the framework of ACINET, and will provide customized country-specific support based on demand, while seeking to maximize the potential for joint learning at the regional level, and across regions, whenever feasible. ACIAC will also promote adherence to the principles of aid effectiveness, through a proactive and far-

reaching partnership strategy that seeks to foster linkages with relevant initiatives at the country, regional and global levels. Implementation will focus on four inter-connected areas of work:

- "Anti-corruption and integrity assessments": Under this component, ACIAC will seek to enhance the capacity of governmental and non-governmental practitioners to design implement and use assessments in a contextualized manner, with a focus on reinforcing the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the UNCAC[6] and generating data that would better informing national related policies and programmes, including national anti-corruption strategies.
- "Implementation of the UNCAC": Under this component, ACIAC will support ACINET as an interactive and inclusive regional platform for capacity development, knowledge networking, and policy dialogue aimed at enhancing institutional capacities to support UNCAC implementation in relation to specific prevention and law enforcement themes that are identified by project stakeholders.
- "Integrity in sectors": Under this component, ACIAC will support linkages between national anti-corruption strategies and the national development agendas, particularly in relation to supporting the achievement of the MDGs, through a focus on generating knowledge and developing tools that will promote the mainstreaming of integrity standards and practices in sectors that deliver basic services such as healthcare, water, education, energy and others.
- "Anti-corruption in crisis-affected countries": Under this component, ACIAC will work to raise awareness on the state of corruption in those countries, its particularities and potential responses through fostering an active regional dialogue among stakeholders based on a series of desk studies and field surveys, with a view to providing the main building blocks for the development of follow-up initiatives at the country level.

II. THEMATIC FOCUS

7. In 2010, the Arab countries' stake in having more effective anti-corruption systems has become even higher than before. First, the recent adoption of the global *Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the UNCAC* will require all States Parties across the world, including Arab countries, to examine the progress of implementation efforts more closely and to pursue concrete steps more vigorously. In the words of the UN Secretary General, "*from now on, States will be judged by the actions they take to fight corruption, not just the promises they make*"[7]. Second, the global financial crisis, which has taken its toll on the region in more

[6] http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/COSP/session3/V0988538e.pdf.

[7] The UN Secretary General, message on the occasion of "International Anti-Corruption Day", 9 December 2009 (http://www.un.org/en/events/anticorruptionday/sgmessages.shtml).

than one way, has provided important lessons on the need for enhanced integrity and transparency.[8] More importantly, it has created additional incentives for governments to pursue anti-corruption and broader governance reforms, with a view to attracting scarce foreign investment and invigorating sluggish local markets. Businesses also have come under greater pressures to develop and implement internal compliance systems and to proactively pursue adherence to integrity standards and practices. Third, the increasing awareness on the linkage between corruption and the modest levels of development in the region are likely to fuel additional demand for anti-corruption. This is particularly true given the Arab countries' commitment to achieve the imminent MDGs, which have been adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000, and reaffirmed at the highest regional level under the auspices of the LoAS during the 2009 Arab Social and Economic Summit.

III. OBJECTIVES

8. The overall aim of this high-level conference is to foster inclusive high-level discussions that would contribute to focusing the regional anti-corruption dialogue on concrete solutions that draw on related international and regional standards and good practices, and take into consideration the particularities of local circumstances, including developmental and conflict-related issues. More specifically, the high-level regional conference aims at:

- Reviewing recent anti-corruption developments in the participating Arab countries, as well related regional-level initiatives including efforts undertaken by ACINET, LoAS, and other regional and international partners.
- Examining the interface between emerging global challenges and the anti-corruption agenda in the Arab countries to enable the identification of actionable recommendations that would strengthen integrity in the public and private sectors and contribute to the effective implementation of the UNCAC.
- Exploring common anti-corruption challenges in a contextualized manner with a focus on sharing good practices and lessons learned related to UNCAC implementation, sectoral integrity initiatives, and broader governance reforms including parliamentary strengthening, the modernization of public administration, improving the business environment and promoting justice and human rights.

9. By working towards these objectives, the conference is expected to deliver a common understanding on past progress and emerging needs, and to promote cooperation among governments, businesses, civil society organizations and regional and international partners. At the end, the conference is expected to issue joint recommendations that can contribute to strengthening anti-corruption work in the near future, taking into consideration the impact of

[8] OECD, "The Financial Crisis: Reform and Exit Strategies", 2009, pp. 36-40.

emerging challenges, and the need to reinforce regional and international cooperation and support complementarities between related efforts at the country, regional and global levels.

IV. PARTICIPANTS AND RESOURCE PERSONS

10. This regional conference will bring together leading anti-corruption stakeholders from Arab countries as well as from partner countries and organizations, including:

- high-level representatives from Arab Governments, including ministers, attorney generals, heads of specialized anti-corruption bodies, parliamentarians and senior officials from key anti-corruption institutions including financial and administrative control bodies and judicial and prosecution authorities.
- Senior practitioners from key non-governmental actors including leading civil society organizations, as well businesses and independent media, academic and research institutions.
- Senior representatives from major multilateral organizations, donor agencies and partner countries that are engaged in anti-corruption cooperation in the region.

11. The conference will draw on the expertise of a distinguished group of high-level stakeholders and senior experts to provide presentations and interventions, and moderate interactive roundtable discussions.

V. METHODOLOGY AND DOCUMENTATION

12. The regional conference will include two days of interactive sessions. The working languages will be Arabic English and French with simultaneous interpretation provided in three languages. The programme will start with an opening session that will establish the conceptual framework of the regional conference. It will be followed by a series of roundtable discussions and break-out groups to address the various objectives set above. These discussions will be followed by a high-level panel that will present and discuss the new UNDP regional anti-corruption initiative, followed by a discussion that will enable participants to jointly outline recommendations, which can help reinforce anti-corruption cooperation in view of the progress made so far and the challenges lying ahead.

13. The following material will be available for distribution during the conference:

- Informational package on the ACIAC Project (2011-2014).
- Documentation on ACINET including the Brochure; Constitutive Documents; and Progress Report I.

- The UN Convention against Corruption and related documentation.
- UNDP knowledge products on anti-corruption.
- Other relevant material submitted by participants (to submit material please contact anti-corruption@undp-pogar.org).

VI. AGENDA

Tuesday, 26 October 2010	
08.00 – 09.00	**Registration**
09.30 – 10.30	**Opening Session:** ***Session Objective:*** *To provide a conceptual framework for the conference and introduce its objectives and expected outcomes.*

- **Welcome Statement.**

  H.E. Mr. Sameeh BINO, Chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

- **Statement of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network.**

  H.E. Mr. Ahmed AL ANISI, President of the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption, the Republic of Yemen; and the Chair of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network.

- **Statement of the League of Arab States.**

  H.E. Minister Plenipotentiary, Mr. Abdallah AL KAILANI, representing the Secretary General of the League of Arab States.

- **Statement of the President of the Conference of States Parties to the UNCAC.**

  H.E. Dr. Ali Bin Fteis AL MARRI, the President of the Conference of States Parties to the UNCAC, the Attorney General, State of Qatar.

- **Statement of the United Nations Development Programme.**

  H.E. Mr. Luc STEVENS, the UN Resident Coordinator, and the UNDP Resident Representative in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

- **Official Opening Statement.**

  H.E. Mr. Nayef Saoud EL-KADI, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior representing the Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

10.30 – 11.00	**Break**

11.00 – 12.30	**First Session – roundtable:** **Emerging Global Challenges and Opportunities to Strengthen Integrity in the Arab Region.** ***Session Objective:*** *To examine the interface between emerging global challenges and the progressing governance agenda in the Arab countries; and enable participants to identify actionable recommendations that would strengthen integrity in the public and private sectors.*

Chaired by H.E. Mr. Mohammad Saad AL ALAMI, the Minister of Public Sector Modernization, the Kingdom of Morocco.

- **Mainstreaming anti-corruption in development and the realization of the Millennium Development Goals.**

  H.E. Mr. Douglas GARDNER, the Deputy Director of the Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP.

- **Learning from the global financial crisis to advance good governance efforts.**

  Dr. Mohammad WEHBE, Expert on Audits and Financial Controls, Professor, the Lebanese University.

- **The growing role of business and the need for collective action against corruption.**

  Ms. Olajobi MAKINWA, Head of Anti-Corruption, the UN Global Compact.

- **Open Discussions.**

12.30 – 12.45	**Break**

12.45 – 14.00	**Second Session (Part a) – country presentations:** **Reviewing Progress on Integrity and Anti-Corruption in the Arab Countries** ***Session* Objective*:*** *To promote knowledge sharing on the anti-corruption and integrity challenges, achievements and future directions in participating Arab countries, including the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption and other related initiatives.*

Chaired by H.E. Judge George AOUAD, the President of the Central Inspection Board, the Republic of Lebanon.

- **Country Presentations:**

Dr. Mohamad ADEINAT, member of the Anti-Corruption Commission, the

Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Mr. Fateh DJELLOUL, Judge, Representative of the Ministry of Justice, the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

H.E. Mr. Bol Lul WANG ROUT, State Minister at the Ministry of Justice, the Republic of the Sudan.

Mr. Mhanna AL SHAIJI, Head of Prosecution, Public Prosecution Office, Kingdom of Bahrain.

Mr. Thamer HADI, Assistant to the general manager, Commission of Integrity, The Republic of Iraq.

Mr. Hadi AL-HAJRY, Public Prosecutor, Public Prosecution Office, the State of Qatar.

14.00 – 15.30	**Lunch**

15.30 – 17.30	**Second Session (Part b) – country presentations:** **Reviewing Progress on Integrity and Anti-Corruption in the Arab Countries** ***Session Objective:*** *To promote knowledge sharing on the anti-corruption and integrity challenges, achievements and future directions in participating Arab countries, including the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption and other related initiatives; and inform participants about the involvement of key regional and international organizations in supporting related initiatives in the Arab countries.*

Chaired by H.E. Judge Medhat AL MAHMOUD, Head of the Higher Judicial Council, the Republic of Iraq.

- **Country Presentations (continued):**
  H.E Mr. Amro Abellatif Abo EL ATA, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Jordan.

  Mr. Faysal AJINA, Judge and Team Leader at the Legal and Judicial Center, Ministry of Justice and Human Rights.

  H.E. Mr. Mohammad Saad AL ALAMI, the Minister of Public Sector Modernization, the Kingdom of Morocco.

  H.E. Dr. Rafic EL NETCHEH, President of Anti Corruption Commission, the Palestinian National Authority.

  Mr. Bassam WEHBE, Prosecutor at the Audit Court, the Republic of Lebanon.

Mr. Badr EL MASSAAD, Public Prosecutor, Ministry of Justice, the State of Kuwait.

Mr. Abdourahman ABDILLAHI, Inspector General, State General Inspection, the Republic of Djibouti.

Mr. Obied AL-HOMER, Member of the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption, the Republic of Yemen.

- **Special Presentation on the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Academy.**

  Mr. Samarajoo MANIKAM, Director, Malaysia Anti-Corruption Academy.

20.30	**Official dinner hosted by the Anti-Corruption Commission in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.**

Wednesday, 27 October 2010

09.00 – 11.00	**Third Session – roundtable:** **Entry points to support the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption in the Arab Countries.** ***Session Objective:*** *To share good practices and lessons learned on supporting UNCAC implementation with a view to maximizing its potential including a discussion on related challenges and priorities in Arab countries, with a view to identifying entry points for enhancing synergies and complementarities between ongoing efforts at the national, regional and global level.*

Chaired by H.E. Dr. Ali KHASHAN, the Minister of Justice, the Palestinian National Authority.

- **Maximizing the potentials of the UNCAC through the Review Mechanism.**

  Mr. Giovanni GALLO, Crime Prevention Expert, UNODC.

- **Elements for promoting strategic national approaches to promote integrity and fight corruption.**

  Dr. Ahmad Sakr ASHOUR, Expert on Governance and Anti-Corruption, Professor, Alexandria University.

- **Exploring entry points to strengthen the participation of the private sector and civil society in integrity and anti-corruption efforts in the Arab region.**

  Dr. Azmi SHUAIBI, Coordinator of the Non-Governmental Expert Group of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network.

- **Open discussions.**

11.00 – 11.15	**Break**
11.15 – 13.00	**Fourth Session – parallel break-out groups:** **Exploring common integrity challenges and strengthening contextualized anti-corruption approaches.** ***Session Objective:*** *To explore common integrity challenges in a contextualized manner with a focus on the added value of sectoral approaches, the potential role of the private sector and civil society, and synergies between UNCAC implementation efforts and broader governance reforms.*

- **Group on middle-income countries.**

  Moderated by Dr. Amer KHAYATT, Secretary General, the Arab Anti-Corruption Organization.

  Mr. Mohamed Ramzy Ismail, Technical Officer, Division of Health Systems and Services Development, WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.

- **Group on high-income and resource-rich countries.**

  Moderated by Mr. Mohamed AL SHARIF, UNDP Assistant Resident Representative, the Kingdom of Bahrain.

  Mr. John WEST, Coordinator of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

- **Group on crisis-affected countries.**
  Chaired by H.E. Mr. Bol Lul WANG ROUT, State Minister at the Ministry of Justice, the Republic of the Sudan.
  Moderated by Dr. Youssef CHAITANI, First Economic Officer, Unit for Emerging and Conflict Related Issues, UN Economic and social Commission for West Asia.

  Ms. Julia KEUTGEN, Policy Analyst at the Democratic Governance Group in the Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP.

13.00 – 14.30	**Lunch**
14.30 – 16.00	**Closing Session – high-level roundtable:** **Towards Enhancing Anti-Corruption Cooperation in the Arab Region** ***Session Objective:*** *To present the new regional anti-corruption project that*

will be implemented by UNDP in cooperation with various regional and international partners in 2011-2014; enable a forward-looking discussion on ways to maximize the target results; and jointly outline recommendations that can help reinforce regional anti-corruption cooperation in view of the progress made so far, and the challenges lying ahead.

Chaired by H.E. Mr. Sameeh BINO, Chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

- **Summary on the Anti-Corruption and Integrity in the Arab Countries (ACIAC) Project.**

  Mr. Arkan EL SEBLANI, Legal Specialist, Programme on Governance in the Arab Region, UNDP.

- **Discussions on Ways to Maximize the Impact of the Initiative and Support Synergies with Related Initiatives in the Arab Region.**

  H.E. Mr. Douglas GARDNER, the Deputy Director of the Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP.

- **Conference Conclusions.**

  H.E. Mr. Ahmed AL ANISI, the Chair of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network, the President of the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption, the Republic of Yemen.

- **Closing Remarks.**