In partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Working Session for the

Arab Governmental Expert Group (AGEG) on UNCAC Self Assessment

Gammarth, Tunisia

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Background Paper

A. Background

The Arab Governmental Expert Group (AGEG) on UNCAC Self Assessment is comprised of Arab government experts who have been officially nominated by their countries, based on pre-set criteria, to participate in the activities of the Group. The AGEG aims at improving the capacity of Arab countries on assessing the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, with the aim of supporting policy makers and reform efforts through identifying implementation gaps and technical assistance needs and priorities.

Based on the request of 5 Arab countries (Sharm EL SHEIKH, 23 October 2007), the AGEG was established in December 2007, with the support of UNDP's Regional Program on Governance in the Arab Region (UNDP-POGAR), in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). At the moment, it includes experts from 17 Arab countries. So far, the AGEG has conducted a first training seminar (Amman, 17-18 December 2007) on using the UNCAC Self Assessment Checklist, which was developed by UNODC; a first working session (Dead Sea, 21 January 2008) to review progress of work on the preparation of UNCAC Self Assessment Reports; and a second training seminar (Casablanca, 21-22 April 2008) on the use of a pilot in-depth information-gathering questionnaire on UNCAC implementation, which was developed by UNDP-POGAR.

Lessons learned from AGEG's work were transmitted to UNODC's team working on improving the UNCAC Self Assessment Checklist and have contributed, along other expert and country inputs to the development of the Omnibus Survey Software, which includes the new and improved UNCAC Self Assessment Checklist in addition to Self Assessment Checklists for the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its three protocols.

Naturally, the work of the AGEG will continue to be focused on the UNCAC Self Assessment Checklist only; and accordingly, a second working session was organized in Rabat on 3 April2009, with the support of UNDP's Program on Governance in the Arab Region (UNDPPOGAR) and in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and

Crime (UNODC). The purpose is to introduce the new Checklist and inform AGEG members about the recent improvements with a view to enabling participating Arab countries to provide their input in preparation for finalization and presentation of the Software at the upcoming Third Session of the Conference of State Parties (CoSP) to the UCAC, which will be held in Doha early November 2009.

B. Main working sessions:

First Session: This session is dedicated for the organizers to introduce the agenda in addition to the presentation of the interventions of all the Arab countries participating in the self-assessment process in agreement with the United Nations Convention against Corruption, and the measurement of anti-corruption efforts in each country, this will be based on a questionnaire prepared for this purpose and sent to each country , followed by the provision of technical and substantive observations relevant to the self-evaluation. The objective of this session is the exchange of knowledge among the participants in the self-evaluations in the Arab States, and explains the key issues on the needs of States in the area of assessments and the collection of accurate data.

Second Session: This session is dedicated to review and discuss the indicators of the fight against corruption and methods of measuring corruption, where they will be focusing on how to distinguish between different ways of measuring corruption, in addition to the explanation and exchange of experiences with respect to indicators of corruption.

Third Session: This session is dedicated to review and discuss the tools to evaluate the importance of regulation and corruption, self-assessment checklist on the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which will provide an overview of the different forms of assessment tools of corruption and how to use them. In addition a presentation will be held the new checklist for self-evaluation on the United Nations Convention against Corruption, to review and discuss the proposals submitted by Arab experts to provide input on the latest version of the UNCAC Self-Assessment Checklist and to inform its finalization.

Fourth Session: This session is dedicated to the study and the presentation of the evaluations led by the State and its role in supporting anti-corruption efforts, as a clear explanation will be given on how these principles and processes of evaluations led by the countries, contribute to the public understanding and their role in supporting efforts to fight corruption, and discuss the implications of the development and adoption of assessments of corruption in their countries**.**

C. Conclusion

This training session will establish a significant framework for the continuation and expansion of the support for the Arab Governmental Expert Group on UNCAC self assessment. It will witness the strengthening of the cooperative relationship between this group and the General Secretariat of the Conference of the State Parties to the UNCAC, were it will offer a chance for AGEG members to transfer their

regional experience to an international level, while enabling it to directly contribute to the development of international self assessment tools.