Network of Corruption Prevention Authorities

Virtual Plenary Meeting

29 September 2020

Minutes of the NCPA Seventh Meeting

- **Item 1. Opening remarks by the NCPA Presidency**

The NCPA President opened the NCPA's virtual plenary meeting. While expressing his regret that they could not meet again in person, he was pleased to note the continued effort of NCPA members to pursue their collective work. He thanked all members for their commitment and the Council of Europe for their support. He also took the opportunity to welcome the new NCPA members from Chile, Ecuador, Egypt, and Georgia.

The President extended a warm welcome to the NCPA partners, who joined for the first time in a plenary meeting of the Network. He stressed the significance of their participation, given the invaluable expertise and experience they could share, and expressed his confidence that this meeting was the beginning of a fruitful collaboration.

- **Item 2. Partnerships: taking stock of progress made and planning the way forward**

The NCPA Presidency started the meeting by presenting the role of partners affiliated to the Network and by taking stock of the progress made since December 2019, when the NCPA Charter was amended to provide for partnerships. Current partners include the East African Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (EAAACA), the Basel Institute on Governance, the NYU Program on Corporate Compliance and Enforcement (PCCE), and the research center Transcrime of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. Each partner was given the floor to present their organization and their expectations towards the NCPA.

The PCCE elaborated on its mission to develop research on corporate compliance, and to serve as a platform for off-the-record discussions between government officials, academic experts and legal practitioners. As part of their partnership with the NCPA, the PCCE aims to promote more efficient compliance and enforcement policies through knowledge sharing, with a focus on business integrity. Participants were encouraged to visit the PCCE's website and follow their publications and events by subscribing to their mailing list.

The EAAACA presented its functioning and members originating from 8 countries. It highlighted the association's focus in combatting corruption through a regional approach, and in promoting capacity building, the creation of partnerships, and the strengthening of asset recovery inter-agency networks across the world. Participants were also invited to visit the EAAACA's website and consult their publications.

The Basel Institute on Governance, an independent not-for-profit foundation based in Switzerland, presented its work with public and private partners around the world to prevent and combat corruption. The Basel Institute's interest in promoting anti-corruption as a norm through multilateral, multi-stakeholder and collective action approaches was emphasized.

Finally, Transcrime, a research center on transnational crime based in Milan, expressed their willingness to support the activities of the NCPA by making their expertise, analytical tools and trainings available to the members of the Network through joint projects. In particular, NCPA members could be involved in the project DATACROS.

After the presentations, participants exchanged views on the role of partners in the NCPA and explored new avenues for multi-stakeholder cooperation in the field of corruption prevention. A member expressed deep satisfaction with the progress made by the NCPA and thanked its members and partners for their valuable contribution.

Several members successively outlined their anti-corruption programs and strategies. They all stressed the need to engage in international cooperation while involving actors from the private sector, academia, and civil society.

A partner mentioned its particular interest in further discussing ways to detect corruption through methods that enhance enforcement. Another partner proposed to work with the NCPA on ways to better integrate collective action in the implementation of national anti-corruption strategies.

▪ **Item 3. Updates on outreach and communication activities**

The NCPA Presidency gave an overview of the NCPA's outreach activities, underlining its rapid expansion. The Network recently welcomed new members from Chile, Ecuador, Egypt, and Georgia. Moreover, some prospective members had expressed their interest in the NCPA.

Concerning communication activities, the Presidency had designed a logo for the NCPA, and launched a new NCPA LinkedIn page followed by more than 500 users. All members and partners were invited to suggest posts and other content to feed this social media channel.

Additionally, the Presidency presented its plan to carry out two communication-related initiatives. Firstly, it was willing to publish a statement to celebrate the NCPA's second anniversary on 16 October. Furthermore, it proposed to launch a call for contributions to gather

documents from all members to complete the "Reference Library" section on the NCPA website, which remains empty to this day.

A member raised the idea of creating a permanent secretariat to manage the activities currently carried out by the NCPA rotating presidency. Concerns were expressed however about the lack of specific allocation of resources for the Network and the feasibility of the project in the near future.

- ▪ **Item 4. Enhancing the cooperation between supreme audit institutions (SAIs) and anti-corruption authorities (ACAs)**

Discussions focused on enhancing the cooperation between supreme audit institutions (SAIs) and anti-corruption authorities (ACAs). A presentation on the topic was delivered, describing the initiatives conducted by the Specialized Working Group on the Fight against Transnational Corruption of the Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Supreme Audit Institutions (OLACEFS).

As part of the NCPA's activities, members were proposed to organise online exchange sessions to identify ways to improve inter-agency cooperation by mapping similarities and differences between SAIs and ACAs. Participants would assess information from November to December, to then organize sessions during January 2021. Moreover, members were invited to join a webinar on the cooperation between SAIs and ACAs during times of crisis, which would occur the first week of November 2020.

- ▪ **Item 5. Results and latest developments of ongoing projects**

The NCPA members presented the results and latest developments of their ongoing projects.

- ➢ *Using modern tools and technologies to prevent and detect corruption*

Information was shared about an initiative, which aims at describing best practices on the use of new technologies for the purpose of anti-corruption by drawing upon the concrete experiences and feedbacks from NCPA members. A first draft of the paper had previously been shared with the Network, and remained open to any input from members and partners. Since the use of technology will be discussed in the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly against Corruption in June 2021, this project would provide the NCPA an avenue to make a proactive contribution to the debate.

- ➢ *Global mapping of anti-corruption authorities*

Since the release of the global mapping of ACAs in May 2020, the Network has continued to disseminate the results of the project. A number of articles discussing the findings of the study

had notably been published by the [FCPA Blog](#) or the [Basel Institute on Governance](#), while two others were to be published during this fall. A French version of the report was also to be published by the end of the year. Besides, as part of the project, it was decided to establish the international directory of ACAs. Its release is expected before the end of the French presidency in December.

➢ *Guidance on facilitation payments*

The state of progress of this initiative was presented. Based on extensive research on the subject, a first of draft of the NCPA practical guidelines to help businesses in dealing with facilitation payments is being completed. Participants were informed that this first draft was about to be shared with members and partners, and that they would be soon asked to provide feedback.

➢ *Key success factors in anti-corruption training*

The project on anti-corruption training, which aims at identifying best practices and key success factors, was presented. A questionnaire had been sent to the members, who were invited to share information on the training activities they have implemented, lessons learned, and challenges encountered. Ideally, responses were due by 21 October.

➢ *Perception of corruption in relation to prevention of corruption*

A member presented its research project on the perception of corruption in relation to prevention of corruption. After collecting inputs from other members through a questionnaire, the member is preparing a final report that would be shared soon with the Network. Comments or feedbacks from members would be welcomed.

➢ *Asset declarations*

A joint project led by two members of the Network to further strengthen procedures on asset declarations was presented

➢ *Whistleblowing*

A member presented an overview of its national policy on the protection of whistleblowers, in line with European standards. As part of the implementation of its program, the member stressed the pivotal role of transparency and accountability, as well as the provision of technical support to raise awareness on whistleblowing.

➢ *Transparency in the business sector*

A member delivered a comprehensive presentation of the objectives currently pursued, with a particular emphasis on the promotion of transparency in the business sector. A series of related activities were presented, highlighting this member's active role of the fight against corruption.

In particular, the member has conducted a program with the European Union titled "Institutional support for the prevention of corruption", which contains expected results with regard to the promotion of transparency in the business sector, such as:
- the improvement of the administrative simplification process to fight corruption in the private sector;
- the development of an efficient vigilance and corruption prevention system for companies.

Moreover, the OECD is aiming to establish an alternative means of reporting and resolving corruption problems in this member's country, the "High Level Reporting Mechanism" (HLRM).

➢ *Impacts of national anti-corruption strategies and corruption risk assessment methodology*

Underlining the difficulty to measure corruption, a member presented its current work on designing indicators to measure it and assess its impact, as part of its national strategy to combat corruption and promote accountability. A dedicated study was being conducted, on which more information would be provided within the next months. The member highlighted that the project's final objective was to prepare a unified guideline accompanied with specific tools on corruption risk assessment methodology.

▪ **Item 6. Proposals for new projects and emerging priorities**

A member proposed to further develop the exchange of information and good practices on the implementation of national anti-corruption strategies.

Another member presented a proposal for a new cooperative project titled "The Role of Media in Corruption Prevention and Detection". Acknowledging the decisive role of media in promoting accountability and transparency by raising public awareness, this members aimed to launch an initiative to foster a supportive environment for investigative journalism. NCPA members were encouraged to share their experiences on their relations with the media, so as to collect submissions for producing a booklet with all the contributions, and work on designing a manual to assist media professionals in their efforts related to corruption prevention.

▪ **Item 7. Liability of Legal Persons for Corruption Offences**

The Council of Europe's Economic Crime and Cooperation Division presented its new publication on the liability of legal persons for corruption offences. This publication serves a dual purpose: to provide policy makers and practitioners with an overview of the concept of corporate liability taken by different jurisdictions, and to inform future efforts on codification and revision of rules on liability of legal entities by providing model legal provisions. Moreover,

the Council of Europe reiterated its interest in collaborating with the NCPA and in offering continuous support to its work.

- **Item 8. Next steps and conclusion**

The Presidency concluded the meeting by addressing the Network's next steps. As the health crisis would make the organization of the annual conference too hazardous, a postponement of the event was decided. Nonetheless, the Presidency proposed to hold a plenary meeting around 15 December, during which a new president would be elected for the year 2021. This date will be confirmed in due time. Finally, the NCPA members shared their closing remarks.