

Executive Director's message on International Anti-Corruption Day, 9 December

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International Anti-Corruption Day is a suitable day to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Conceived 10 years ago in Merida, Mexico, UNCAC is almost unique within the UN System.

Driving the Convention is a remarkable review mechanism enabling nations to review their peers in a partnership process that is contributing to a growing global dialogue on corruption's impact. Among its many strengths is the inclusivity of the review process: rich or poor, large or small, developed or developing, nations participate as equals.

Now, in its fourth year, the review mechanism has helped 35 States to improve their anti-corruption laws and led to the training of 1,400 experts.

This spirit of cooperation is necessary. Corruption is not simply a developed or developing nation's problem, it is the challenge of every person and every nation. The review mechanism mirrors this unpalatable fact.

But to help reject corruption in all its many forms, we need a powerful platform. With 171 States that have ratified the convention, UNCAC offers such a universal foundation.

The Convention is countering corruption in the areas of development, the environment, in the private sector, during major public events, match-fixing, asset recovery and in many other areas of our lives.

Through UNCAC, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime is promoting information sharing across borders, encouraging cooperation among nations and sending the message that words such as integrity, accountability, governance and transparency must carry weight in our societies.

An important area of our work relates to the private sector where UNODC is working, using a guidebook and other tools, to help businesses continuously improve their anti-corruption ethics and compliance programmes.

UNODC and UNDP, on 9 December, are jointly launching a campaign titled "Zero Corruption – 100% Development" that is designed by young people for young people to raise awareness about corruption.

Our work has recently been reinforced by the high-level international conference on anti-corruption held in Panama and attended by States Parties and other partners in civil society, academia and the private sector.

On International Anti-Corruption Day, I call on everyone in UNODC, whether in headquarters or in the field, and our colleagues in governments and elsewhere to take the resolutions and decisions from Panama and to transform them into the activities that help corruption's victims.

Yury Fedotov,
Executive Director

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime