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**Mauritius Communiqué on the Global Conference on Anti-
Corruption Reform in Small Island States**

Document submitted by Mauritius

**Communiqué adopted during the “Global Conference on
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Mauritius Communiqué on the Global Conference on Anti-Corruption Reform in Small Island States

From 17 to 21 August 2015, high-level anti-corruption officials from small island developing States representing the Caribbean, African, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS) regions and the Pacific region convened in Pointe aux Piments, Mauritius, at the invitation of the Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms of the Republic of Mauritius, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Throughout the Conference, the participants actively discussed the follow-up of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, technical assistance needs identified through the Mechanism and its lessons learned. Furthermore, participants also discussed current challenges and practices in small island developing States to prevent corruption in public procurement, asset declarations and challenges in implementing mechanisms for the protection of reporting persons. Those discussions were facilitated by representatives of UNODC and UNDP. Participants actively engaged in peer-to-peer learning through the sharing of experiences of small island developing States, discussed policy options and worked together to identify priorities for anti-corruption reform in small island developing States.

The participants,

Recognizing that small island developing States are characterized by their smallness and challenges with existing human capacity, resources and accessibility, and therefore that they require context-specific anti-corruption reforms that are affordable, sustainable, accountable and effective to prevent and combat corruption,

Recognizing the importance of the role of regional and international partnerships and the relevance of peer-to-peer learning among small island developing States,

Recalling the outcomes of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in assessing implementation of chapters III (Criminalization and law enforcement) and chapter IV (International cooperation),

Mindful that small island developing States have the same legal obligations as any other State party to the Convention,

1. *Request* those small island developing States that have yet to incorporate the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Corruption into their domestic legal regime to do so in line with the principle of respect of national sovereignty;

2. *Call for* considering the possibility of using the Convention as a basis for mutual legal assistance and to complete, as needed, the necessary legal framework for expeditious international cooperation;

3. *Acknowledge* the importance of implementing the Convention and the recommendations of the Implementation Review Mechanism to strengthen their fight against corruption.

The participants from States that are currently parties to the Convention identify and recommend the following priorities for reform:

- (a) Corruption prevention:
 - (i) Develop and implement policy and legislative reforms to prevent corruption, engaging all relevant stakeholders in the process;
 - (ii) Adopt a national action plan for prevention based on corruption risk assessment;
 - (iii) Prevent corruption in the public procurement process as a priority;
 - (iv) Develop codes of ethics and mechanisms to ensure implementation;
 - (v) Strengthen the capacity of anti-corruption authorities to prevent corruption in small island developing States and share expertise among small island developing States on good practices and lessons learned;
- (b) Criminalization and law enforcement:
 - (i) Legislative reform:
 - a. Implement measures to enhance and safeguard the independence of anti-corruption institutions, in particular offices of attorney generals and prosecutor generals of small island developing States;
 - b. Allocate appropriate resources to adequately investigate and prosecute corruption offences;
 - c. Develop and implement legislation for the protection of witnesses, experts, victims and reporting persons, in accordance with articles 32 and 33 of the Convention;
 - d. Develop and implement legislation on bribery of foreign public officials and officials of public international organizations, trading in influence, illicit enrichment, bribery in the private sector and liability of legal persons, as addressed, respectively, in articles 16, 18, 20, 21 and 26 of the Convention;
 - e. Amend investigative rules to collect and admit as evidence material obtained through electronic communications, including e-mails and text and recorded messages;
 - f. Amend legislation to simplify the presentation of evidence by witnesses residing outside the national jurisdiction;
 - g. Amend legislation on asset disclosure to allow the requirement of financial reporting by senior officials on an annual basis and to permit requests to any public official on a random basis or as deemed necessary by prosecuting authorities;
 - h. Undertake regular legislative reform and deliver the corresponding training and public awareness-raising on the legislation amended;
 - (ii) Inter-agency training on corruption and fraud cases:
 - a. Deliver specialized training for investigators and prosecutors and supplement training with a mentoring programme on anti-corruption;

b. Increase personnel available full-time to prosecute corruption crimes;

c. Seek assistance to obtain equipment to protect witnesses and improve the presentation of evidence in court, such as voice distortion equipment, cameras, streaming video, closed circuit television and depositions;

(iii) Enhance transparency through information technology-based case-management and investigative databases tailored to the needs of investigators and prosecutors;

(c) International cooperation and asset recovery:

(i) Create a secure electronic communication network for small island developing States to allow for informal queries before officially submitting a request for international cooperation;

(ii) Establish central authority units;

(iii) Deliver training on:

a. Key languages used in international cooperation;

b. Build the capacity of relevant staff (lawyers) of central authority units with respect to different legal systems and requirements for mutual legal assistance;

c. Build the capacity of anti-corruption personnel tailored to their respective functions relating to providing and receiving international cooperation in support of asset recovery;

(iv) Convene on, an annual basis, a meeting of central authorities from small island developing States on international cooperation to support anti-corruption in order to address issues of transnational crime trends;

(v) Convene meetings at the operational level every two months to facilitate domestic inter-agency coordination;

(vi) Implement bilateral or multilateral agreements (art. 59 of the Convention);

(vii) Request that there be dedicated staff at international organizations such as UNODC, UNDP and the Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative to provide advisory services in support of requests from small island developing States for asset recovery;

(viii) Advocate, on behalf of small island developing States, for overseas agencies to give assistance within the requested timeline.

Furthermore, the participants,

1. *Highlight* the importance of developing partnerships with international organizations, funds and programmes and the donor and development partners at large, in a coordinated and coherent manner consistent with the different synergies reinforcing anti-corruption efforts;

2. *Recommend* that while developing technical cooperation programmes, development partners should incorporate recommendations with regard to the

Convention in its technical projects, in line with the contextual characteristics of small island States;

3. *Request* UNODC and UNDP to continue providing technical assistance tailored to the contexts and needs of small island developing States, and as part of that, provide assistance to:

(a) Foster regional and interregional cooperation and anti-corruption networks specifically for small island developing States;

(b) Support the effective participation of small island developing States in the Convention's Implementation Review Mechanism;

(c) Support small island developing States through the provision of technical assistance for the priority areas identified at the Conference;

(d) Support the work of small island developing States in anti-corruption through the development of knowledge tools specific to the needs of those States;

(e) Support the work of anti-corruption practitioners in small island developing States in the areas of research, analysis and the dissemination of good practices in those States that could be replicated in similar jurisdictions;

(f) Support the anti-corruption frameworks of small island developing States, creating synergies with the larger donor community and development partners, in order to increase the responses of small island developing States in upholding international standards against corruption;

(g) Promote the academic development of universities in small island developing States to incorporate anti-corruption programmes in their respective university curricula;

4. *Call upon* the Governments of small island developing States that are signatories of the Convention to allocate sufficient personnel and budget resources to ensure transparent and accountable institutions and mechanisms;

5. *Call upon* the larger United Nations system, through the different funds and programmes, to incorporate principles of transparency and accountability in the different sectors of technical assistance, in line with the requirements of the Convention and in support of the corresponding sustainable development goals;

6. *Request* the larger donor community and development partners to support country-specific anti-corruption technical cooperation within and among small island developing States, consistent with the Convention;

7. *Express their appreciation* to the Government of Mauritius for volunteering to provide a platform for small island developing States to share good practices and lessons learned in anti-corruption reform initiatives;

8. *Express their appreciation and gratitude* to the Government of Mauritius for hosting the first Global Conference on Anti-Corruption Reform in Small Island States, in cooperation with UNODC and UNDP;

9. *Recommend* that the concerns of small island developing States be reflected in a formal resolution to be presented at the session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption to be held in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, in November 2015.