



Kingdom of Morocco

Ministry of Public Sector Modernisation

# **CONCLUSIONS**

## **Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue**

### **Putting anti-corruption Commitments into Practice:**

### **Transparency, Participation and Rule of Law**

9-10 June 2011, Rabat, Morocco

The Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on *Putting anti-corruption Commitments into Practice: Transparency, Participation and Rule of Law* was held under the high patronage of His Majesty Mohammed VI of Morocco on 9-10 June 2011 in Rabat. The event, which was opened by the Prime Minister His Excellency Mr. Abbas El Fassi, was organised by the Ministry of Public Sector Modernization in the Kingdom of Morocco, with the joint support of OECD and UNDP, and in coordination with UNODC.

This dialogue attracted more than 175 participants from 33 countries and more than 20 non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations. It brought together senior government officials from Arab and OECD countries, leading experts from the private sector and civil society as well as representatives of donor agencies, regional and international organisations.

The event fostered an open and in-depth debate on ways to respond to the on-going transformation in the Arab region. In particular participants explored approaches and practical solutions to strengthen existing efforts against corruption as well as formulated proposals for action in order to move forward in a more concrete and responsive manner.

### **Reflecting on transformations in Arab countries and implications for anti-corruption**

The Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue highlighted the **urgent call for reform from the people of the Arab region** – recognising the need for greater freedom, employment and economic and social justice, and the perception that corruption is a major root cause for the lack of progress in these areas.

- Participants agreed that corruption is often a symptom of a larger problem and thus the **fight against it must be rooted in broader reforms that promote transparency and the rule of law, enhance public participation in governance systems and safeguard human rights and freedoms**. They also emphasised the need to revisit the elements of the **social contract** to foster cleaner, fairer and stronger economies and accelerate the achievement of development objectives including the Millennium Developments Goals.
- Participants stressed that despite some important steps towards progress on anti-corruption issues in the last few years, the profound developments of 2011 require a new impetus in Arab countries that **(i) builds on existing declarations of intent to ensure that governments live up to their commitments** by effectively implementing international anti-corruption instruments, including the United Nations Convention against Corruption and moving closer to other international anti-corruption standards, as applicable, including relevant OECD standards; and **(ii) that empowers people to have a more active role in the process of policy making and in monitoring the actions of governments**.
- Participants called for focusing anti-corruption efforts on the achievement of visible, concrete and immediate progress in **areas that matter most to citizens**, namely: fostering employment and equitable distribution of wealth and opportunity; making citizens' voices heard in decision-making; keeping government accountable, especially at the highest levels; controlling illicit financial flows and combating illicit trade; ensuring equality before the law

and the existence of an independent, effective and efficient judicial system; streamlining administrative procedures to make them more transparent and responsive; as well as providing fair and timely access to basic services, especially water, healthcare and education.

- Participants highlighted the need to use **participatory approaches** in the development and implementation of national anti-corruption measures and to anchor them in the broader processes of governance reform.

### **Paving the way for comprehensive anti-corruption responses in the Arab region**

The Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue recognized the urgent need to continue and deepen regional policy dialogue on anti-corruption to share experiences and lessons learned along with other bilateral and regional initiatives. Regional-level efforts can be complemented by **differentiated and country-specific approaches depending on countries' trajectories**. The Arab Anti-corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET), including its non-governmental group, and the MENA-OECD Governance and Investment Initiative can play a leading role in this regard.

The dialogue also helped gather the views from various stakeholders in the Arab region to prepare for the discussions at the fourth session of the **Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption** to be held from 24 to 28 October 2011 in Marrakesh. This dialogue was organised in the framework of a series of preparatory works that Morocco initiated more than a year ago for the organisation of this major event.

During the multi-stakeholder dialogue **participants called for**:

- **Intensifying tailored anti-corruption technical assistance** and supporting the development of inclusive roadmaps for specific reforms while highlighting the synergy between anti-corruption and broader governance reforms.
- Fostering the use of monitoring processes to **support the ongoing implementation of anti-corruption reforms**, especially in areas that are vulnerable, drawing on positive experiences in the context of the Arab region such as the MENA-OECD Joint Learning Studies reviewing public sector integrity, the MENA-OECD Business Climate Development Strategies, and the inclusive UNCAC self assessments supported by UNDP in partnership with UNODC.
- Promoting **transparent and inclusive peer reviews** in Arab countries under the United Nations Convention against Corruption in order to help monitor the actual implementation of anti-corruption commitments. Governments under review were invited to welcome country visits by peer reviewing countries, provide opportunities for civil society input and participation, and enhance transparency of the process including by publishing the full review reports, drawing on the lessons learned from the experiences of OECD countries in the framework of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention and other review mechanisms.
- Encouraging countries in the Arab region that have not done so, to **ratify** the United Nations Convention against Corruption as a matter of urgency and, as appropriate, actively engage

with the OECD Working Group on Bribery with regards to the standards of the Anti-Bribery Convention and related instruments.

Participants also requested international institutions, donor agencies and other partners in the region, such as the League of Arab States, the Union of the Maghreb, and the Gulf Cooperation Council, to **coordinate their efforts** to reinforce anti-corruption efforts and support countries that are undergoing transitions and are demanding continuous and intense technical support in the medium-term. They also called the international community, represented by UN system, the OECD Ministerial Council, the G20, donor countries and others, to stand ready to support governments, businesses and civil society in building open, transparent and efficient governance and economic management systems.

### **Proposals for Follow-up Action against Corruption in Arab Countries**

Participants suggested informing relevant authorities at the **political level** in Arab and OECD countries as well as development partners about these conclusions. They also outlined a number of follow-up actions that could be considered to strengthen cooperation partnerships against corruption in the Arab region:

1. Accelerate anti-corruption reforms with a **special attention to the following areas**:
  - Reinforcing corruption prevention mechanisms with a focus on the integrity of public officials, through codes of conduct, prevention of conflict of interest, and mandatory asset disclosure.
  - Strengthening the rule of law with a focus on anchoring the principle of accountability and supporting the struggle against impunity, through clearly defined laws and effective justice systems, including an independent judiciary, and more responsive international cooperation mechanisms.
  - Enhancing transparency and public engagement, with a focus on promoting multi-stakeholder consultation and empowering citizens to participate in policy-making, through access to information laws, proactive public reporting, and the effective use of modern technology; Awareness-raising efforts can also educate students and the public at large about the detrimental impact of corruption on societies and the ways to fighting it .
  - Reducing corruption in the delivery of services, with a focus on sectors that have a direct impact on the lives of the people, including healthcare, water, education and related cross-cutting challenges including public procurement systems.
  - Promoting a business-enabling environment, with a special attention to transparency and integrity issues, including procedures that are streamlined and competitive, public-private consultations; Working with business to promote multi-stakeholder initiatives such as integrity pacts and encourage the adoption of internal measures such as codes of conduct, corporate compliance systems, due diligence as part of a corporate social responsibility policy.
  
2. **Strengthen frameworks** to examine progress made over time in the implementation of international anti-corruption standards in Arab countries building on existing monitoring mechanisms and networks.

3. Invest efforts in **promoting the role of civil society in the fight against corruption**, in particular by: enabling the formation and qualification of non-governmental organizations; supporting the systematic engagement of the youth in related efforts; consulting with various civil society groups and organisations and the wider public in the development and implementation of anti-corruption policies and programmes; as well as strengthening independent capacities to monitor government performance.

4. Foster **progress on these lines of action**:

- The OECD will develop and launch an observatory on integrity in the framework of the MENA-OECD Initiative to measure progress in the implementation of country-specific reforms against corruption, building on the use of peer review methodology and the collection of comparative data at the regional level ;
- The UNDP and its partners, particularly UNODC , are committed to support Arab countries to undertake concrete anti-corruption reforms, to implement the UN Convention against Corruption and reduce corruption risks in public service delivery, in the framework of the regional project on “Anti-Corruption and Integrity in the Arab Countries” (ACIAC), that will be implemented in 2011-2014, building on the achievements and lessons learned under the UNDP Programme on Governance in the Arab Region;
- Business active in the region will establish a network that can represent the private sector perspectives and enable its effective participation in anti-corruption efforts, with support from the MENA-OECD Initiative and UNDP, as well as other partners.
- The Organizing Committee of the conference<sup>1</sup> proposed to convene a follow-up forum that would provide a high-level platform for the identification of new anti-corruption reform initiatives, including concrete time-bound government commitments to demonstrate progress.

Furthermore, participants agreed that these Conclusions could inform the discussions of the fourth session of the **Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption** that will be held in Marrakesh on 24-28 October, and thus requested their submission to the Secretariat of the Conference for inclusion in the documentation of the conference. They also agreed that these Conclusions could also be used in the preparation of the meetings to be held in July in the framework of the G8 in relation to the Deauville Partnership, and the forthcoming work of the MENA-OECD Governance and Investment Initiative and the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET).

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<sup>1</sup> The Organising Committee included the Moroccan government, OECD, UNDP, the US Department of State.

Last but not least participants expressed their gratitude to His **Majesty Mohammed VI King of Morocco** for holding this international meeting under his high royal patronage.