



UNCAC AT 20:  
UNITING THE WORLD  
AGAINST CORRUPTION



# 2023 Parliamentary Dialogue on UNCAC & GOPAC Annual General Meeting

8-9 March 2023

Doha, Qatar

## 2023 PARLIAMENTARY DIALOGUE ON UNCAC – BACKGROUND NOTE

As the only legally universal binding instrument on anti-corruption, the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) has, since its adoption in 2003, reached almost universal adherence with 189 parties.

UNCAC is comprehensive, as its provisions recognize the importance of both preventive and punitive measures. It acknowledges that corruption is not just a matter of national importance but also a cross-border one, implying that international cooperation in addressing the offenses is essential.

It also emphasizes that the fight against corruption is not just the government domain. A whole-of-society approach including parliaments, both at the national and international levels, is needed to provide a solid anti-corruption regime that can thrive under the guidance of UNCAC. All state actors, including parliaments and other international communities, must work hand in hand to address corruption in all its forms.

While the convention has successfully instilled a foundation for countries to tackle corruption at the national level, challenges still need to be addressed to ensure its provisions are implemented effectively. That is where parliament plays its part.

The legislature is crucial in the implementation of the convention. Parliament is not only an institution involved in the passage of ratification. It is also vital in driving changes aimed to support the effective implementation of the convention through its roles in policy and budget setting as well as oversight, and towards a stronger public engagement to the issue.

In practice, the parliament's role in the state's international obligations is often overlooked. Parliament is only needed when there is a need to ratifying or passing laws relevant to the convention. Its oversight role for the convention implementation is underutilized since parliamentarian has less exposure to UNCAC provisions and its review mechanism. Most of the time, the executive counterpart significantly dominates the parliament.

Since its founding, GOPAC has called for the effective implementation of UNCAC by engaging parliamentarians deeper into the realm of the treaty both at the national and international levels. Doha Declaration adopted during [the 7th Global Conference of Parliamentarians against Corruption in 2019](#) even urged parliamentarians to enhance their engagement with UNCAC.

The need for such engagement was later affirmed by the 8th Conference of the States Parties to UNCAC, in 2019, through [Resolution 8/14 on Promoting Good Practices in Relation to the Role of National](#)



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[Parliaments and other Legislative Bodies in Preventing and Combating corruption in all its Forms](#) where it recognizes the roles of parliament in strengthening the implementation of the convention.

The role of parliament in the management of public finances, in the exercise of effective budget oversight and in strengthening relations with supreme audit institutions was re-emphasized by Member States in the political declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its first-ever special session against corruption in June 2021. In its [Political Declaration](#), Member States also recommitted to strengthening interparliamentary dialogue and cooperation, to a culture of legality in the public sector and to preventing and prosecuting corruption involving members of national parliaments, while taking into account questions of privileges and immunities.

This year UNCAC is in its 20<sup>th</sup> year of journey. Much has progressed but the challenge of effectively implementing the convention remains a question. Guided by the need to further engage parliament and parliamentarians in UNCAC and to explore possible areas where legislators and legislative institution can fully maximize their potential to strengthen the convention implementation effectively, GOPAC will organize a Parliamentary Dialogue on UNCAC. The Dialogue aims to explore perspectives, practices, lesson-learned from parliament in several areas, including how parliamentarians can improve their oversight role and establish specific parliamentary measures to implement the convention's provisions effectively.

The Dialogue will address the underlining issues of parliament and parliamentarians' engagement with UNCAC. In specific, it will explore the following:

1. The current and potential future parliamentary initiatives and innovations that can support the effective implementation of UNCAC.
2. The avenue(s) available for parliaments and parliamentarians to be fully engaged, informed, and aware of the UNCAC implementation gap at international and national levels.
3. The lessons learned and experiences parliaments and parliamentarians have for effectively supporting the implementation of specific UNCAC provisions.

## THE DIALOGUES

### **1. *UNCAC at 20: The Role of Parliament.***

It will highlight the urgency for parliament and parliamentarians to support the effective implementation of UNCAC. The topic also addresses ways to strengthen parliamentary roles and how parliament and parliamentarians are aware of the UNCAC review mechanisms and its findings. It is expected to facilitate more shared and good parliamentary practices, innovation, and lessons learned among the parliamentary community regarding their involvement in global governance.

### **2. *Parliament and People: addressing the emergencies.***

The Dialogue elaborates on the relationship between the parliament and parliamentarians and the people they represent. It explores various parliamentary initiatives to engage the public in the fight against corruption and protect their rights, especially during times of emergency. Parliamentarians will be invited to share their implementation progress and practices on engaging the public to report,



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prevent and fight corruption as guided by the UNCAC provisions on public reporting (10), participation of society (13), and protection of reporting persons (33).

The above practices and how the parliament exercises its functions are critical to holding the government accountable. The last few years have illustrated how parliament has to adapt its functions, including pandemic oversight, in unprecedented situations. Participants are also invited to share good practices and discuss actions in ensuring that legislative oversight remains in place even during emergencies or future crises, especially concerning public finances (article 9 UNCAC).

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. [7<sup>th</sup> GOPAC Conference: Doha Declaration.](#)
2. [Anti-Corruption Assessment Tool for Parliamentarians.](#)
3. [Financial Oversight: A Handbook for Parliamentarians.](#)
4. [Parliament's Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.](#)
5. [COSP8 Resolution 8/14 on Promoting Good Practices in Relation to the Role of Parliament and Other Legislative Bodies in Preventing and Combating Corruption in All Its Forms.](#)
6. [COSP9 Resolution 9/1 on Sharm el-Sheikh Declaration on Strengthening International Cooperation in the Prevention of and Fight against Corruption During Times of Emergencies and Crisis Response and Recovery.](#)
7. [UN General Assembly Special Session against Corruption Political Declaration, 2021.](#)
8. [Crises and Corruption: Emergency Responses During COVID-19.](#)

## THE PROGRAMME

<b>TUESDAY, 7 MARCH 2023</b>	
Arrival of Delegates	
<b>WEDNESDAY, 8 MARCH 2023</b>	
10.00 – 11.00	<p><b>Opening of the Dialogue</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H.E. Mr. Hassan bin Abdulla Al-Ghanim, Speaker, the Shura Council of the State of Qatar.</li> <li>• H.E. Mr. Hamad bin Nasser Al-Missned, President, Qatar Administrative Control and Transparency Authority.</li> <li>• H.E. Mr. Nikhil Seth, Executive Director, UNITAR.</li> <li>• Ms. Brigitte Strobel-Shaw, Secretary, Conference of the State Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption (<i>virtual</i>).</li> <li>• H.E. Dr. Ali bin Fetais Al-Marri, Chair, GOPAC.</li> </ul>
11.00 – 13.30  (Coffee break will be served at the foyer)	<p><u>1<sup>st</sup> Dialogue</u>  <b>UNCAC at 20: The Roles of Parliament</b></p> <p>Moderator:                  Hon. Dr. Fadli Zon, Vice-Chair, GOPAC Executive Committee</p> <p>Panelists suggestion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H.E. Muhyieddeen Shaban Touq, Acting Chairman, the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Negotiation of a Convention against Corruption (2002 -2003).</li> <li>• Lord Fusitu'a, Chair, GTF UNCAC (<i>virtual</i>).</li> <li>• Mr. Giovanni Gallo, Chief, Thematic Support Section, Corruption and Economic Branch, Division for Treaty Affairs, UNODC.</li> <li>• Senator Marie Rose Mureshyankwano, Rwanda (<i>virtual</i>).</li> <li>• Hon Terieta Mwemwenikeaki, GOPAC Kiribati chair and former UNCAC Focal Person for Kiribati.</li> <li>• Senator Minerva Hernandez, GOPAC Mexico Chair.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion</p>
13.30 – 14.30	Lunch
14.30 – 17.00  (Coffee break will be served at the foyer)	<p><u>2<sup>nd</sup> Dialogue</u>  <b>Parliament and People: Addressing the Emergencies.</b>                  (Specific issue to be discussed related to the implementation of UNCAC provisions on public reporting (10), participation of society (13), and</p>

	<p>protection of reporting persons (33) as well as in ensuring that legislative oversight remains in place even during emergencies or any future crises especially when it relates to public finances (article 9 UNCAC).</p> <p>Moderator:                  Mr. Alex Meija, Director, Division for People and Social Inclusion, UNITAR.</p> <p>Panelists suggestion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. John Hyde, Chair, GTF Parliamentary Oversight.</li> <li>• Mr. Hidehiko Yuzaki, Governor, Hiroshima Prefecture (<i>virtual</i>).</li> <li>• Hon. Kavinda Jayawardana, Sri Lanka Parliamentary Caucus for Open Parliament Initiative.</li> <li>• Senator Jorge Carlos Ramirez Marin, Senate of Mexico (<i>virtual</i>).</li> <li>• Mr. Rodrigo Herrera Bravo, Chair, GTF Open Parliament and Participation of Society Chair.</li> <li>• Judge Mohammed Al-Askari, President, Chamber of Criminal, Court of Cassation, Tunisia.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion</p>
17.00 – 17.15	Day 1 wrap up and close.
<b>THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 2023</b>	
09.00 – 09.45	Executive Committee meeting
10.00 – 10.30	Board Meeting
11.00 – 13.00	<p><b>GOPAC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b></p> <p><b>Agenda</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consider and adopt the minutes of preceding AGM.</li> <li>2. Consider and adopt the GOPAC 2022 Report.</li> <li>3. Consider and adopt the Audit Committee’s Report and GOPAC 2022 Financial Report.</li> <li>4. Consider and adopt any operational plan and budget.</li> <li>5. Activities Report by Regional Chapters.</li> <li>6. Consider and adopt any proposals correctly received to amend the Constitution and By-Laws.</li> <li>7. Other Matters.</li> <li>8. Closing.</li> </ol>
13.00	Lunch
<b>FRIDAY, 10 MARCH 2023</b>	
Departure of Delegates	