

# Joint Communiqué by the High-Level Segment of the International Anti-Corruption Conference 2024

Vilnius, Lithuania

*“Today... we are facing an increasing use of force and hybrid attacks in various areas, including information, cyberspace, energy, climate, and even food and migration. We are facing the use of corruption as a strategic tool by state and non-state actors.*

*... To tackle new criminal schemes, we need to be vigilant and ready to act swiftly and efficiently... Our efforts must be united not only internally, but also within the international community that shares our democratic values.*

*It is our collective responsibility to defend rules-based international order and to stand united.”*

*Ingrida Šimonytė, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania*

*“We must enhance regulatory frameworks, foster stronger international cooperation, and leverage technology... Engaging civil society, the media, and the private sector remains crucial, as does protecting civic space and promoting democratic resilience.”*

*Gabija Grigaitė-Daugirdė, Vice-Minister of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania*

## **I. Introduction**

The High-Level Segment of the 21st International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC) in Vilnius, Lithuania, convened on June 19, 2024, under the theme "Confronting Global Threats: Standing up for Integrity." This meeting brought together high-ranking government officials, leaders of international and regional organizations, civil society organizations and business representatives to address the pervasive issue of corruption that disrupts peace, impedes development, and compromises security. It reviewed recent developments, identified new challenges, and set shared priorities and actions for the next two years, reaffirming a collective commitment to transparency, accountability, and integrity. The meeting emphasized the crucial importance of collaborative efforts between governments, civil society, and the private sector in combating corruption and reinforcing the rules-based international order, democratic values, and human rights.

Corruption is a global challenge that also hinders the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), weakens the rule of law, deteriorates public institutions, erodes trust, and exacerbates social and economic disparities. In today's geopolitical climate, characterized by rising authoritarianism and hybrid threats, the menace of corruption is ever more pressing. Collaborative and comprehensive approaches are essential to effectively address corruption at local, national, and international levels.

Two years ago, participants of the High-Level Segment in Washington, D.C., USA, agreed on shared priorities for anti-corruption action to address impunity, enhance financial transparency, develop robust legal frameworks, link anti-corruption efforts with the promotion of democratic values, mainstream anti-corruption efforts across various sectors, and enhance international cooperation.

To date, challenges persist. The enforcement of anti-corruption measures remains uneven, and the need for greater political engagement and commitment at all levels remains evident.

The increased sophistication of corrupt practices requires continuous adaptation and innovative solutions. The landscape of corruption is evolving, with persistent challenges including the weaponization of corruption by authoritarian regimes and organized crime groups, escalating threats from kleptocracy, financial opacity, and the utilization of digital technologies in corrupt activities. The impact of corruption on global security is another pressing concern, as it weakens state institutions, fuels organized crime, and enables terrorist financing. Additionally, the concept of strategic corruption—where corruption is systematically used by state and non-state actors to achieve broader geopolitical or economic goals—has emerged as a significant threat to democracies worldwide.

While addressing these grand corruption issues, it is also imperative to tackle other pervasive forms of corruption that have both systemic and personal impacts. For instance, corruption related to climate action threatens environmental sustainability and climate goals, affecting humanity at large. On a more personal level, sextortion—coercion into sexual acts through abuse of power—remains underreported and unpunished, affecting individuals and necessitating targeted interventions and heightened awareness.

Effectively combating these challenges requires a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that addresses both broad and individual consequences. Innovative, adaptive responses, stronger international cooperation, and enhanced harmonized regulatory frameworks are necessary to counter the evolving tactics of corrupt actors, including professional enablers. Prevention is key in creating a culture of integrity, while robust enforcement is essential in upholding anti-corruption laws. Stronger efforts are needed across the board to implement effective anti-corruption measures that complement enforcement. A commitment to continuous adaptation and proactive measures is vital to maintaining the effectiveness of global anti-corruption efforts.

## II. Strategic Priorities for 2025/2026

The High-Level Segment has identified shared priorities for the period of 2025/2026, focusing on strengthening global anti-corruption efforts:

- **Enhancing Financial Transparency and Integrity:** Implement robust measures for beneficial ownership transparency, target enablers of corruption, ensure transparency and accountability in political finance, and strengthen frameworks for asset recovery and implementation of international sanctions.
- **Addressing Impunity and Weaponization of Corruption:** Develop strategies to prevent the use of corruption as a tool for manipulation, ensure accountability, and foster international cooperation as well as advocate for sufficient regulations addressing corruption offenses.
- **Countering Strategic Corruption:** Develop and implement comprehensive policies to identify and mitigate the use of corruption as a deliberate strategy by state and non-state actors. Enhance intelligence-sharing among international partners, impose targeted sanctions on entities engaged in strategic corruption, and promote transparency in foreign investments and political donations to prevent undue influence on political and economic outcomes.
- **Leveraging Technology and Innovation:** Utilize technologies such as blockchain and AI to enhance transparency and detect corruption.

- **Building Capacity and Enhancing Accountability:** Support the development of robust anti-corruption institutions, aim to improve the effectiveness of existing anti-corruption tools, and promote comprehensive national strategies.
- **Strengthening International Cooperation:** Harmonize anti-corruption laws, enhance mutual legal assistance, and support international networks for peer learning, monitoring, and risk mapping of transnational corruption.
- **Engaging Civil Society, the Media, and the Private Sector:** Foster partnerships and sustained cooperation through collective action and encourage the adoption and effective implementation of compliance programs and ethical standards.
- **Protecting Civic Space:** Support civil society, foster an environment that allows civil society actors to operate freely and securely, and ensure that those who threaten or commit violence against them are brought to justice.
- **Promoting Democratic Resilience and Rules-Based International Order:** Integrate anti-corruption efforts with democratic values, human rights, and the rules-based international order.

### III. Recommendations for Future Actions

The High-Level Segment of the 21st International Anti-Corruption Conference outlines the following recommendations to guide future actions in combating corruption. These recommendations aim to enhance the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures and ensure sustainable progress in promoting integrity and accountability.

#### 1. Strengthening Legal and Institutional Frameworks:

- Promote the adoption and enforcement of comprehensive anti-corruption laws that align with international standards, ensuring the criminalization of all corruption offenses at the national level.
- Support the establishment and strengthening of independent anti-corruption agencies with sufficient resources and authority to investigate and prosecute corruption cases.
- Promote the development of national anti-corruption strategies and action plans that include clear goals, timelines, and accountability mechanisms.
- Mainstream anti-corruption across sectors to achieve sustainable development outcomes and humanitarian assistance objectives.

#### 2. Enhancing Financial Transparency and Accountability:

- Advocate for the implementation of beneficial ownership transparency to prevent the misuse of corporate structures for illicit purposes.
- Promote international standards for financial transparency, including the exchange of information between jurisdictions to combat tax evasion and money laundering.
- Support the creation of public registries for beneficial ownership and asset declarations to enhance accountability.

### **3. Promoting International Cooperation and Collective Action:**

- Foster greater collaboration between countries through mutual legal assistance, extradition agreements, and joint investigations to tackle transnational corruption.
- Encourage the development of international networks and platforms for sharing best practices, information, resources, monitoring, and global corruption risk-mapping.
- Direct efforts towards strengthening the global anticorruption architecture, enhancing the coordination of international organizations in their anti-corruption initiatives, and providing robust technical assistance to member states.

### **4. Leveraging Technology and Innovation:**

- Invest in the development and implementation of digital tools, such as blockchain and artificial intelligence, to enhance transparency and detect corruption.
- Support initiatives that promote open data and e-governance to improve public sector integrity and citizen engagement.
- Develop cybersecurity strategies to protect against digital threats and ensure the security of anti-corruption systems.

### **5. Engaging Civil Society, Media, and the Private Sector:**

- Encourage active participation of civil society organizations and media in monitoring and advocating for anti-corruption reforms.
- Promote partnerships between governments, civil society, and businesses to co-create, develop, and implement anti-corruption initiatives.
- Support the private sector in adopting robust compliance programs and ethical standards to prevent corruption within their operations.

### **6. Protecting the Civic Space and Whistleblowers:**

- Develop and enforce comprehensive laws and institutional mechanisms to protect the rights and safety of civil society actors, ensuring accountability for violations.
- Foster an environment that values and supports civil society through international collaboration and the promotion of freedom of expression.
- Promote whistleblower protection laws to encourage the reporting of corruption, safeguard those who expose corrupt activities, and ensure safe and accessible reporting mechanisms.

### **7. Addressing Impunity:**

- Foster international cooperation to address state capture and kleptocracy effectively.
- Implement measures to ensure that individuals and entities involved in corruption are held accountable through fair and transparent legal processes.
- Strengthen the independence and capacity of legal institutions to effectively prosecute and adjudicate corruption cases.

## 8. **Supporting Capacity Building and Technical Assistance:**

- Provide targeted technical assistance and capacity-building programs to countries and institutions in need of strengthening their anti-corruption and integrity frameworks.
- Facilitate training and knowledge-sharing initiatives to equip anti-corruption practitioners with the skills and tools necessary to combat corruption effectively.
- Encourage the development of specialized training modules on digital tools and innovative approaches to anti-corruption.

## 9. **Promoting Public Awareness and Education:**

- Implement public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about the negative impacts of corruption and the importance of integrity and transparency.
- Integrate anti-corruption education into school curricula to foster a culture of ethics and integrity from an early age.
- Support media initiatives that investigate and report on corruption, providing the public with accurate and timely information.

These strategic recommendations aim to create a comprehensive and coordinated approach to combating corruption, ensuring that efforts are effective, sustainable, and inclusive. They should allow stakeholders to collaborate and foster a more transparent, accountable, and integrity-driven frameworks.

## IV. **Conclusion: Summary and Way Forward**

The High-Level Segment of the 21st International Anti-Corruption Conference reaffirms the collective commitment to advancing the global fight against corruption. The discussions highlighted the crucial importance of transparency, accountability, and integrity as foundational principles for sustainable development and democratic governance.

### 1. **Summary of Key Points:**

- The progress made since the 2022 High-Level Segment in Washington, D.C., was discussed, while recognizing ongoing challenges and emerging threats.
- New dynamics and threats, including the weaponization of corruption, strategic corruption, financial opacity, and the impact of digital technologies were identified.
- Shared priorities for 2025/2026, focusing on financial transparency, international cooperation, leveraging technology, and engaging civil society, media, the private sector, and protecting civic space were established.
- The commitment to core principles, including rules-based international order, democratic values, and human rights were reaffirmed.
- The importance of strengthening partnerships and international cooperation to combat transnational corruption was emphasized.

## 2. Way Forward:

- Commit to continuous adaptation and innovation in anti-corruption strategies to address evolving threats and challenges.
- Encourage all stakeholders to implement the strategic recommendations outlined, focusing on enhancing legal and institutional frameworks, financial transparency, and technological advancements.
- Promote ongoing collaboration and information sharing among governments, international organizations, civil society, media, and the private sector.
- Support capacity-building initiatives and provide technical assistance to countries and institutions to strengthen their anti-corruption efforts.
- Commit to expanding the scale and scope of anti-corruption interventions by systematically integrating governance principles and anti-corruption measures across all areas of sustainable development efforts. This includes interventions in the environment, health, conflict prevention, peace-building, and the implementation of the SDGs.
- Foster public awareness and education to build a culture of integrity and accountability from the community level.

The High-Level Segment underscores the necessity of a unified and proactive approach to combating corruption. By working together across sectors and borders and leveraging the strengths of diverse stakeholders, the global community can build more resilient, transparent, accountable systems, and an integrity-driven future for all. The commitment to these efforts will contribute to progress towards reducing corruption, thereby supporting sustainable development, peace, and prosperity for all.

Participants in the 2024 High-Level Segment in Vilnius, Lithuania, included the following:

- **African Development Bank,**  
Paula Santos da Costa, Director of the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Department
- **Basel Institute on Governance,**  
Nicola Bonucci, Member of the Board
- **European Commission,**  
Corinna Ullrich, Director, International and Horizontal Affairs, European Commission's Directorate General of Migration and Home Affairs
- **European Court of Auditors,**  
Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Member of the Court, Member of Chamber III — External Action, Security and Justice
- **French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs,**  
Hélène Dantoine, Director of Economic Diplomacy
- **Global Affairs Canada,**  
Jeanette Sautner, Canadian Ambassador to Lithuania
- **Government of the Republic of Lithuania,**  
Host, Ingrida Šimonytė, Prime Minister

- **Government of Montenegro,**  
Momo Koprivica, Deputy Prime Minister
- **International Anti-Corruption Conference Council,**  
Rueben Lifuka, Chair
- **International Anti-Corruption Conference Series,**  
Roberto Perez-Rocha, Director
- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands,**  
Caroline Weijers, Ambassador, Special Envoy Anti-Corruption
- **Ministry of Infrastructure and Justice of the Principality of Liechtenstein,**  
Graziella Marok-Wachter, Minister
- **Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania,**  
Moderator Gabija Grigaitė-Daugirdė, Vice-Minister
- **Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova,**  
Veronica Mihailov-Moraru, Minister
- **Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,**  
Björg Sandkjær, State Secretary
- **Open Government Partnership,**  
Sanjay Pradhan, Chief Executive Officer
- **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development,**  
Mathias Cormann, Secretary-General
- **Palantir Technologies,**  
Noam Perski, Executive Vice President
- **Special Investigation Service of the Republic of Lithuania,**  
Linas Parnavas, Director
- **Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs,**  
Lars Wahlund, Ambassador of Sweden to Lithuania
- **The Council of Europe,**  
Hanne Juncker, Director, Directorate of Security, Integrity and Rule of Law
- **Transparency International,**  
François Valérian, Chair  
Daniel Eriksson, Chief Executive Officer  
Ketakandriana Rafitoson, Vice Chair
- **U.S. Agency for International Development,**  
Shannon Green, Assistant to the Administrator
- **U.S. State Department,**  
Richard Nephew, Coordinator on Global Anti-Corruption
- **United Nations Development Programme,**  
Francine Pickup, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director of the Bureau of Policy and Programme Support
- **World Bank,**  
Roby Senderowitsch, Practice Manager for Public Administration, Governance Global Practice
- **World Bank Group,**  
Mouhamadou Diagne, Vice President of Integrity