



Political Leadership for the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) – A Checklist for Parliamentarians: 23-04-09

The checklist that follows is based on the Declaration and policy positions approved by parliamentarians at the GOPAC Global Conference in Kuwait in November 2008. For more information see <http://www.gopacnetwork.org/>

How to use this checklist

While some parliamentarians may feel comfortable answering these questions directly, doing so together with parliamentary colleagues, as well as with experts and civil society organizations can help build greater:

- **awareness** of parliament's contribution to governance and fighting corruption;
- **consensus** on an action plan for improvements to parliamentary capacity and performance; and
- **capacity**, through the identification of training needs and other technical assistance for parliamentarians or their staff with respect to the UNCAC.

In some cases answering the checklist questions and discussing the implications may be undertaken by GOPAC country chapters; in others individual parliamentarians might find other ways and other fora to initiate action. There also might be advantages for countries in a region to compare findings and where there are similar findings, regional initiatives might be a preferred option.

Checklist – Can you answer these questions?

General Questions (most applicable where combating corruption is seen as a public policy priority)

- **National Priority:** How and to what extent are parliamentarians, business, civil society and government collectively engaged in domesticating and implementing the UNCAC – as well as related anti-corruption conventions? What further steps to building political coalitions, if any, would help?
- **Public Reporting:** Does the government report on corruption and the steps being taken to improve integrity in governance? Are these reports tabled in Parliament?
- **International Support:** To what extent are international organizations helping parliamentarians play a more effective role in corruption prevention? If needed, how could they be more helpful?

Financial oversight of government by Parliament

- **Budget:** To what extent does parliament receive timely information on both plans and actual results for all revenues (taxes, royalties, fees, development assistance funds) and all expenditures (by ministry and program)? To what extent is parliament's approval of expenditure plans required?
- **Resource Revenue Transparency:** To what extent is there transparency and accountability in the publicly owned extractive industries sector?
- **Parliamentary Engagement:** To what extent do parliamentarians have the means (e.g., committee review and staff support) to develop a good understanding of government financial practices and do they use these means? What further tools and practices, if any, would help?
- **Financial Control Framework:** To what extent has parliament set out adequate legislation and standards for controlling public expenditures, and for the use of all financial instruments (e.g. procurement, grants or subsidies) and are these respected in practice? What, if any, further steps are needed?
- **Accountability:** Has parliament established effective practices to receive professionally audited financial accounts and to question government officials regarding financial plans and actual expenditures? If not, what tools and practices would help?

Parliamentary Ethics, Conduct and Immunity

- ***Credibility of Parliament:*** To what extent are parliamentarians carrying out their democratic roles (representation, legislation, and oversight), and doing so in a manner that meets societal expectations of ethical behaviour? If needed, what further steps are indicated?
- ***International Credibility:*** To what extent does parliamentary behaviour reflect international standards or good practices? Would greater alignment be useful and is it feasible?
- ***Appropriate Parliamentary Immunity:*** To what extent do parliamentary immunity practices allow parliamentarians to play their roles fully, without encouraging corruption by parliamentarians? What, if any, further steps are indicated?

Participation of Society

- ***Citizen Engagement:*** Does Parliament engage experts, civil society and citizens in the domestication of the UNCAC provisions? Can and do the media assist in this engagement? What, if any, further steps are indicated?
- ***Public Transparency:*** To what extent do citizens have adequate access to information on the government operations and adequate means to seek redress from corrupt acts?

Money Laundering and Recovery of Assets

- To what extent are parliamentarians working in harmony with government and expert international organizations to legislate, oversee and build public support to prevent money laundering and improve the potential for recovery of stolen assets?

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