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Regional Expert Meeting
**Strengthening Law Enforcement Capacities in Arab Countries
against Corruption Crimes**

Doha, State of Qatar

26 March 2012

Programme

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OVERVIEW

A selected group of distinguished law enforcement experts and practitioners from Arab countries as well as a number of partners countries and institutions are meeting in Doha on 26 March 2012, under the auspices of the Public Prosecution of the State of Qatar. The meeting is held, in the framework of the ongoing partnership between ACINET and UNDP, and in cooperation with the Qatar University College of Law. Participants will discuss means to strengthen national law enforcement capacities in Arab countries against serious corruption crimes. Among other things, their recommendations will contribute to the formulation of a concrete capacity development plan that will be implemented by ACINET, with the support of UNDP, and in cooperation with various partners in the region and beyond.

I. CONTEXT

1. Demand for swifter and more effective action against corruption has recently witnessed a sharp increase in the Arab region, especially in relation to serious corruption crimes involving senior public officials. Although primarily driven by the region-wide transformations which have been triggered in 2011, this demand is also part and parcel of the mounting global pressure against corruption, and the incremental progress achieved over the past few years in the area of anti-corruption in some Arab countries. In this overall context, there are no indications that this demand would be declining any time in the near future; on the contrary, it is expected to grow even more, especially in countries where the political sphere is opening up and civil society is becoming more vocal. As a result, public attention is most likely going to become increasingly more focused, at least in the short and medium terms, on the need to show results in terms of convicting corrupt officials and recovering that assets that they have illicitly acquired over the years. While this does not undermine the importance of sustaining and deepening ongoing corruption prevention efforts, it does demonstrate the **urgent importance of stepping up anti-corruption law enforcement efforts** across the region.

2. Recent months have without doubt witnessed critical successes in this area, including in Jordan, Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia; however, there continues to be a prevalent perception that not enough is being done, amidst a polarized transformational environment that is characterized by high hopes for change and significant gaps in communication between national authorities on the one hand, and between them and the general public on the other. While some experts attribute the slow pace of progress in the prosecution of major corruption cases to the lack of genuine political will, the majority identifies a host of other factors, including deficiencies in criminal laws and procedures, institutional limitations and weak inter-institutional coordination, protracted and often unresponsive international cooperation mechanisms, and limited individual technical capacities. The intensity of these challenges vary between Arab countries, and thus require specifically-tailored national reform programs; yet the significant commonalities that exist also warrant the intensification of regional cooperation efforts in this area. In its third conference, held in Fes, Morocco, on 19-21 December 2011, the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET) recognized this situation and decided to include the "development of law enforcement capacities against serious corruption crimes" as one of its three main priorities for 2012-2013. More specifically, it identified the **need to reform relevant laws, procedures, and institutions, as well as the need to develop relevant specialized skills**, including the detection,

investigation, and prosecution of corruption crimes, as well as key skills needed to efficiently engage in related international cooperation and asset recovery processes.

3. The particular nature of most corruption crimes, particularly those that are considered serious - typically involving high-level officials, considerable assets, intricate cross-border elements, and by some standards, significant social damage - requires a specific set of skills that are usually not used to address other crimes. The secretive nature of the corrupt transaction and the fact that it takes place between two or more consenting parties makes the obtainment of evidence particularly challenging. Also, the type of evidence needed to secure convictions in serious corruption crimes is mostly documentary and not physical or testimonial, and the fact that such evidence is often deliberately scattered across different jurisdictions, many of which have "secretive" financial systems, necessitates proficiency in forensic auditing, tracing financial proceeds, special investigative techniques, and international cooperation mechanisms, amongst others. Indeed, experience after the 2011 events, and more generally in recent years, revealed that **specialized corruption-specific law enforcement capacities are scarce in the Arab region**. This scarcity seems to have further undermined the ability of national criminal justice systems to respond to the sudden influx of corruption cases in an efficient manner. Even in countries, where specialized anti-corruption bodies had existed, such as in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen, or where new bodies were specifically set up, such as in Tunisia, specialized investigators and prosecutors proved to be a rare commodity. As a result, ACINET members decided to explore ideas to address this challenge, building on existing national capacities especially in the area of anti-money laundering, and drawing on comparative experiences and relevant ongoing international anti-corruption initiatives such as the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Academy (MACA), the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), and the StAR-INTERPOL asset recovery focal points.

II. METHODOLOGY

4. ACINET convenes, with the support of UNDP's regional project on "Anti-Corruption and Integrity in Arab Countries" (ACIAC), a regional expert meeting on "Strengthening Law Enforcement Capacities in Arab Countries against Corruption Crimes". The meeting is held in Doha, the State of Qatar, on 26 March 2012 under the auspices of the Public Prosecution and in cooperation with the Qatar University College of Law. Participants in the meeting include senior practitioners from concerned law enforcement agencies in a representative group of Arab countries, including Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, and Qatar, in addition to independent experts and representatives from a number of partners countries and institutions.

5. The overall objective is to discuss and finalize ACINET's proposal to design and deploy a training programme that would contribute to the development of specialized law enforcement capacities in Arab countries against corruption crimes, with a focus on serious corruption crimes, and possibly lead to the establishment of a rapid deployment team of law enforcement professionals that would be act as a specialized technical resource to ongoing anti-corruption efforts in the Arab region. The meeting will extend for a whole day, and will be divided to an opening session and three working sessions, where participants are expected to share perspectives and experiences on the topics at hand, and contribute to the formulation of a concrete capacity development plan that will be implemented by ACINET, with the support of UNDP, and in cooperation with various partners in the region and beyond.

III. AGENDA

Monday, 26 March 2012

09.30 Departure: *Mövenpick Towers & Suites* to Qatar University College of Law

10.30 – 11.00 Opening session

Objective: Enable organizers to present the background, objectives, and expectations of the meeting.

- **Welcome statement**

Dr. Hassan OKOUR, Dean of the College of Law, Qatar University

- **Official statements**

H.E. Dr. Ali Ben Fetais AL MARRI, Attorney General, State of Qatar

H.E. Mr. Abdessalam ABOUDRAR, President of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network, President of the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention, Kingdom of Morocco

11.00 – 11.30 Break

11.30 – 13.00 First session

Situation Analysis of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement in the Arab Region

Session Objective: Enable participants to exchange views on recent and ongoing developments in the Arab region that are related to anti-corruption law enforcement efforts; and share information on achievements, challenges, and related initiatives.

- **Introduction of participants**

- **Moderated discussion**

General Mr. Tolson SALEM KHAIRY, Director of Anti-Money-Laundering in Public Funds General Intelligence Directorate at the Ministry of Interior, Arab Republic of Egypt

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.30 Second Session

Proposals to Enhance Specialized Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Skills

Session Objective: Enable participants to discuss and contribute to the finalization of the draft plan proposed by ACINET aimed at developing anti-corruption law enforcement capacities of investigators, prosecutors, and judges in Arab countries.

- **Introduction of draft plan**

Mr. Arkan EL SEBLANI, Regional Project Manager of Anti-Corruption and Integrity in Arab Countries, UNDP

- **Moderated discussion**

Honorable Mr. Ramzi NUZHA, Member of the Board of the Anti-Corruption Commission, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

15.30 – 16.00 Break

16.00 – 17.00 Third Session

Potential Roles of Stakeholders and the Way Forward

Session Objective: Enable participants to share their own perspectives of how they would like to take part in the finalization and deployment of the draft plan, and what complementarities and synergies exist with their respective efforts and initiatives, as well as other efforts and initiatives that they are aware of; and assist in outlining the next steps.

- **Presentation of the results of the Second Session**

Mr. Arkan EL SEBLANI, Regional Project Manager of Anti-Corruption and Integrity in Arab Countries, UNDP

- **Moderated discussion**

H.E. Mr. Abdessalam ABOUDRAR, President of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network, President of the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention, Kingdom of Morocco

17.00 Departure: Qatar University College of Law to Mövenpick Towers & Suites
