



Press Statement

Commemorating the International Anti-Corruption Day

Beirut, 9 December 2009

The International Anti-Corruption Day, which is commemorated across the world on the 9th of December, gains additional significance this year because it comes on the heels of two important international events, the sixth Global Forum for Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity, and the second is the Third Session of the Conference of State Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). The two back-to-back events, hosted by Qatar last month, were concluded with the endorsement of an international mechanism to monitor the State Parties' commitment to implement the UNCAC, which is the most comprehensive international framework available for dealing with this serious phenomenon.

The International Anti-Corruption Day also comes this year amidst growing challenges and the continuous efforts of countries of the region and the rest of the world to address the repercussions of the global financial and economic crisis and to advance the process of development.

This Day presents a special opportunity for those concerned with the fight against corruption – a phenomenon that is sophisticated in its manifestations and clear in its implications – to raise awareness, gather momentum, and unify efforts against corruption which squanders financial and human resources and hinders development efforts around the world. It is for this reason that the UN Secretary General delivered a message marking this Day under the slogan "do not let corruption kill development", describing corruption as one of the biggest impediments to the world's efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

In the Arab region, it is a time of agreement on the need to advance the fight against corruption, which is in conflict with the principles and values on which the Arab culture, with all its social and religious components, is based, and that also devours the wealth of the region's peoples, hinders national and foreign investment, impairs the quality of basic services delivered to the citizens, undermine the rule of law, threatens the societies' stability and security. As a result, there is a pressing need to unify and coordinate Arab efforts and enhance cooperation among Arab states on one the one hand and increase cooperation between the

Arab states and the rest of the world on the other with a view to enhancing integrity and anti-corruption.

The achievements made by the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET) during 2009 has made a significant contribution in this regard, added to the other achievements made by several Arab states, including the signature and ratification of the UNCAC, the enactment of anti-corruption laws, the establishment and strengthening of specialized anti-corruption bodies, and the enhancement of the investigation and prosecution of corruption crimes, among many other steps that require follow-up and continued support.

This week witnesses an unprecedented activity in Arab countries in commemoration of the International Anti-Corruption Day as stakeholders closely examine methods for enhancing integrity and addressing the challenges of corruption, thus creating an opportunity to renew the call for joint action by Arab states in this regard, as a national duty and a moral obligation towards the future generations.

Finally, ACINET's Regional Support Unit and UNDP's Programme of Governance in the Arab Region seize the opportunity to wish continued cooperation in this field and promise to continue supporting related efforts with all available means. They also express their sincere regards to ACINET's members on this occasion, and renew their commitment to support the drive towards modernization, development, and reform, which is one of the key requisites for achieving development in our region.

Please send your questions, inquiries, and comments to ACINET at info@arabacinet.org or at the fax number +961 1981645.
