

## CONCEPT NOTE

### INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY 2021

#### **BACKGROUND**

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) provides the foundation for citizen participation in anti-corruption efforts in article 13(1), which requires States parties to "take appropriate measures to promote the active participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector, such as civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, in the prevention of and the fight against corruption".

Since the passage of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in 2003, December 9th has been observed as International Anti-Corruption Day – a day dedicated to raising public awareness about the dangers corruption poses to the stability of a society, and mobilizing political will to tackle this global issue. Corruption affects all countries worldwide and it weakens the foundation of democratic institutions, stunting economic development, undermining the rule of law, and eroding the quality of life for all citizens.

Fighting corruption is not a simple task. It's a fight that concerns everyone and requires everyone's involvement to prevent its manifestation or to react decisively to wrongdoing. It calls not just for the dedication of independent anti-corruption bodies in preventing, detecting, and holding corrupt officials accountable, but also for the active public involvement of every citizen by saying NO to corruption, not turning a blind eye, and demanding transparency and accountability from those they vote into public office.

The fight against corruption is never truly "won" or "over." The fight against corruption, therefore, depends on citizen awareness, support, and participation. The people are the first line of defense. Citizens are drivers of accountability, reform and change. It is therefore important to put citizens at the centre of fighting corruption. This event is one of many efforts to empower citizens to act against those who are corrupt.

Chapter 14 of the National Development Plan commits the country to a set of nation building goals to engender the knowledge of the Constitution and foster the values contained in it.

## **THEME**

The UNODC, as the custodian of the UNCAC provides a global and broad theme every year for the commemoration of the IACD, which all countries party to the UNCAC can use for their respective events. However, each country may customise or even create own theme that is line with current domestic circumstances.

Several consultative meetings were held with the UNODC Regional Office based in Pretoria. It was agreed that South Africa will in 2021 commemorate the IACD under the international UNODC theme: “Your right, your Role: Say no to corruption”.

The National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) was developed to create a South Africa that is free from corruption, a South Africa that is based on the values of integrity, transparency and accountability, respect for the rule of law, and zero tolerance for corruption in keeping with the objectives of the National Development Plan 2030 (NDP) and South Africa’s international and regional obligations. *“Corruption, wherever it occurs, represents a decline in our value system as a nation. If left unchecked, it poses a grave threat to our democratic values and our dream of being an ethical and developmental state.”* reflects the words of the President of South Africa in the foreword to the NACS. The NACS acknowledges the Charter of Positive Values developed by the Moral Regeneration Movement, constitutional values and values expressed in other South African policy documents such as the National Development Plan. The commitment to uphold constitutional and other positive values should be made at the macro level by government, businesses and CSOs and at a micro level by communities, families and individuals.

Building a culture of integrity in society begins with education of young people. The knowledge, skills and behaviours they acquire will shape the country’s future and will also help them to uphold integrity, which is essential for preventing corruption. Engaging the youth is thus also critical to inspiring norms for integrity, ethical behaviour and equipping the youth with knowledge and skills to resist corruption.

Public integrity means doing the right thing, even when no one is watching. When corruption and unethical behaviour seem normal, we can lose sight of what public integrity is and why it matters. It’s important to educate for public integrity so that public good is emphasized over private gain. By teaching youth about public integrity we give them the knowledge and skills to fight corrupt practices and establish new behavioural norms and values for society. This will harness youth’s desire for fairness and equity. The goal being sustainable cultures of integrity and a better future for all.

Empowering young people to fight corruption begins with ensuring that they understand how to recognise it. It's important to help youth to understand corruption's causes and consequences, and introduce them to concepts such as the importance of proper processes and the need for transparency.

When corruption and unethical behaviour become part of everyday life, it is critical to establish what public integrity is and why it matters and how to find solutions to ethical dilemmas.

It's also important to capacitate youth to understand how rules and laws protect all members of society, and why rules and laws must be obeyed - even when no one is watching.

Under this theme, the event will cover the following sub-themes:

- Contextualising International Anti-Corruption Day
- **The impact of corruption on the Youth / Corruption infringes on our Constitutional rights**

Focus - sensitizing the youth to be aware of the cost of corruption and encourage them to act for the greater common good. Possible activities: a) Youth corruption perception survey (*Possible speaker/item showcasing this: video on providing African Youth perspective as well as South African Youth survey by Corruption Watch*) or b) a case study/testimony on how a young person's life was directly affected by corruption. (*Possible speaker/item showcasing this: Not my Name, Ahmed Kathrada foundation Youth Club Programme*)

- **The Youth's role in reshaping South Africa**

Focus - Young people have a role to play in putting an end to corruption (*Possible speaker/items showcasing this: Academia, Accountability Lab,– Also consider the Accountability Lab Integrity Icons*)

- **“Be the change you want to see”**: (*Possible speaker/item showcasing this: NYDA or the UNODC Hackathon*) - What are your dreams for South Africa? Activate Change Drivers

These sub-themes are consistent with the NDP and the National Anti-Corruption Strategy's Strategic Pillar One: Citizen Participation. It fits under NACS Programme 1A: Support active citizenry, and promote values reorientation initiatives to prevent and combat corruption.

### **APPROACH AND FORMAT**

The commemoration will be held virtually. The event will be conducted under a number themed sessions each hosted by different directors/facilitators for the different sections of the

programme. These hosts should ideally be young people who are actively engaged in anti-corruption and integrity work. Each section will comprise of two-three short (5-15 min) events.

### **DATE AND VENUE**

The physical component of the event will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 online due to the rising numbers of covid-19 infections.

Suitable arrangements for the virtual webinar and broadcast component have been made in conjunction with GCIS.

### **PROGRAMME**

A draft programme for the event has been attached to the concept document.

### **PARTICIPANTS AND INVITATIONS**

At least three hundred and fifty (350) guests are expected to attend. Amongst the invited participants will be the Diplomatic Corps, Academia, Public Service Officials, selected Business and Civil Society members. UNISA staff will also be attending. Invitations have been drafted and will be sent to all Heads of National and Provincial Departments and organisational components to attend with one other designated official. Separate invitations have been sent to the Anti-Corruption Inter-Ministerial Committee, members of the Anti-Corruption Task Team, selected members of Civil Society and the Business sector. The UNODC is responsible for invitations to the Diplomatic Corps.

### **IACD CAMPAIGN**

The GCIS will conduct a campaign during the first week of December as a build up to the main event that will be commemorated on the 9<sup>h</sup> December 2021. The Campaign will be conducted as part of the current anti-corruption campaign of government spearheaded by the GCIS. Consideration could be given to the launch of an appropriate themed “hashtag” social media campaign instead of the usual anti-corruption pledge.

### **MEDIA**

The OPSC Director: Communications will take care of the media needs of the PSC.

## **FINACIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.