

## UN Office on Drugs and Crime

### Statement at FFD4 PrepCom3 [3 min]

To be checked against delivery

Excellencies, dear colleagues,

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime took note with appreciation of the issuance of the Zero Draft outcome document, which emphasized the importance of addressing corruption, financial integrity and inclusion, including in sections on sustainable borrowing, trade, domestic resource mobilization and tax, but also across the text.

UNODC submitted two briefs as part of the call for inputs by the co-facilitators of the Fourth Financing for Development Conference (FfD4) which informed the development of the zero draft. Both emphasized that economic and financial crime undermine domestic resource mobilisation and inclusive economic growth and that financial integrity and anti-corruption are essential for development finance.

UNODC was particularly appreciative of the direct reference to the the UN Convention against Corruption, calling for the full implementation of the Convention, of which we are the guardian. It is worth recalling that the Convention is ratified almost universally by the UN Member States, with 191 Parties [as of 1 February 2025]. This is consistent with the renewed commitment to UNCAC and its implementation made by the General Assembly in adopting the biennale resolution on corruption in December last year.

Echoing language under Action 4 of the Pact for the Future [*We will close the SDG financing gap in developing countries*], which included the decision of Member States to strengthen ongoing efforts to prevent and combat corruption, the zero draft highlights that “anti-corruption measures must be integrated into all dimensions of financing for development”

While all these elements are addressed in this initial draft, it is critical that they remain as the text evolves.

We would like to raise additional elements for Member States' consideration:

- The **mediation mechanism** referred to in paragraph 31(e) would not necessarily be an effective use of resources. Instead, strengthening existing mechanisms could be a more efficient measure, in particular strengthening the work that the joint UNODC-World Bank Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative (StAR) already carries out to convene,

plan, and organize case coordination meetings for practitioners of relevant jurisdictions and provide a forum for in-depth discussions to advance cases. We would encourage Member States to provide funding to support this platform, which has provided meaningful assistance to countries and yielded very positive results.

- It is also important to strengthen the **commitment to asset recovery** and to adopt inclusive asset recovery strategies that involve not only law enforcement agencies but also addresses, for example, the role of enablers and financial centers, the interlinkages between corruption and tax crimes and tax evasion, the importance of beneficial ownership transparency for the identification and recovery of assets and the need to build better capacity to manage seized and confiscated assets.
- **Robust anti-money laundering/counter-financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) frameworks** will be essential to Member States' efforts to combat economic and financial crime. Therefore, we welcome reference to complimentary international standards such as the Financial Action Task Force which was also mentioned in the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda. UNODC, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), key stakeholders in the Interagency Task Force on Financing for Development all work to assist Member States in the implementation of these standards.

As discussions on the draft text move forward, we will continue to facilitate dialogue and find opportunities to work with Member States to raise these issues in global *fora*.

Thank you very much.