

**Statement on the occasion of the 20th anniversary  
of the adoption on the United Nations Convention against Corruption  
delivered by the Russian Federation also on behalf of Belarus, Burkina Faso,  
China, Cuba, Islamic Republic of Iran, Namibia, Nicaragua, State of Palestine  
and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**

We welcome the **20th anniversary** of the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) by General Assembly resolution 58/4 of 31 October 2003. On this important occasion, we reiterate our commitment to the full and effective implementation of the UNCAC that is part of the foundations of the global multilateralism, and call on States parties to fully adhere to and comply with its principles and provisions.

In this context, we remain committed to efficient and effective **anti-corruption cooperation** under the Convention and other legally-binding instruments, as applicable. At the same time, we express our deep concern about the adverse impact of barriers that hinder international cooperation and undermine mutual trust on the overall effort of States parties to the Convention to prevent and combat corruption, and call on other States parties to fully respect the obligations under the Convention, in particular, by eliminating undue delays and unresponsiveness, and preventing the abuse of and simplifying their legal procedures.

We stress that the **return of assets** is a fundamental principle of the Convention and that States Parties shall afford one another the widest measure of cooperation and assistance in this regard. We invest our effort in progressively making our domestic asset recovery systems more effective. However, we express our deep concern about the lack of progress in the implementation of Chapter V of the Convention at the international level. We therefore strongly urge States parties to remove barriers to the recovery and return of assets and to give priority consideration to returning confiscated property to the requesting States parties without improperly conditioning such returns in violation of the sovereign right of requesting States to manage and dispose of returned assets.

We therefore expect that the **special session of the Conference of the States parties to the Convention on all aspects of the asset recovery and return process** to be held after the conclusion and evaluation of the findings from the second review cycle, as envisaged in the political declaration of the General

Assembly 2021 special session against corruption, will impartially assess all options available under the Convention and explore possible areas for improvement to the international asset recovery framework, including by developing a dedicated additional protocol complementing the UNCAC, to make it truly effective and ensure that the interests of sovereign States are fully respected throughout the asset recovery and return process.

We remain resolute to fulfill our obligations under the Convention to develop and implement **effective and coordinated anti-corruption policies** that reflect the principles of the rule of law, proper management of public affairs and public property, integrity, transparency and accountability, while recognising that each State party has a sovereign right to define these policies and principles in accordance with the fundamental principles of its legal system. We further stress that the capacity of each State to prevent and combat corruption also depends on its economic potential.

We therefore reiterate our concern about any **unilateral coercive measures** and **unilateral economic, financial or trade measures** in contravention with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries, and urge the States that enforce such illegal measures to refrain from promulgating and applying them.

We appreciate the progress made under the **Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the Convention** and reaffirm our commitment to its principles, including its intergovernmental, technical, non-intrusive, inclusive and non-adversarial character. These fundamental principles must remain inviolable for the second review phase whose scope and details are to be determined with due regard to the interests of all States parties to the Convention upon reviewing the status of implementation of all articles of the UNCAC in all States parties under the current review phase as determined by the Conference of the States parties to the Convention in line with the Terms of reference of the Mechanism.

We reiterate our full commitment to **the spirit and the letter of the Convention** that envisages a considerable progress for States parties in their anti-corruption effort and in fostering trustful international cooperation based on the principles of equality of sovereign States. 20 years on, the Convention and its mechanisms are more relevant than ever.