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Third Conference of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network

**“Societal Participation in Anti-Corruption and Prospects
for Enhancing Related Mechanisms in Arab Countries”**

Fes, Morocco

19-21 December 2011

PROGRAMME

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| OVERVIEW ON THE ARAB ANTI-CORRUPTION AND INTEGRITY NETWORK..... | 2 |
| OVERVIEW ON THE CONFERENCE | 2 |
| I. GENERAL BACKGROUND | 3 |
| II. THEMATIC FOCUS | 5 |
| III. METHODOLOGY | 6 |
| IV. AGENDA..... | 8 |

OVERVIEW ON THE ARAB ANTI-CORRUPTION AND INTEGRITY NETWORK

The Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network is the leading regional mechanism which is specialized in supporting Arab countries to act against corruption, in line with their national priorities, and drawing on global and regional standards. The Network currently brings together 34 national authorities with anti-corruption roles and responsibilities in 14 Arab countries, namely Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Qatar, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen. Its members include anti-corruption agencies, ministries with relevant competencies, and various types of oversight, prosecution, and judicial authorities. In addition, the Network includes a “non-governmental group” consisting of leading non-governmental practitioners from civil society, business, media, and academia, thus making it the first regional mechanism that brings together state and non-state actors for purposes of anti-corruption dialogue and cooperation in the Arab region. The Network strengthens the capacity of its members through advisory support and technical training. It promotes knowledge sharing among them, as well as with their peers in the region and the world. It also provides its members and other stakeholders with a joint platform to regularly review and enhance anti-corruption policies, and build bi-lateral and multi-lateral partnerships against corruption.

For more information on ACINET, please visit www.pogar.org/acinet.

OVERVIEW ON THE CONFERENCE

The Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network convenes its third conference in the historic city of Fes in the Kingdom of Morocco, on 19-21 December 2011, in partnership with the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention in Morocco and with the support of the United Nations Development Programme. The conference brings together anti-corruption leaders from across the Arab region representing state and non-state actors to address the theme of “societal participation in anti-corruption and prospects for enhancing related mechanisms in Arab countries”. The conference focuses the discussion on four major sub-themes that constitute different, yet inter-connected, frameworks for enhancing societal participation in

anti-corruption. These frameworks are (i) access to information and public reporting; (ii) complaints and whistleblowing; (iii) public consultation in policy-making; and (iv) social accountability. Drawing on relevant international standards and comparative experiences, the conference enables participants to discuss the requirements for setting up these frameworks and ensuring that they are implemented in practice. Participants will also discuss how different stakeholders can support related efforts and promote complementarities with broader national political, economic, and social reforms. At the end, participants are expected to discuss and endorse “Regional Conclusions” that would summarize the findings of the conference and provide concrete guidance on the way forward.

On the side of the conference, ACINET's non-governmental group will convene its first general session on December 19th. It will be followed by the third general meeting of the Network on December 21st. Both side-events will enable the Network to review its work progress and identify future priorities for its work in 2012-2013.

For more information, please contact us at info@arabacinet.org.

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. Since its establishment in July 2008,¹ and the launch of its first programme of work in April 2009,² the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET) strived to create a more open space for national dialogue on anti-corruption in the Arab region. The efforts of its members have been, and continue to be, driven by a two-pronged conviction: first, that while corruption exists in all countries, it is more likely to flourish in countries that do not adopt and implement effective legal and institutional counter-measures; second, that if left unchecked, corruption can seriously undermine development in all its forms and become a destructive force in societies. Building on this conviction, ACINET's members spearheaded several anti-corruption initiatives in their respective countries, most notably in Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Qatar, and Yemen, and succeeded in integrating the long-avoided issue of anti-corruption into the regional reform discourse, helping stakeholders to overcome the taboo of anti-corruption engagement and to acknowledge the existence of the problem and the need for specific reforms in this area. At the same time, however, ACINET members recognize that current efforts are still not enough, and that in order to achieve better results, they will need to strengthen their own anti-corruption capacities, and mobilize stronger political will and promote more effective multi-stakeholder cooperation against corruption.

2. In the last three years, ACINET members led the formulation and implementation of new anti-corruption policies and programmes, and in some countries the adoption of their first national anti-corruption strategies. They promoted adherence to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and supported the implementation of various related

¹ The establishment of ACINET was declared at the “Regional Conference on Preventing Corruption and Strengthening Cooperation between Anti-Corruption Bodies in the Arab Region”, which was held in Amman, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, on 29-30 July 2008 (<http://www.pogar.org/resources/ac/details.aspx?aid=213>).

² The first work cycle was launched at the first ACINET conference, which was held in Rabat, the Kingdom of Morocco, on 2-3 April 2009, and which addressed the theme of “witness and whistleblower protection” (<http://www.pogar.org/resources/ac/details.aspx?aid=241>).

measures, including measures that touched on new and rather challenging issues, such as the “protection of witnesses and whistleblowers” and the “establishment of added-value anti-corruption agencies”. At the second ACINET conference in July 2010,³ members launched their second programme of work and formulated specific ideas to make national anti-corruption strategies more inclusive and more effective. Notably, they recognized the need to make anti-corruption efforts more tangible for ordinary citizens, so they highlighted the importance of focusing on corruption prevention in sectors that deliver basic public services to citizens, and called for increasing cooperation between national anti-corruption authorities and non-governmental stakeholders, namely civil society organizations and the private sector.

3. The growing engagement of ACINET members in anti-corruption efforts in the past three years has coincided with a growing sense of public disgruntlement, in many Arab countries, with the deterioration of socio-economic conditions, especially for the youth and the poor, and with the various limitations imposed on genuine political participation. This situation erupted into an unprecedented wave of massive popular protests in 2011, starting in Tunisia and continuing to sweep across the Arab region. This wave is still ongoing and has, so far, ousted long-standing regimes in some countries and reinvigorated the will to undertake new reforms in others. On the whole, the fate of these emerging developments remains unknown; however, what is certain is that the resulting shift in the paradigm of state-citizen relationships will be a determining factor in shaping this fate.

4. There have been several analyses on the reasons behind recent events in the Arab region and their implications for the future of its peoples. Most of them have pointed out to corruption as one of the main drivers, if not *the* main driver, of these events, which have essentially underlined the citizens’ deep-seated frustration with the status-quo in their respective countries. In the absence of sufficient information and data on corruption trends, however, it is very difficult to capture the real magnitude of corruption or understand the exact relationship between corruption and the other grievances that have also been at the centre of public protest, such as unemployment, poverty, poor public service delivery, and restrictions on human rights and political freedoms. Nevertheless, it is broadly accepted across the region that corruption has become a prevalent and entrenched in government and society, but that it has contributed to almost each one of the other grievances exacerbating an already unsatisfactory developmental performance.⁴

5. As 2012 approaches, reform calls are still being heard loud and clear. They are voiced by citizens demonstrating in the streets and acknowledged by policy-makers and opinion leaders in decision-making circles. Whether the emerging situation will eventually bring about the needed reforms or not, will, by and large, depend on how different societal powers interact to influence the processes of forming governments and holding them accountable. In this very challenging context, ACINET recognizes the urgent need to reinvigorate and expedite anti-corruption reforms in the Arab region, while linking them to broader political, economic,

³ The second conference of ACINET addressed the theme of “National Anti-Corruption Strategies and the Role of National Stakeholders” and was held in Sana’a, the Republic of Yemen, on 26-27 July 2010 (<http://www.pogar.org/resources/ac/details.aspx?aid=304>).

⁴ According to the 2011 Human Development Report (HDR), the Arab states region scored 0.641 on the Human Development Index. This is lower than East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia, but more than South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, whose development has nonetheless been advancing at a faster pace than that of the Arab region over the last twenty years. To download the 2011 HDR, please visit <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2011/>.

and social reforms that are needed to improve the daily lives of citizens in Arab countries, and to ensure a more secure future for the coming generations. To achieve all this, ACINET recognizes the critical value of enhancing the participation of societies in the enduring struggle against corruption. What are the major mechanisms for supporting societal participation in anti-corruption? How can they be strengthened? How can they be linked to other reforms? What are the roles of the various stakeholders in supporting them? All these questions and others have driven ACINET to focus its third conference on the strategic issue of societal participation in anti-corruption in the Arab region, with a view to enabling its members and other stakeholders to reflect jointly on how they can progress related efforts in the wake of the historic developments that the Arab region has been experiencing since the beginning of 2011.

II. THEMATIC FOCUS

6. The third ACINET conference is the culmination of ACINET's work in 2010-2011 and a transition point to its forthcoming work in 2012 and beyond. It focuses on societal participation in anti-corruption, but also acknowledges the interplay with the broader issues of participation in governance. The overall theme is "societal participation in anti-corruption and prospects for enhancing related mechanisms in Arab countries". Through its various sessions, the conference will provide participants with an open and interactive space to break down the abstract concept of societal participation in anti-corruption into specific mechanisms that can be strengthened by ACINET members and other stakeholders in the Arab region. These mechanisms may be seen as channels through which anti-corruption cooperation between state and non-state actors is made possible and through which their respective contributions can become mutually reinforcing in the struggle against corruption.

7. Mechanisms to enhance societal participation in anti-corruption are part and parcel of the concept of democratic governance. Most of them are highlighted in various sections of the UNCAC, especially in article 13 that deals with "Participation of Society". They may be categorized in different ways. One way is to categorize them as "umbrella frameworks" that are pre-requisites for effective societal participation, such as access to information laws; "formal frameworks" that require joint work between national authorities and the public, such as consultation in policymaking; and "informal frameworks" through which various actors can contribute to anti-corruption efforts on their own through individual action or collective action. The successful adoption of these various mechanisms, regardless of their categorization, will largely depend on the broader governance environment, and the citizens' ability to form their governments and hold them accountable, notwithstanding the different systems through which this may be achieved. As a result, the conference focuses discussions on four major sub-themes that constitute different, yet inter-connected, mechanisms for societal participation in anti-corruption: (i) access to information and public reporting mechanisms; (ii) complaints and whistleblowing mechanisms; (iii) public consultation in policy-making mechanisms; and (iv) social accountability mechanisms.

III. METHODOLOGY

8. The overall objective of the third ACINET conference is to provide a high-level and inclusive forum to identify ways for governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to enhance societal participation in anti-corruption in Arab countries in the wake of ongoing regional developments. More specifically, the conference seeks to:

- a. Analyze the emerging situation in the Arab region and the various opportunities and challenges it presents for anti-corruption efforts;
- b. Promote a deeper understanding of the main requirements for enhancing societal participation in anti-corruption in the context of the Arab region, and the various linkages that exist with broader governance reforms;
- c. Share expertise and experiences on how to establish and implement specific mechanisms that would contribute to the enhancement of societal participation in anti-corruption; and
- d. Raise awareness on the respective roles of anti-corruption stakeholders in enhancing societal participation in anti-corruption in Arab countries, and on the various areas for multi-stakeholder cooperation;

9. The conference brings together more than 120 participants including leading governmental and non-governmental stakeholders from 18 Arab countries, distinguished independent experts, and other stakeholders representing partner countries, and regional and international organizations. More specifically, conference participants include:

- a. Governmental stakeholders including ministers, heads of anti-corruption agencies and various types of oversight, prosecution, and judicial authorities, in addition to parliamentarians, and senior judges, prosecutors and government officials.
- b. Non-governmental stakeholders including heads of major civil society organizations, general counsels and compliance officers from major companies, and other senior non-governmental practitioners working in civil society, business, media, and academia.
- c. Independent experts including distinguished researchers, academics, and practitioners from the Arab region and beyond.
- d. Representatives of partners countries including Belgium, Indonesia, South Africa, the United States of America and others, as well as representatives of regional and international organizations including the League of Arab States (LoAS), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and others.

10. To enable participants to achieve the various objectives outlined above, the conference is divided into seven plenary sessions in addition to the opening and closing sessions that will extend over a period of three days. More specifically, the sessions will be divided as follows:

- a. The opening session will enable conference organizers to welcome participants and share their views on the conference theme and updates on their work.

- b. The first session will enable participants to discuss how the overall environment for anti-corruption efforts has changed in the Arab region over the past few years, particularly after the events of 2011, while drawing on specific country examples, including Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia.
 - c. The second session will enable participants to discuss the importance of societal participation in anti-corruption efforts in the wake of the ongoing regional developments, and how to enhance it drawing on the UNCAC and taking the specificities of the Arab region into consideration.
 - d. The third session will enable participants to discuss how to strengthen access to information and public reporting mechanisms, drawing on related international standards and comparative experiences.
 - e. The fourth session will enable participants to discuss how to strengthen complaints and whistleblowing mechanisms, drawing on related international standards and comparative experiences.
 - f. The fifth session will enable participants to discuss how to strengthen mechanisms for public consultations in policy-making, drawing on related international standards and comparative experiences.
 - g. The sixth session will enable participants to discuss how to strengthen social accountability mechanisms, drawing on related international standards and comparative experiences.
 - h. The seventh session will enable participants to reflect on the various discussions they have conducted in the previous sessions, while reviewing their respective efforts in related areas over the past few years, and exploring possible contributions they can make in the future through individual or collective action.
 - i. The closing session will enable the conference organizers to present the conference findings for final discussion and endorsement in the form of “Regional Conclusions” that would summarize the findings of the conference and provide concrete guidance on the way forward.
11. The conference will also have two main side-events as well as others upon the request of, and in coordination with the concerned delegations. More specifically, the side-events will be divided as follows:
- a. On the first day, ACINET’s non-governmental group will convene its first general session to reach out to key non-governmental stakeholders to share with them information about the Group and its planned work for 2012-2013 and invite them to join the Group in line with the rules of procedure. At the end of the general session, the Group will issue its recommendations.
 - b. On the third day, ACINET will convene its third general meeting to review its work progress, identify priorities for its future work, and decide on other matters of concern. At the end of the general session, ACINET will issue its annual resolution which is expected to endorse its report on the second work cycle (2010-2011) as well as its third programme of work (2012-2013), confer Morocco for ACINET chairmanship in 2012-2013, elect the forthcoming chairperson for 2013-2014, and make additional recommendations as needed.

- c. Other side-events may be convened through the conference organizing committee which should be contacted at info@arabacinet.org.

12. Conference documentation and other publications will be made available for participants at the conference venue. The working languages of the plenary sessions will be Arabic, English, and French. Interpretation will be provided in three languages. The working language of the two main side-events will be Arabic and English. Interpretation will be provided in both languages.

IV. AGENDA

Day One: Monday, 19 December 2011

09.00 – 10.00 Registration

10.00 – 10.30 [Opening session]

- **Opening Statement**

His Excellency Mr. Abdessalam ABOUDRAR, President of the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention, Kingdom of Morocco

- **Official Statements**

Ms. Alia AL DALLI, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Morocco

His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Al ANISI, Chairperson of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network, and President of the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption, Republic of Yemen

10.30 – 11.00 Break

11.00 – 13.00 [First Session] Comparative Overview of Anti-Corruption in Arab Countries Before and After 2011

Moderated by Dr. Muhyieddeen Touq, Independent Expert

- **Panelists**

His Excellency Mr. Abdessalam ABOUDRAR, President of the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention, Kingdom of Morocco

Honorable Judge Ahmed OUEFFELLI, Independent Expert, Former Legal Advisor of the Former Interim President, Tunisia Republic

Honorable Mr. Taimour Mustafa KAMEL, President of the Administrative Prosecution Authority, Arab Republic of Egypt

Open Discussion

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 16.00 [Second Session] Key Requirements for Enhancing Societal Participation in Anti-Corruption and the Prospects of Success in Arab countries

Moderated by Dr. Azmi SHUAIBI, Coordinator of ACINET's Non-Governmental Group, Anti-Corruption Commissioner of Transparency Palestine

- **Panelists**

Mr. Hussein HASSAN, Anti-Corruption Project Manager, Regional Office of Middle East and North Africa, UNODC

Dr. Nasser Al SANE, Chairperson of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption

Mr. Mohammed ALHARTHY, Chairman of the Omani Economic Association

Open discussion

17.00 – 19.00 First General Session of the Non-Governmental Group of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (by invitation only)

- **Presentation of the Rules of Procedure and the 2010-2011 Progress Report**

Dr. Azmi SHUAIBI, Coordinator of ACINET's Non-Governmental Group, Anti-Corruption Commissioner of Transparency Palestine

- **Discussions and endorsement of recommendations**

20.30 – 22.30 Dinner

Day Two: Tuesday, 20 December 2011

09.00 – 10.45 [Third Session] Access to Information and Public Reporting Mechanisms

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

- **Panelists**

Ms. Charmaine RODRIGUES, Regional Democratic Institutions and

Accountability Specialist, Regional Pacific Center, UNDP

Honorable Mr. Ghassan Moukheiber, Chairperson of Arab Parliamentarians against Corruption, Member of Parliament, Republic of Lebanon

Mr. Mukelani DIMBA, Deputy Executive Director, Open Democracy Advice Center, Republic of South Africa

Open discussion

10.45 – 11.15 Break

11.15 – 13.00 [Fourth Session] Complaints and Whistleblowing Mechanisms

Moderated by Mr. Constantine PALICARSKY, Independent Expert

• Panelists

Dr. Ghada MOUSSA, Director of the Governance Centre at the Ministry of State for Administrative Development, Arab Republic of Egypt

Mr. Salem POLIS, Inspector General of the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources, Republic of Iraq

Mr. Ali RAME, Director of Legal Affairs at the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention, Kingdom of Morocco

Open discussion

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.45 [Fifth Session] Mechanisms for Public Consultations in Policy-making

Moderated by Mr. Fredrik ERIKSSON, Independent Expert

• Panelists

Mr. Ziad ABDELSAMAD, Executive Director of the Arab NGO Network for Development

Mr. Rainer GEIGER, Independent Expert

Mr. Frenky SIMANJUNTAK, Economic Governance Manager in Transparency Indonesia

Open discussion

15.45 – 16.00 Break

16.00 – 17.45 [Sixth Session] Social Accountability Mechanisms

Moderated by Ms. Juanita OLAYA, Independent Expert

• **Panelists**

Mr. Nils TAXELL, Advisor at the U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre

Ms. Vanessa HARRINGSHAW, Director of London Office of the Revenue Watch Institute, United Kingdom

Mr. Lorenzo DELESGUES, Board Member, Integrity Watch Afghanistan

Mr. Shadi ALDAOUD, General Counsel at Siemens Ltd, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Open discussion

20.30 – 22.30 Gala Dinner hosted by the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention in the Kingdom of Morocco

Day Three: Wednesday, 21 December 2011

09.00 – 11.30 [Seventh Session] Entry Points for Enhancing Societal Participation in Anti-Corruption in the Arab Countries and the Possible Roles of Different Stakeholders

Moderated by Dr. Khalil GEBARA, Independent Expert

• **Panelists**

Dr. Muhyieddeen TOUQ, Independent Expert (wrapping up the first and second sessions)

Mr. Fredrik ERIKSSON, Independent Expert (wrapping up the third and fifth sessions)

Mr. Constantine PALICARSKY, Independent Expert (wrapping up the fourth session)

Ms. Juanita OLAYA, Independent Expert (wrapping up the sixth session)

Open Discussion

09:00 – 11:30 Third General Meeting of ACINET (Closed)

• **Welcome statement and the annual report for 2010-2011**

His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Al ANISI, Chairperson of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network, and President of the Supreme National

Authority for Combating Corruption, Republic of Yemen

- **Components of the proposed programme of work for 2012-2013**

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

- **Statement of the Non-Governmental Group of ACINET**

Dr. Azmi SHUAIBI, Coordinator of ACINET's Non-Governmental Group, Anti-Corruption Commissioner of Transparency Palestine

- **Guest Intervention**

Honorable Mr. Ghassan Moukheiber, Chairperson of Arab Parliamentarians against Corruption, Member of Parliament, Republic of Lebanon

- **Deliberations and Resolutions**

His Excellency Mr. Abdessalam ABOUDRAR, President of the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention, Kingdom of Morocco

11:30 – 12:00 Break

12.00 – 13.00 [Closing Session]

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

- **Presentation and discussion of Conference Conclusions**

His Excellency Mr. Abdessalam ABOUDRAR, President of the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention, Kingdom of Morocco

- **Rapporteur**

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

- **Closing Statements**

His Excellency Mr. Ahmad AL ANISI, Chairperson of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network, and President of the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption, Republic of Yemen

His Excellency Mr. Abdessalam ABOUDRAR, President of the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention, Kingdom of Morocco

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

15.00 Press Conference
