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## **Building Innovative Governance to Fight Corruption**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

First of all, I would really like to thank Commissioner WOO Ying-ming and the entire team at the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) for organising this very important conference on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of this institution and for all the work he and they are doing to make the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA) bigger, more dynamic and more efficient.

I am therefore particularly pleased to address this important Symposium, which brings together an incredible number of delegates from so many different countries, jurisdictions, and international organizations.

This impressive turnout reflects your - and our - commitment to finding possible solutions to the challenges of fighting corruption on a truly global scale.

We all know that corruption is a pervasive challenge that undermines governance, distorts markets, erodes quality of life, and exacerbates inequality.

Despite numerous laws, conventions and measures around the world, corruption persists, often using sophisticated and evolving tactics.

In order to effectively combat this systemic problem, it is therefore essential to chart a new path, as the title of the symposium suggests.

A new way of fighting corruption requires an integrated approach that combines technology, institutional reform, education, international cooperation and citizen participation.

It's about creating an ecosystem where corruption is not only undesirable and unacceptable, but also difficult to commit.

This comprehensive approach will help build societies that are not only resistant to corruption, but also characterized by fairness, accountability and transparency, and fostering sustainable development.

Sustainable International Cooperation for a Shared Future, the theme of our session, embodies a vision in which global partnerships and collaborative efforts transcend individual national interests to address the pressing challenges of corruption.

It advocates a holistic and inclusive approach to sustainability that balances economic growth and social inclusion across borders.

This framework focuses not only on achieving immediate goals, but also on ensuring that future generations inherit a world free of corruption, and therefore more just and equitable.

In this sense, central to sustainable cooperation is the principle that all nations, regardless of their economic status or power, have an equal stake and say in the processes and outcomes.

Moreover, since the challenges posed by corruption do not respect national borders, sustainable cooperation requires countries to share responsibility for this global problem.

At the same time, sustainable cooperation must be focused on long-term goals that transcend short-term political cycles. Policies and initiatives should be designed with foresight, aiming at durability and adaptability to future technological changes.

Moreover, effective cooperation depends on transparent processes and mechanisms that hold all parties accountable. This ensures that commitments are honoured and that progress can be openly monitored and evaluated.

Finally, the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders - including governments, the private sector, NGOs and the scientific community - will be crucial.

Different perspectives bring innovative solutions and help to ensure that the benefits of collaboration are widely shared.

Although the world is facing profound crises, from climate change and extreme forms of poverty to protracted conflicts and the erosion of human rights, humanity has never had such an abundance of knowledge, resources or technological means to effectively address global and regional problems through collective action.

At the same time, institutions and practices of global and regional cooperation are not keeping pace with rapidly changing technological trends.

We must therefore strive to make public governance increasingly innovative by completing the process of digitalization, and also explore the opportunities and challenges associated with the use of artificial intelligence to strengthen anti-corruption and integrity in government.

In this sense, digitalization has become a powerful tool in preventing and fighting corruption. This transformation, which involves the integration of digital technologies into all aspects of governance, offers unparalleled opportunities to enhance transparency, efficiency and accountability, key pillars in the fight against corrupt practices.

Digitalisation facilitates the creation of online platforms and databases that make government operations more transparent and efficient. When processes such as public tenders - I mention this because the Italian Anti-Corruption

Authority is also responsible for overseeing public procurement - are carried out digitally, they not only simplify all activities, but also leave a data trail that can be audited and verified, significantly reducing the opportunities for corrupt transactions. In fact, digital systems can be programmed to automatically flag unusual transactions, allowing fraudulent activity to be detected more quickly.

We have to use digitalization to improve and combine efficiency and anti-corruption.

Public access to information is also greatly improved, empowering citizens and watchdog organizations to monitor government activities and hold officials accountable for their actions.

Digitalisation is also driving the creation of big data in the public sector and, as we have seen in the private sector, it will increasingly be used as a fundamental intangible asset to improve the efficiency of all activities.

AI and machine learning require huge amounts of data to learn and improve decision-making processes. Big data analytics uses AI for better data analysis, including for anti-corruption.

While the benefits are significant, the transition to digital governance is not without its challenges.

Issues such as digital divide, privacy concerns, and cybersecurity threats need to be carefully managed.

Algorithms are fed data, and if that data is biased or unrepresentative, the conclusions drawn may be wrong or unfair.

This is particularly worrying in the public sphere, where decisions based on faulty data can have serious consequences for citizens.

In the digital age, artificial intelligence (AI) can be a powerful ally in the fight against corruption. With its ability to analyze large amounts of data and detect

hidden patterns, this technology offers unprecedented tools for identifying and preventing fraud.

However, its practical implementation is still very limited.

In terms of the challenges posed by the use of AI, there are ethical issues related to invasion of privacy, perpetuation of bias and social impact.

At the same time, accountability, transparency and fairness in the decisions made by AI systems are now also a challenge.

While artificial intelligence can be a powerful tool for identifying patterns and anomalies, it is not without its problems, and as has been said, there are ethical issues relating to invasion of privacy, perpetuation of bias and inequality.

At the same time, AI challenges not only accountability and fairness, but also transparency. It is indeed difficult to explain and justify a decision made with the help of generative AI, just as it is difficult for programmers to do so.

In short, we need the benefits of AI in the fight against corruption, but we need to avoid the bad consequences.

We must not be afraid of these technologies, but we must manage them.

We need to use them, not be used by them.

In conclusion, I would like to focus on two key points.

In order to reap the full benefits of new technologies for anti-corruption purposes, and to build consensus in the process, it is first necessary to build trust among all stakeholders, in the public and private sectors, and to engage citizens through greater transparency and participation.

This requires responsible use of data, as well as collective action to build analytical capacity and address concerns in a transparent manner.

Secondly, none of our organisations or even our states can achieve these goals and results alone. We all need to work together, nationally and internationally.

That is why meetings like this one are so important to strengthen cooperation between all relevant actors at the international level and to lay the foundations for achieving our common goals.

The future is now, and we must all act together to make it truly sustainable, to make it better for all of us and for all of our citizens.