**Cohort on Anti-corruption Meeting**

**08.11.2022**

**Minutes**

The first Summit for Democracy Cohort on Anti-corruption meeting, convened by co-leads from the Republic of Moldova and Transparency International, that took place on November 8, provided an opportunity for government representatives and civil society to shape the scope and expected results of the cohort by sharing their initial reactions, recommendations, and questions regarding the cohort’s high-level objectives and activities.

More than 30 organizations and government entities participated in the event. Attendees offered feedback on the cohort’s priority areas, objective, potential outputs and outcomes. Participants shared their perspectives on anti-corruption topics they believe the cohort should prioritize, discussed outcomes the cohort’s work should be oriented toward, and provided recommendations for broadening the cohort.

During the meeting, which was moderated by Mr. Viorel URSU, the Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova to the United States of America, representatives of key institutions from countries such as Austria, the United States of America, Kosovo, Costa Rica, Armenia and the Republic of Moldova elaborated on the proposed objectives, goals, and outputs of the cohort and particularly on the following aspects.

Mrs. Cristina GHERASIMOV, Secretary General of the Presidency of the Republic of Moldova, delivered introductory remarks highlighting the importance of the cohort for the Republic of Moldova and for the international community.

Mr. Iulian RUSU, Director of the National Anticorruption Centre (NAC) of the Republic of Moldova, made a presentation of the institution he leads and emphasized the areas of interest that NAC would like to address within the cohort.

Mr. Ravi R. PRASAD, Head of Global Policy and Advocacy at Transparency International, stressed that in a challenging world, where the rule of law is facing major obstacles, this cohort brings together a large number of countries which can work together in the future and become a working group able to influence the global and the national mechanisms for fighting corruption.

Mr. Valeriu CUPCEA, Head of the International Cooperation Directorate of NAC talked about the proposed objectives, goals, and outputs of the cohort, referring to the possible fields of cooperation within the anti-corruption cohort.

Mrs. Gretta FENNER, Managing Director at Basel Institute on Governance specified that in order to make the work within the cohort more efficient, it must focus on very narrow and practical deliverables.

Mr. Florian KOHLFUERST, Head of Political Section at the Austrian Embassy in the United States of America, raised three issues of interest to be addressed within the cohort: education and training in the area of anticorruption and preventing corruption, communication and exchange of information and asset recovery.

Mr. Alejandro GARCIA, representative of the US Department of State, welcomed the establishment of the anti-corruption cohort and expressed his support and openness to be involved in future activities, in order to achieve the proposed objectives of the working group.

Mr. Norm EISEN, representative of the Financial Integrity and Transparency Cohort, mentioned that the two cohorts have complementary subject matters, since both are part of the broad field of anti-corruption, and expressed his openness to a future fruitful cooperation.

Mrs. Gillian Dell called on the participants to come up with proposals on relevant narrowed down areas to focus on within future activities.

Mrs. Veronica MIHAILOV-MORARU, Secretary of State within the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, spoke about the most important issues that arose in the justice reform process.

Mr. Yll SADIKU, legal adviser to the President of the Republic of Kosovo, emphasized that the cohort is of particular importance for the Republic of Kosovo, since they made a reasonable number of national commitments on anticorruption. At the same time, Mr. Sadiku mentioned that the Anticorruption Cohort should cooperate with the Cohort on Judicial Reform and Rule of Law which is co-leaded by the Republic of Kosovo and the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Pawel WOJTUNIK, EU High Level Adviser on Anti-corruption, explained the reasoning of proposing the creation of Joint Investigation Teams within the priority area regarding international cooperation on cases of high-level corruption.

Mrs. Juliana BORBON, representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica referred to the fight against corruption and the actions taken to promote access to justice as one of the main pillars of promotion of democracy in Costa Rica.

Mr. Yeprem KARAPETYAN, representative of the Ministry of Justice of Armenia, elaborated on the work done in different areas like, for instance, in the integrity and judicial systems and expressed his intention to share experiences in this regard.

Mrs. Claudine JUSTAFRE, Expert seconded to the Presidency of the Republic of Moldova (Expertise France), proposed to use the creation of the cohort in order to advocate for the extension of the sanctions applied to people accused of corruption and related crimes.

Summing up the issues discussed during the meeting of the cohort, the following aspects must be mentioned:

* the participants came up with proposals regarding the organization of cohort’s activities and the key areas on which it must focus. Thus, the attendees came to the conclusion that the cohort must focus on very specific and practical areas;
* the members of the cohort stressed the importance of international cooperation and also of the exchange of information and good practices;
* in order to ensure the impact of cohort’s activity, participation from governments and civil society organizations must be widened.

Moving forward, the co-leads will provide to the members of the cohort updates regarding a proposed work plan. At the same time the cohort’s co-leads encouraged attendees to provide feedback on priority topics and suggested cohort participants.