

MESSAGE FROM THE STEERING GROUP OF THE ADB/OECD ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Fifth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), 25-29 November 2013, Panama City

delivered by

Mr. Aderito Soares, Commissioner of Anti-Corruption Commission, Timor-Leste (Initiative Member), during the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption Session (28 November 2013, 3-6PM)

Dear Distinguished Members of the Implementation Review Group,

The Asian Development Bank/Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific (The “Initiative”) is a regional anti-corruption body consisting of **31 jurisdictions from Asia and the Pacific**.¹ The Initiative is a regional forum for supporting national and multilateral efforts to address and reduce corruption in Asia and the Pacific primarily through the effective implementation of UNCAC. The Initiative seeks to achieve this goal through capacity building based on peer-learning, mutual support and exchange of expertise, while taking into account the geographical and developmental diversity of its members; demands on members’ human and financial resources; and the need to provide value-added in view of the functions and roles of other multilateral anti-corruption bodies.

An important area of the Initiative’s work is Thematic Reviews. Since 2005, the Initiative has conducted Thematic Reviews of specific areas of anti-corruption work among the Initiative’s members. Each Review involves an in-depth evaluation of a member’s efforts in the chosen area, and includes recommendations to each member for improvement. Two years after a Thematic Review is concluded, members provide a written report on steps taken to implement the Review’s recommendations.

The Initiative’s members choose the Thematic Reviews’ topics. Topics are geared primarily towards assisting members to implement UNCAC. Past reviews have focused on corruption in public procurement (2005); and extradition/mutual legal assistance/recovery of proceeds (2008). A fourth review on corporate compliance, internal controls and ethics measures to prevent and detect corruption has just been launched and will be completed in 2014.

Of particular interest to the UNCAC Implementation Review Group may be the 2010 Thematic Review on Criminalisation of Bribery Offences under the UNCAC. The Thematic Review examines each member’s implementation of Articles 15, 16 and 26 of UNCAC (domestic and foreign bribery by natural and legal persons). The review will also touch upon Articles 30 (prosecution, adjudication and sanctions), 31 (freezing, seizure and confiscation), 37 (co-operation with law enforcement authorities), 40 (bank secrecy), 42 (jurisdiction) and 50 (special investigative techniques). The report includes recommendations to each member for improving their implementation of these provisions of UNCAC. A horizontal analysis identifies trends and challenges that cut across the Asia-Pacific region. The Review’s report and a database of relevant laws are available on the Initiative’s website: (www.oecd.org/site/adboecdanti-corruptioninitiative/46485272.pdf).

¹ Member countries and economies of the Initiative are: Afghanistan; Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; People’s Republic of China; Cook Islands; Fiji Islands; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kazakhstan; Korea; Kyrgyz Republic; Macao, China; Malaysia; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Palau; Papua New Guinea; the Philippines; Samoa; Singapore; the Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Vanuatu; and Vietnam.

The distinguished members of the Implementation Review Group are encouraged to refer to these materials prepared by the Initiative in their future work on UNCAC implementation reviews. They are also invited to direct any inquiries about the Thematic Review to the Initiative's Secretariat.

Thank you very much for your attention.