The Private Sector Forum
The United Nations Convention against Corruption at 20:
Uniting Leaders for Business Integrity

On the margins of the tenth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the
United Nations Convention against Corruption

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Private Sector Forum?

The Private Sector Forum “The United Nations Convention against Corruption at 20: Uniting Leaders for Business Integrity” is a special global event hosted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Global Compact (UN Global Compact) on the margins of the tenth session of the Conference of the States Parties (CoSP) to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) on 11 and 12 December 2023, in Atlanta, Georgia, United States.

At the Private Sector Forum, participants will have the opportunity to:

- Take stock of milestones achieved since the adoption of the UN Convention against Corruption and Principle Ten of the UN Global Compact, and examine their relevance today.
- Shape the global business integrity agenda based on discussions of common challenges, trends, innovative solutions and priorities in the field of governance and anti-corruption.
- Explore how to further leverage the Collective Action approach to drive impact across the 2030 Agenda and strengthen the ecosystem in which companies operate.
- Determine effective measures States can adopt to incentivize compliance, while ensuring misconduct is sanctioned, and how the private sector can contribute to this endeavour.
- Analyse how a company’s commitment to integrity can be best demonstrated and, in turn, assessed by investors, customers and regulators, through environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting and other communication mechanisms.

Furthermore, the following publications and tools will be launched at the Private Sector Forum:

- Updated e-Learning tool for the Private Sector “Thefightagainstcorruption.org”, renamed “Doing Business with Integrity”
- UN Global Compact SDG16 Corporate Toolkit for Transformational Governance
2. What is the UN Convention against Corruption and its relevance to business integrity?

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), is the only legally binding universal instrument setting international anti-corruption standards based on the principles of accountability, integrity and transparency.

While the responsibility to meet the obligations of the Convention ultimately lies with Governments, the Convention recognizes that the fight against corruption will not be successful without the engagement of the private sector. In this regard, article 12 of UNCAC focuses on ways to enhance business integrity, while article 26 requires States parties to establish the liability of legal persons for acts of corruption.

Since the UN Convention against Corruption was adopted 20 years ago, much has changed for businesses and societies. More and more States have enacted laws on the liability of legal persons with incentives for corporate compliance and criminalized unethical business practices. Bribes that once used to be tax deductible now lead to hefty fines and even the dissolution of companies. The tightening legal framework brought about by the commitment of States to the full implementation of the Convention has created significant momentum for multisectoral cooperation. In 2004, the establishment of Principle Ten of the UN Global Compact began challenging companies to proactively develop strategies and policies that tackle corruption internally, externally and collectively.

Today, rising expectations from consumers, investors, Governments and employees have increasingly placed business integrity at the forefront of the private sector’s agenda. ESG directives are adopted worldwide, raising the bar for companies to not only be more accountable, ethical, inclusive and transparent, but to also act as responsible corporate citizens, contributing to strengthening public institutions, laws and systems.

3. What is the Conference of the States Parties (CoSP) to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)?

The Conference of the States Parties (CoSP) meets every two years and is one of the world's largest anti-corruption gatherings, representing the main policymaking body of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

The Conference supports States that have signed or ratified the Convention (“States parties”), in implementing its provisions and gives policy guidance to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to develop and implement anti-corruption technical assistance. The Conference was established, as per article 63 of the Convention, to: improve the capacity of States to implement the Convention; to enhance cooperation among States in achieving the objectives of the Convention; and to promote and review the implementation of the Convention. The Conference brings together people from Member States, parliaments, inter-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector. It adopts resolutions and decisions in furtherance of its mandate, defining the priorities in the field of governance and anti-corruption across the globe.
4. Which resolutions have been adopted to date by the United Nations on this topic?

Several resolutions of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention have called on Governments to strengthen measures for private sector compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and requested UNODC to provide capacity-building initiatives and new knowledge products, notably resolutions 9/1, 9/6, 6/5 and 5/6.

The political declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly at its special session against corruption in 2021 also recognized the importance of preventing corruption in the private sector. In December 2022, the General Assembly adopted resolution 77/235 calling upon the private sector to remain fully engaged in the fight against corruption and stressing the role of the UN Global Compact in this effort.

5. Where and when is the Private Sector Forum taking place?

The Private Sector Forum will be held on the margins of the tenth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, on 11 and 12 December 2023, in Atlanta, United States. Participants will be informed about the exact venue of the event in due time.

6. Who should attend the Private Sector Forum?

Participation in the Private Sector Forum will be of interest to business leaders such as CEOs, chief compliance and chief legal officers, as well as other personnel dealing with sustainability, business integrity issues and government relations. Representatives from the public sector, civil society, academia and international organizations engaging in this field are also welcome to attend.

7. Why should a company representative attend the Private Sector Forum?

Corruption persists despite virtually universal condemnation. It has a cross-cutting effect that impedes the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Corruption weakens democracy and the rule of law, while fueling insecurity and the neglect of human rights. For some business people, this might seem like a distant problem, but the reality is that sustainable and profitable environments are fundamental to the very viability of their enterprises. When those fundamental factors are in place, companies can spur economic innovation and development, generate jobs and income, diminish poverty and expand opportunities.

Corruption translates into profound risks for companies, from the distortion of markets and unfair competition, to increased costs, missed business opportunities, as well as legal and reputational risks. Due to the scale and complexity of the issue, neither Governments nor the private sector can tackle corruption alone; in fact, major corruption cases frequently occur at the intersection between the two. As a result, a multisectoral approach is key to truly levelling the playing field by seizing the opportunities and associated benefits of a robust clean ecosystem that is fostered and implemented collectively by a committed group of like-minded stakeholders.
In particular, participants at the Private Sector Forum will:

- Have a voice in the global conversation on how to foster business integrity while ensuring sustainable growth and prosperity.

- Network and engage in a dialogue with other business leaders, representatives of civil society organizations, academics, government authorities and experts from international organizations on business integrity issues.

- Demonstrate ethical leadership and commitment in advancing Principle Ten of the UN Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals.

- Discuss common challenges affecting business communities, as well as Collective Action approaches to tackle pressing issues in the field of governance and anti-corruption.

- Share trends and innovative solutions with peers to improve internal governance policies and enhance reputation and credibility among customers, partners, investors and regulators.

8. **What is the agenda of the Private Sector Forum?**

The Private Sector Forum agenda can be found [here](#).

9. **What is the “Call-to-Action from companies to Governments on the 20th Anniversary of the UN Convention against Corruption”?**

The Call-to-Action on the 20th Anniversary of the UN Convention against Corruption is put forth as an appeal by the private sector to Governments to intensify efforts to tackle corruption affecting business communities around the world and to join forces in this endeavour.

The Call-to-Action urges Governments to underscore anti-corruption and good governance as fundamental pillars of a sustainable and inclusive global economy and embrace them as important tenets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Concretely, this Call-to-Action signed by companies across the globe will serve as basis for Governments discussions and decisions on this matter during the tenth session of CoSP.

10. **Why should companies sign the Call-to-Action on the 20th Anniversary of the UN Convention against Corruption?**

Business leaders from around the world are invited to sign the Call-to-Action on the 20th Anniversary of the UN Convention against Corruption, amongst others, to:
- Demonstrate ethical leadership and commitment to sustainability, transformational governance and business integrity matters.
- Attract sustainability-minded investors, employees, partners and consumers.
- Contribute to level a playing field that translates into greater certainty for long-term investment, fair competition, and better quality of products and services.
- Amplify the voice of the private sector towards the adoption and effective implementation of anti-corruption resolutions, policies and legal frameworks.

Tackling corruption requires a Collective Action approach. By signing the Call-to-Action, companies not only encourage Governments to strengthen anti-corruption efforts, but they also show their commitment to join forces and inspire other companies to follow their lead.

11. How to register for the Private Sector Forum

Interested participants will be invited to first register for the Private Sector Forum by sending an expression of interest through a registration form in Microsoft Teams. Once the expression of interest is received, more information on the following steps of the registration process will be shared.

Please note that participation in the Private Sector Forum is only possible with prior registration through the Microsoft Teams form, which can be accessed via: https://forms.office.com/e/cP6V7zFSNj

Deadline for registration: **30 November 2023, 23:59 CET**

No conference fees will be charged. Participants who wish to attend the event will be responsible for completing all necessary formalities to enter the United States and for covering their own accommodation and travel expenses.
Resources and promotional materials

Registration link
Private Sector Forum webpage
Call-to-Action webpage
Trello Board (flyers, banners, social media posts, statements)

Contact

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