



## **FIGHTING CORRUPTION IN AFGHANISTAN: STEPPING UP INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY - UN REPORT**

**KABUL, 4 August 2021** - Stepping up ongoing efforts to address corruption in Afghanistan remains critical, finds a UN report released today.

UNAMA's fifth annual anti-corruption report, titled "Afghanistan's Fight against Corruption: Stepping up integrity, transparency and accountability," finds that Afghanistan has taken positive steps towards establishing solid anti-corruption legal and institutional frameworks but that numerous shortcomings remain, including the need to further increase transparency, integrity, and accountability.

To its credit, during the period covered by the report, from January 2020 to May 2021, the Government has continued supporting anti-corruption reforms. The worsening impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing peace talks and increased violence after the announcement of international troops' withdrawal, have however slowed down the pace of reforms.

The report acknowledges positive developments such as the establishment in November 2020 of the Anti-Corruption Commission in line with the UN Convention Against Corruption. Such an entity has the potential to advance anti-corruption reforms, provided its independence is ensured and it is enabled to fully perform its functions.

It also refers to the adoption of new legislation on whistle-blowers protection during the reporting period, which should also strengthen, if effectively implemented, the fight against corruption.

The report further acknowledges an increase in the number of cases processed by the specialized anti-corruption tribunal (*Anti-Corruption Justice Center*) and the important role of the Supreme Court in increasing accountability, which should reduce corruption-related crimes. It recommends enhancing the capacity of law enforcement to detect corruption crimes and arrest alleged perpetrators regardless of their status.

"Effectively fighting corruption goes hand in hand with increasing State legitimacy, prosperity and stability," said Deborah Lyons, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan.

While progress is being made in strengthening legal and institutional frameworks in particular, ongoing efforts to enhance monitoring and oversight mechanisms; streamline public funding and revenue management; and increasing transparency, integrity and impunity, need to be stepped up. UNAMA stands ready to continue supporting Afghanistan to advance anti-corruption reforms to address remaining challenges.

The report argues that it is time to take stock of the impact of anti-corruption reforms and increase genuine and sustained efforts to effectively address remaining gaps, including by reinforcing the effectiveness of monitoring and oversight mechanisms.

Considering the critical role of civil society and media in fostering transparency and exposing corruption, the report recommends that anti-corruption stakeholders continue engaging and supporting civil society and media. It also encourages the Government to protect media given the alarming increase of attacks targeting journalists.



The report concludes by encouraging all Afghans to genuinely commit to effectively tackling corruption through an inclusive effort that must also aim at addressing corruption root causes. UNAMA stands ready to continue its support.

The United Nations remains committed to supporting Afghanistan in further implementing its obligations under the UN Convention against Corruption, which Afghanistan ratified in 2008. The United Nations Convention against Corruption is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument. The Convention's far-reaching approach and the mandatory character of many of its provisions make it a unique tool for developing a comprehensive response to a global problem. The majority of UN Member States are parties to the Convention.

Read the report here:

<https://unama.unmissions.org/corruption>

\* \* \*

*UNAMA supports the Afghan people and government to achieve peace and stability. In accordance with its mandate as a political mission, UNAMA backs conflict prevention and resolution, promoting inclusion and social cohesion, as well as strengthening regional cooperation. The Mission supports effective governance, promoting national ownership and accountable institutions that are built on respect for human rights. UNAMA provides 'good offices' and other key services, including diplomatic steps that draw on the organization's independence, impartiality and integrity to prevent disputes from arising, escalating or spreading. The Mission coordinates international support for Afghan development and humanitarian priorities.*