United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)
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Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguishes Delegates,
Honourable representatives of civil society,

At the outset, I would like to wish you, Mr. President, every success for your work and thank the State of Qatar for hosting this important conference. Let me also commend the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their dedicated work.

We have come together here today, because we are all acutely aware about the destructive effects of corruption. It is a global scourge that transcends borders and ideologies. No country is immune, whether rich or poor. Therefore, the fight for a corruption-free society is a moral imperative that demands collective action, transparency and unwavering integrity.

Mr. President,

Let me quote former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan: "The greatest threat to good governance is the absence of transparency and integrity." Austria completely agrees and is firmly convinced that instilling integrity – including the values of honesty, fairness and accountability – into our young generation from an early age will help them grow into leaders of tomorrow who will not tolerate or participate in corruption. For this reason, in many Austrian schools integrity initiatives such as dedicated workshops have been introduced. This is not just an educational practise, but a strategic investment in building a corruption-free society.

In order to highlight the important issue of integrity education for children and young people as a preventive tool against corruption, Austria, together with Slovenia and Chile, is tabling a resolution entitled "Strengthening education activities and programmes on ethical values, integrity and anti-corruption for children and young people as a significant pillar to prevent corruption and enhance trust in public institutions" at this year's Conference of State Parties. This initiative is in the common interest of us all, especially of the youngest members of our societies. We thank all delegations for the constructive input and discussion during the past weeks, and look forward to positively finalising our work and adopting this important resolution with consensus.

Integrity and anti-corruption education is the most effective prevention tool against corruption not only for children, but for decision-makers at any age. The International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) with its seat in Austria should be a key partner in this endeavour. IACA is the only international organisation exclusively devoted to anti-corruption education

and training. I would like to invite all States which have not yet done so, to join IACA and benefit from its experience, training and research.

Mr. President,

The second UNCAC review cycle of Austria took place from 2019-2022. It allowed for direct engagement with Austrian authorities and representatives from civil society. We are very pleased that the Executive Summary of the report on this UNCAC review cycle has now been completed and is awaiting publication. Many of the recommendations made therein have already been implemented by Austria since 2022. To present just a few examples, the Freedom of Information Act has been adopted, which foresees a comprehensive right to government information for all citizens. The new Whistleblower Protection Act considerably improves the protection of informants on corruption. The offense of bribery has been expanded to include bribery of candidates for political office. Finally, the compliance risk analysis introduced in the Federal Chancellery is an important preventive tool and may serve as a best practice for all sectors of the Austrian government. Fulfilling the UNCAC Coalition's Transparency Pledge, which Austria has signed, we will hold a civil society dialogue on this Executive Summary in early 2026.

Looking ahead, we consider the further development of the Implementation Review Mechanism (IRM) to be one of the pivotal issues before this CoSP. We sincerely hope that this conference will lay the groundwork for an effective mechanism in Phase 2,-one that builds on the lessons learned from the first phase. Particularly in the area of prevention, anti-corruption is not a snapshot but a long-term commitment for all of us.

Mr. President,

Civil society is one of the most fundamental pillars of UNCAC. Particularly in the areas of education and prevention, civil society organizations are indispensable partners. Their perspective, grounded in the analysis of global trends and international best practices, helps us improve our work and bring in much-needed new viewpoints. Only when governments, civil society, the private sector, and communities work together, can we build resilient systems and achieve lasting impact in preventing and combatting corruption.

Mr. President,

Austria remains steadfast in our common pursuit of integrity, transparency and a corruption-free society. Albert Einstein famously said: "The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything." Therefore, let us not rest our ambitions, but fortify our efforts and continue building on the Convention against Corruption through the Conference of State Parties and its forthcoming resolutions and decisions. Let us together create a future where the values enshrined in the UNCAC become a reality for all.

Thank you.