UNCAC CoSP11: Major win on political finance, limited progress on other anti-corruption priorities

The [Conference of States Parties](#) (CoSP) to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which ended on 19 December, marked significant progress in advancing political finance transparency and achieved agreement on the future of the mechanism for reviewing country implementation. However, some countries fought hard to water down resolutions. References to civil society participation, climate, gender and the Sustainable Development Goals encountered particular opposition.

The Conference adopted a landmark resolution on combatting corruption through transparency in political finance. For the first time since the Convention was adopted in 2003, states agreed on global minimum standards aimed at keeping anonymous, opaque and illicit money out of political parties and election campaigns, as Transparency International has long [advocated](#).

The resolution, tabled by Norway, Albania, Ghana and Mongolia, was adopted by consensus and has been co-sponsored by 55 other countries to date, showing widespread agreement on the need to strengthen political finance standards globally.

The resolution sets a basic expectation: citizens must know who funds those who ask for their votes. It calls for online publication of donations and donors, as well as expenditures, including before election day. Crucially, it calls for states to restrict or prohibit donations by anonymous, state, foreign owned or controlled entities as well as government contractors. The resolution also calls upon states to prohibit, monitor and detect the abuse of state resources in election campaigns; recognises the importance of women's participation; and highlights the key role of civil society and election observers in enhancing transparency in political finance.

Transparency International has been advocating for the resolution for over two years and supported, through technical expertise, the negotiations leading to this outcome. We welcome the leadership of Norway, Albania, Ghana and Mongolia in putting political finance squarely on the global anti-corruption agenda.

The Conference also addressed corruption's impacts on the environment and on efforts to tackle climate challenges. A resolution by Brazil and Namibia on the links between corruption and environmental crimes calls for states to enhance access to data, prosecute corruption driving environmental crimes, and ensure protection for persons reporting corruption. Another resolution tabled by Tuvalu encourages Small Island Developing States to enhance the transparency, accountability and integrity of climate finance by addressing corruption risks.

States Parties made a modest advance in addressing the role of professional service providers in facilitating or enabling corruption in the environmental crimes resolution, specifically calling for strengthened internal controls and for oversight of such providers. However, by stopping short of a dedicated resolution despite growing momentum, states missed an important chance to tackle the role of these providers across the full spectrum of corruption and illicit financial flows. The next CoSP must not miss the opportunity.

After challenging negotiations, states also agreed on the next phase of the mechanism for reviewing country implementation. While civil society engagement in the review process will remain at the discretion of the State under review, the resolution calls on states to facilitate such engagement and encourages them to consider information provided by civil society in the review. There was also agreement on measures to strengthen transparency through the publication of a calendar and timeline of reviews, and on voluntary follow-up reporting. While the advances are modest and fall short of civil society targets, they are better than expected in the current geopolitical climate. Going forward, it will be key to ensure that the voluntary measures agreed become standard practice for most reviews.

See UNCAC CoSP11 Doha Civil Society Declaration