Colombian Proposal for the structure and content of the Political Declaration of the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly against Corruption - UNGASS 2021

The Republic of Colombia, as one of the sponsoring States of Resolution 73/191, which summons the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly against Corruption (hereinafter UNGASS 2021), has a special interest in the success of this Special Session, recognizing the impact that this scourge has had worldwide as a criminal phenomenon linked to other criminal activities such as Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism.

Corruption constitutes a deviation of resources that affects not only the operation and stability of States, but also international institutions and the dynamics of international cooperation. Assets not recovered as a result of corruption both internationally and domestically affect the allocation of resources towards institutions and programs that contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals - 2030 Agenda, delaying the development of States and, consequently, undermining Peace and International Security.

Goals

UNGASS 2021 should be a forum where the following objectives are met:

1. Collect and review the international framework of legal instruments and tools in the fight against corruption, highlighting the most important treaty worldwide on the matter, the United Nations Convention against Corruption (hereinafter UNCAC), and at the same time including other relevant legal instruments and tools.

2. Evaluate the state of implementation of international tools in the fight against corruption and assess their results, highlighting the aspects that have been
successful worldwide and identifying the shortcomings that arise in the applicability and effectiveness of these instruments.

3. Propose the creation of mechanisms that allow States and the international community to improve their capacities to prevent, combat and punish acts of corruption of a transnational scope and that contribute to a more effective and practical application of UNCAC and other instruments at the international and regional level. These proposals should be as ambitious and innovative as possible, in order to address the global problem of corruption and attack the weak points of the current system.

Proposals may include the adoption of new mechanisms or programs that contribute to the implementation of UNCAC, the subscription of protocols or treaties aimed at filling in regulatory gaps, or the creation of new international institutions aimed at the pursuit and prosecution of kleptocrats and others responsible for acts of corruption internationally.

Content and Structure of the Political Declaration

In response to the above, Colombia proposes the following structure for the UNGASS Political Declaration:

I. An initial political/programmatic part where corruption is rejected in all its forms and at all its levels, based on the previously stated objectives.

II. A second part of recommendations and concrete proposals that deal with the following topics, amongst others:

   a. Corruption as a serious obstacle for compliance with the 2030 agenda.
b. The need to strengthen the implementation of UNCAC.

c. The need to strengthen the global asset recovery system and compensate States affected by acts of corruption.

d. The creation of tools and mechanisms aimed at strengthening the investigation of acts of corruption of a transnational scope and the pursuit and prosecution of responsible persons.

e. Strengthening of International Cooperation.

f. Strengthening Judicial Cooperation and Mutual Legal Assistance.

g. Review how corruption affects:
   i. The protection of Human Rights.
   ii. Sustainable development.
   iii. Efforts to protect the environment and mitigate climate change.
   iv. International Security

h. Analyze the links between corruption and criminal phenomena such as:
   i. Terrorism
   ii. Human Trafficking
   iii. Money Laundering
   iv. Transnational Organized Crime

The proposals contained in the second part must be concrete and concise, yet at the same time ambitious and innovative, so that the declaration serves as the basis for the implementation of effective measures that mitigate the impact and incidence of acts of corruption, with an aim to achieving Sustainable Development Goal Number 16.
Participation and Inputs

It is necessary to work off the results of fora where issues regarding the fight against corruption are discussed, as well as depart from the work already being done on a global level on the matter. Consequently, the Political Declaration resulting from UNGASS 2021 must present proposals that acknowledge and incorporate, in addition to State contributions, the results and inputs from:

1. Meetings and congresses at the multilateral level that are concerned with the problem of corruption, such as:
   - The 14th Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to be held in Kyoto, Japan, from April 20-27, 2020.

2. Multilateral initiatives such as the High-Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (FACTI), convened between the Presidency of ECOSOC and the Presidency of the General Assembly, whose final report is scheduled to be delivered on January 2021, amongst others.

3. International organizations of a multilateral and regional nature, including forums and mechanisms for consultation and integration.

4. Civil society organizations, including coalitions and agglomerations of said organizations.

5. Academia and research centers in the field of corruption.