April 2020

New Zealand submission: Political Declaration of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session against Corruption
Corruption is a global problem that damages businesses, markets, democratic institutions, and the social fabric of societies everywhere. Widespread corruption undermines the rule of law and erodes justice. It has negative effects on trust in institutions and political legitimacy and leads to bureaucratic inefficiency. Corruption also enables other domestic and transnational crimes such as trafficking in people, weapons and drugs.

It is estimated internationally that between 3 and 10 per cent of public sector funding is lost through misappropriation and other corrupt behaviours, diverting public money that should provide services and support to all. Corruption disproportionately affects some of the most vulnerable members of our society, and is detrimental to international progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals.

In addition to economic harm, private sector corruption can damage the environment, human rights and stifle innovation.

New Zealand's priorities for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session against Corruption include:

- A call for continued international cooperation. We recognise that corruption is an international issue which cannot be solved by one country alone.

- A call for more proactive efforts to combat corruption and caution against complacency. New Zealand emphasises the need for preventative action rather than reactive action.

- Ensuring that tangible actions arise out of UNGASS. We have a unique opportunity to make strides on combatting corruption, it is not an opportunity to be wasted.

- A call for a zero-tolerance approach to corruption and recognition that corruption is a substantial barrier for economic and social development. Fighting corruption is key to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

- Active support for the involvement of civil society and the private sector to support anti-corruption efforts. This includes ensuring businesses are well prepared to respond to the challenges of corruption.