

## RABAT DECLARATION

### **Towards reinforcing measures for the prevention of corruption to open up new perspectives on development, equity, and stability**

**We, the Presidents of National Authorities and Institutions in charge of Preventing and Fighting against Corruption, Representatives of civil society and the private sector in Africa, gathered in Rabat, the Kingdom of Morocco, on October 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023,**

*Convinced* that corruption is a transnational phenomenon with economic, social, and political dimensions, and multiple adverse impacts on development, equity, and social justice. It undermines institutions and values of democracy, moral values and justice, and the rule of law and threatens the stability of States and societies;

*Committed* to making international cooperation an effective lever of crucial importance in strengthening the prevention of corruption, through the sharing and the exchange of practices and expertise between authorities and institutions in charge of the fight against corruption;

*Referring* to the instruments implemented by the international community to reduce the phenomenon of corruption, in particular, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the African Union's Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption;

*Reaffirming* that the fight against corruption is a global and multidimensional issue for society as a whole, requiring the involvement of all stakeholders, with a shared vision and an action based on collective mobilization and an institutional complementarity, marked by a strong articulation of roles and responsibilities;

*Convinced* that corruption affects investors' confidence and the business environment and therefore weighs negatively on the country's economic attractiveness, making the private sector a leading actor in the efforts of prevention and fight against corruption;

*Emphasizing* the important role of civil society, the media, the academia, as well as the private sector, as relevant proposal forces and stakeholders;

*Stressing* that the fight against corruption requires holistic strategies that involve education, awareness raising, detection, fight against impunity, and prevention, the latter, through the vast field it covers, represents a solid foundation for drying up corruption hotbeds, which gives credibility and effectiveness to the other dimensions;

*Recalling* that preventing and combating corruption are part of, contribute to, and are nourished by the defense of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law at all levels,

*Reaffirming* again that the prevention of corruption in all its forms is a priority and a responsibility, which requires a strong political commitment and determination, involvement, and adherence of all the components of society and institutions, within a framework of convergence and synergy to firmly set the phenomenon on a downward trend and pave the way for sustained, inclusive and sustainable development, for the current and future generations,

*Recalling* the provisions of the resolution 4/3 entitled "**Marrakech Declaration on the prevention of corruption**", adopted during the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the States

Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, held in Marrakech from 24 to 28 October 2011, as well as the resolutions adopted on the follow up of this Declaration, and welcoming the efforts made and the progress achieved in this regard;

We mobilize for a new impetus through the present declaration, and we:

### ***Global and Strategic Framework***

1. Emphasize the importance and the relevance of the preventive measures in significantly and irreversibly reduce corruption and its fatal consequences, by implementing a new generation of policies and strategies to prevent corruption, with clearly defined and measurable objectives, that consider new forms of illicit practices and financial crime, as well as the context inherent in global crises;
2. Reaffirm the importance of setting up mechanisms for data collection, measurement, and analysis for a better understanding of the phenomenon of corruption, and the development of relevant indicators to carry out a periodic evaluation of the legal instruments, administrative measures, and more generally public policies as well as anti-corruption strategies, to focus and guide towards more positive and perceptible impacts by citizens and business community;

### ***Rule of law***

3. Recognize that the prevention and fight against corruption is an important aspect of the rule of law, which requires that the authorities, institutions, and bodies entrusted with this mission, have the independence, resources, and skills, to carry out their duties effectively, free from any undue influence;
4. Recommend that special attention be given to strengthening integrity in all components of the justice system, through specific measures of preventing and fighting corruption;
5. Encourage the reinforcement of the arsenal of transparency in public life and deterrence, through the development of legislation, particularly concerning illicit enrichment, in conjunction and complementarity with the compulsory declaration of assets. Aware of the scale of the task, we believe that the use of innovative and technological solutions is a prerequisite for success;
6. Highlight the need for an enabling environment to prevent and deal with conflicts of interest, as well as the implementation of dissuasive sanctions capable of strengthening the prevention of illicit behavior that may arise from such conflicts of interest;
7. Encourage the strengthening of transparency and prevention through deterrence, by keeping the public informed of cases of corruption and the measures taken for the punishment of the offenders, in accordance with the applicable regulations;
8. Encourage the exchange of experience and information between authorities and institutions involved in preventing and fighting corruption, at regional, continental, and international levels, and the mutual reinforcement of skills and expertise in data collection, analysis, and management, and in the development of policies to prevent the phenomenon and its various manifestations;

### ***Culture of integrity***

9. Welcome the initiatives and progress made in the development of educational tools on the concepts and principles of integrity and on the prevention of and fight against corruption, and urge that they be enriched by other initiatives and promoted, at various levels;
10. Support the promotion of conceptual and practical training at all levels of the public and private sectors and civil society, and call for its integration into national anti-corruption strategies and plans;

### ***Transparency and reform of public services***

11. Are convinced that preventing corruption is crucial for ensuring public service compliance with the principles of efficiency, transparency, and fairness. The same applies to the recruitment of administrative resources, the orientation of their efforts towards satisfying the legitimate needs and expectations of citizens, within a framework for promoting integrity, honesty and accountability, and respect for codes of conduct for public officials;
12. Insist on the need to continue improving transparency in the management of public affairs, notably through the adoption of and respect for the right of access to information, available to all citizens and facilitated by innovative and technological means;
13. Encourage the implementation of specific integrity programs in public bodies, considering their characteristics and mandates, and introduce rules of ethics and conduct to prevent and manage, inter alia, conflicts of interest;
14. Call for the adoption of procedures for guaranteeing the responsiveness, reliability, better regulation, accountability, transparency and impartiality of public services;
15. Encourage the adoption of approaches based on the mapping of corruption risks, leading to their identification and the implementation of appropriate measures capable of preventing and avoiding their consequences.

### ***Business community***

16. Encourage the strengthening of public-private dialogue to act jointly in favor of a business environment free from corrupt practices and oriented towards transparency, integrity, and fair competition;
17. Reaffirm the importance of taking measures to prevent corruption in the private sector and the adoption of codes of conduct and compliance with anti-corruption standards;
18. Recognize the major contribution of all the business community's components in preventing and denouncing acts of corruption, and encouraging the implementation of mechanisms and actions to remove obstacles to productive investment and fair access to public procurement, including the strengthening of anti-corruption provisions in contracts and procurement;
19. Reaffirm the imperative need to accelerate administrative reforms in terms of simplification of procedures, access to information, and digital transformation, as well as the provision of effective and accessible appeal mechanisms;
20. Encourage the institutionalization of responsible corporate governance and the adoption of measures that promote integrity in public companies, notably through effective mechanisms for identifying, evaluating, and mitigating corruption risks;

## ***Civil Society and Youth***

21. Reaffirm the central role played by civil society and youth in raising awareness, education, and advocacy for the promotion of transparency, integrity, and participation in the identification of corruption hotbeds and related preventive measures;
22. Emphasize the need to strengthen the foundations of the rule of law, the consolidation and protection of freedoms, and the action of civil society against corruption;
23. Stress the necessity to reinforce the participation of civil society; and its various components, in preventing and combating corruption, at all the stages of the process, from the design of policies and strategies to prevent corruption, to their evaluation and reframing. To this end, we encourage initiatives aimed at strengthening the capacities of those entities;
24. Encourage the representation of youth and women in the decision-making and consultation process, when developing anti-corruption reforms;
25. Call for the institutionalization of an exchange framework between anti-corruption authorities and civil society;
26. Declare the importance of mobilizing young people and showcasing their contributions, to promote a culture of probity and transparency and to strengthen the front against corrupt practices, notably through UNODC GRACE-like initiatives.