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Short Session Report: Global Solutions

Session Title: **Putting Governance Back in the MDGs: Tackling Corruption at Its Roots in the Post-2015 Agenda**

Date & Time: **9th November 2012, 9.00 – 11.00am**

Report prepared by: **Ms. Azuka Ogugua, Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) Nigeria**

Experts:

- **Ms. Huguette Labelle, Chair, Transparency International *(opening remarks)***
- **Ms. Shireen Said, Global Policy Advisor on Human Rights, UNDP**
- **Mr. Rajiv Joshi, Director of Programmes, Global Call for Action against Poverty (GCAP)**
- **Ms. Lilian Ekeanyanwu, Head, Technical Unit on Governance and Anti-Corruption Reforms (TUGAR) Nigeria**
- **Mr. Francesco Checchi, Anti-Corruption Programme Coordinator, UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre**

Moderated by: **Ms. Chantal Uwimana, Regional Director – Africa, Transparency International**

Session coordinated by: **Ms. Folake Oluokun, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Nigeria**

Main Issues Covered (500 words or more, narrative form)

Governance is crucial for the achievement of sustainable development as well as for developing a new agenda for the post-2015 framework. Experience has shown that progress in achieving the MDGs is underpinned by strong democratic governance. Good governance ensures that basic needs are met and poverty is reduced. The process of formulating a new development agenda will have to take into cognizance changing global political and economic contexts and include national and global consultations as well as e-discussions with various stakeholders so that the entire process will be people driven.

The process of articulating the post-2015 agenda is a new opportunity to create a functional framework that will lead to the achievement of the future we all desire. It will involve mobilizing and empowering citizens so that they can state their priority needs and will involve empowering them to hold government accountable. In terms of national and regional level examples that attempt to link governance, anti-corruption and development agendas, the session discussed examples from Nigeria and the European region respectively.

After a review of the Nigeria´s performance on the MDGs, it was discovered that a number of the MDG targets will not be achieved in Nigeria and corruption was identified as playing a key role. Thus, a corruption risk assessment project was spearheaded by an inter-agency team of anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria with support from UNDP to identify areas that are vulnerable and prone to corruption within MDG-related ministries, departments and agencies and to develop integrity plans to address the identified gaps and loopholes.

The methodology for the risk assessment was developed by a team of international and local experts and the methodology identified the need to train corruption risk assessors in-country that will conduct the assessments. Currently ninety-six corruption risk assessors are being trained to subsequently conduct, in teams, risk assessments in the target ministries, departments and agencies. The risk assessments will expose existing loopholes within the systems and recommendations will be made towards accelerating achievement of the MDGs in Nigeria.

Within the Eastern European region, inequality and social exclusion are major issues. Even with increasing economic growth, wages, social

services and poverty levels are not improving. This is because other non-quantifiable elements were not considered and these include issues bordering on governance, corruption and human rights. A risk assessment of the education sector was conducted in Serbia, several systemic loopholes were discovered and recommendations were made to the government. The tools utilized included review of documents and legislature, analyses of government response, interviews and site visits. The study showed that although there is high enrolment into schools, the quality of education provided is not experiencing a commensurate increase. Thus the assessments provided an opportunity for the government to address the identified gaps and loopholes thereby improving service delivery to the people.

Main Outcomes/Outputs

1. The MDGs are not being achieved in many developing countries because of the siphoning of funds from budgets targeted at alleviating poverty and improving the well-being of the people. However, sustained progress towards the MDGs requires strong democratic governance. Channels for accountability and empowerment are crucial links to ensure that individual and institutional capacities are strengthened and patterns of inequality, discrimination, exclusion and other structural factors inhibiting human development are addressed.

2. Existing national budgets should be better targeted and managed in a participatory, accountable and inclusive manner. This will help to avoid waste and corruption and would facilitate achievement of the MDGs.

3. Corruption risk assessments as a tool for the prevention of corruption can contribute towards improvements in the achievement of the MDGs. When conducted in government agencies that are closely linked to the achievement of the MDGs, and the recommendations made are implemented, they can contribute towards improved service delivery and the provision of basic services to the people, thereby improving the quality of their lives.

Recommendations, follow-up Actions (200 words narrative form)

The process of formulating a post-2015 agenda is going to be lengthy and intensive and all relevant stakeholders (including government, civil society, private sector) should be consulted so that there would be ownership. The E-processes will also enable greater involvement and continuous dialogue on the framework.

Respect for human rights should be a very critical aspect of each of the items in the post-2015 agenda. Human rights should be given prominence in the new framework either as a new item or as an integral part of each of the items.

There could be additional goals to the existing MDGs which focus on governance, democratic values, and human rights and on accountability. However in addition human rights, transparency and accountability need to be cross cutting across all the gaols that will be set in the post 2015 agenda.

Participation at every level is needed in drafting the post-2015 agenda. However, in being participatory and all inclusive it should also be cost effective. The e-consultation process for the post-2015 will ensure wider reach and continuous input. The concept of "social cohesion" should also be explored in the course of the consultations.

Democratic governance should create a friendly system that is friendly to entrepreneurs so that they do not have to pay bribes to survive.

Anti-Corruption should be introduced into the school curriculum as a means of raising a generation that has learnt accountability and transparency and the linkage it has to development.

Highlights (200 words please include interesting quotes)

- "True development is not about economic growth, it is about constant improvement to the wellbeing of people, including through productive investment, the creation of decent jobs and the fair distribution of benefits, without discrimination" – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

- "We can achieve the MDGs 12 times over at the cost of 1 years

corruption"

- **People/citizen ownership of the post-2015 agenda was emphasized during the session as many noted that the consultations for the MDGs were perceived as being handed down rather than being owned by the people. Although the cost of achieving inclusive participation was deliberated upon, the e-platform could make the process wider-reaching and more inclusive.**

- **Corruption has to be addressed if the MDGs are to be achieved. Corruption risk assessment, as a process to prevent corruption and entrench good governance was commended as a means to achieving the MDGs. It should be incorporated into the post-2015 agenda.**

Key Insights Recommended to be included in the IACC Declaration

- **The new development agenda and effective governance capacities will depend heavily on broad-based participation and leadership at the global, regional, national and sub-national levels. Governance and accountability have to be at the core of the post-2015 agenda.**

- **Economic progress does not translate neither to improved human development nor the enforcement of people´s rights. Human Rights should form part of the Post-2015 agenda.**

- **Corruption risk assessments is a key prevention tool for the achievement of MDGs as it detects loopholes that thwart efforts of government to improve the welfare of people and ensures that funds are well utilized as budgeted in meeting MDGs. Corruption risk assessment should be a key strategy to ensure that the post-2015 agenda will be better achieved.**

Rapporteur's name and date submitted:
Ms. Azuka Ogugua, 9th November 2012

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