TOYO MODEL UNITED NATIONS

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIMES

(UNODC)

Background Guide

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Opening Remarks

Chairs

Trần Ngọc Châu Anh

Distinguished delegates,

My name is Chau Anh Ngoc Tran, or Chau Anh – a passionate MUN-er who is currently studying in Ashbourne Sixth-Form College in London, the United Kingdom. It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you, our delegates, to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) committee, and I am very excited to welcome delegates to our interesting council with heated debate topics.

To me, MUN is an energy boost and offers me many great chances to meet new people who have the same mindsets as mine. TOYO MUN has been one of my favorite conferences from my first encounter for its exciting, thrilling debates as well as chances to enjoy the experience with new friends. This year in TOYO MUN 2022, I'll be serving as a Chair and work alongside Huyen Phuong and Tram Anh. When joining TOYO MUN, and especially joining UNODC, as a delegate, you will have a chance to enhance your critical thinking, writing and negotiating skills as well as collaborate with other delegates about international issues regarding economic, politics, and global corporations.

For the last words, we're all very excited to have you all in TOYO MUN 2022, and thank you for your interest in UNODC. We hope our delegates will have meaningful, productive debate as well as enjoying every moment in TOYO MUN. See you in the conference soon!

Tram-Anh Ngoc Do

Greetings delegates,

My name is Tram-Anh, a senior from Foreign Language Specialized School in Vietnam. It is my utmost pleasure to be able to chair you in TOYOMUN this year, 2022.

As for me, going to MUN are always wonderful experiences. It does not only serve as an activity where you learn and improve yourself but also a chance for yourself to explore more into the topics a MUN has given you, a chance for yourself to make new friends, to put yourself out there and be a different someone that you have never expected yourself to be. Every MUN that I went to taught me something new, whether it was about how to do research or what kind of person I am during a discussion. Every experience with MUN counts and teaches something that you can never find in other places.

With the upcoming UNODC council at TOYO MUN 2022, I wish nothing more but an educational experience for our esteemed delegates. May you receive only the best from our council.

Huyen-Phuong Tran

Greetings esteemed delegates,

I am Huyen Phuong Tran, a senior at Hanoi - Amsterdam High School for the Gifted, and it is with utmost honor that I serve as one of the three chairpeople of the UNODC committee at TOYOMUN 2022.

To me, each Model UN conference has been an experience that I look forward to. MUN has not only helped me broaden my knowledge and fine-tuned my skills, but it has also connected me to many talented and passionate people with the same interest. Those people, along with the energetic atmosphere of each conference, have inspired me to be more daring, breach my boundaries and become a better version of myself.

Coming to TOYO MUN 2022 with my co-chairs Chau Anh Ngoc Tran and Tram Anh Ngoc Do, I hope that we will be able to give you a valuable experience at the conference this year. Thank

you for your interest in the UNODC committee, and I look forward to seeing you all at the conference!

Content developers

Sitora Karimova

Dear Future Diplomats!

My name is Sitora Karimova, and currently I am in my sophomore year in the Department of Global Innovation Studies, Toyo University, Japan. Since last year, I have been heavily involved in a variety of MUNs, either in my capacity as a delegate, or a volunteer. This time, I am exceptionally privileged to join the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) team as a content developer.

Even though my journey only started last year, Model United Nations have already earned a special place in my heart. Not only did I expand my knowledge in the field of diplomacy, but also made meaningful connections with delegates from around the world.

Each and every MUN conference offers an invaluable opportunity to challenge our minds, gratify curiosity, expand limitations. It is also a perfect place to meet and learn from passionate delegates who boldly speak out about raging global issues.

I am convinced that Toyo MUN 2022, with the wise guidance of our Chairs, will deliver an exceptionally meaningful and memorable experience to all of you. We sincerely appreciate your interest in UNODC, and look forward to hearing your heated debates.

Best of luck with your future endeavors!

Committee and Topic Introduction

UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes) was established in 1997 by merging the United Nations Drug Control Program and the Centre for International Crime Prevention. The committee's mission is to help achieve justice and security for all by taking fundamental measures to ensure that criminals, drugs and terrorist issues are eradicated and being stopped for the better development. UNODC has offices spread all over the world with the majority of its budget being voluntary contributions made by countries' governments. It plays a leading role in supporting international cooperation on issues across the areas of drugs and crimes. UNODC's 3 main objectives are:

a) Providing security and justice for all
b) Analyzing policy and trends on drugs and crimes
c) Taking charges in prevention, treatment and reintegration, and sustainable development.

UNODC pursues these objectives by offering research, advice and support to governments that are eager to implement and enforce different associated agreements, conventions and protocols.

The media has a great impact in the fight against corruption, especially when the most deciding power of the media is its accountability and transparency. There are many cases in which the media in countries successfully confronts unethical figures and actions and brings illegal activities into the light of justice. Not only does the media play such a big role in small countries, it also helps in tackling fraud and corruption on an international level. By having the media to assist in pointing out corruption, there could be many advantages bound to come. Exposing corruption in the media can easily lead to public outrage, gradually resulting in an impeachment or a demand of resignation. This could even open up many possibilities of opening up formal investigations. The pressure of the public with the power of the media from multiple countries can help in excluding potential harms towards countries, saving enhancing

political pluralism, creating more political debates, and strengthening the sense of responsibility among politicians, institutions, and public bodies.

Key Definitions

Term	Definition
Corruption	Corruption is a form of dishonesty or a criminal offense which is undertaken by a person or an organization which is entrusted with a position of authority, in order to acquire illicit benefits or abuse power for one's personal gain
Fake news	False or misleading information presented as news. Fake news often has the aim of damaging the reputation of a person or entity, or making money through advertising revenue
Procurement	The process of finding and agreeing to terms, and acquiring goods, services, or works from an external source, often via a tendering or competitive bidding process. Procurement generally involves making buying decisions under conditions of scarcity.
Integrity	The practice of being honest and showing a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values. Incorruptibility

Term	Definition
Transparency	Operating in such a way that it is easy for others to see what actions are performed. Transparency implies openness, communication, and accountability.
Accountability	An assurance that an individual or an organization will be evaluated on their performance or behavior related to something for which they are responsible.
CSO	Non-State, not-for-profit, voluntary entities formed by people in the social sphere that are separate from the State and the market.

History

While corruption has been predicted to start off around hundreds, if not thousands of years ago, approaches to the study of this concept only take off around the latter half of the 20th century. There are two clearly identifiable periods of time in which corruption was seen with heavy activities. The first period being in the late 1950s and throughout 1960s; the second wave of activity started around the early 1990s and up until present day.

1, The First Period: Late 1950s - Through 1960s

The examples of newly democratized and emerging countries fueled interest in corruption in the early 1950s and into the 1960s. While there was minimal debate among experts regarding the influence of corruption on political cynicism (it tended to foster it), there was no clear consensus on the economic and social effects of corruption.

It is hardly surprising, then, that the first **definitional conflicts between "moralists" and "revisionists" reflected differences over the impacts of corruption**:

Corruption was unanimously denounced by moralists as a blight on society's sociological, economic, and political well-being. On the other hand, revisionists claimed that corruption should be examined and characterized more objectively. Corruption, for them, did not have to be detrimental; in fact, it was frequently regarded as an unavoidable and necessary component of the adjustment process (Leff 1964, Bayley 1966, Nye 1967, Huntington 1968). Nathaniel Leff (1964) even argued that bureaucratic corruption could, in some instances, actually promote efficiency.

A new group of researchers, such as Anne Krueger (1974) and Susan Rose-Ackerman (1978), questioned the functionalist perspective of corruption in the mid- to late 1970s, arguing that

corruption and rent-seeking conduct had a detrimental influence on political and economic progress. Corruption was redefined as an individual decision rather than a systemic occurrence and an essential component of the modernizing or transitioning process. Corrupt activities were considered as carefully prepared decisions that maximized profits for the persons involved but came at the cost of society.

When the definitional conflicts had largely died down by the 1980s, books and articles on corruption began to include more specific case studies.

2, The Second Period: Early 1990s - Present Day

In the 1990s, there was a resurgence of interest in the study of corruption. **This increase of interest continues to the current day, and it is unlikely to abate in the near future.** Since the 1980s, Third World pessimism about the possibilities of ever decreasing, let alone eliminating, corruption has increased considerably. Despite several administrations' vows to lower corruption levels, most reform measures have failed spectacularly. Examples can be listed as India whose allegations of corruption led to the collapse of Rajiv Gandhi's government in 1989.

Of fact, the problem of chronic corruption was not restricted to Asia. The identical narrative was told several times across Africa and Latin America. Mobutu Sese Seko's four-decade reign of corruption in Zaire, for example, ended in 1997, but Laurent Kabila's following administration was no less corrupt. Corruption persisted at both the highest and lowest levels of Robert Mugabe's leadership in Zimbabwe. General Sani Abacha's regime in Nigeria swiftly became known for its corruption and ruthlessness. Alberto Fujimori was related to corruption and drug trafficking in Peru. Arnoldo Alemán earned a great fortune in Nicaragua at the cost of his compatriots. In addition to the struggling democracies of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the collapse of the Soviet Union presented a slew of new countries confronted with the

formidable job of combating corruption. Indeed, the twin difficulties of democratization and economic transformation appeared to be ideal ground for corruption in Eastern Europe. The privatization of state-owned industries, for example, created new markets and opportunities for both corrupt politicians and entrepreneurs (Boycko, et al 1996; Shleifer and Vishny, 1994).

Causes

Censorship and lack of access to information:

For the media to effectively and impartially report on corruption, it should be free from restrictions and influences that might hinder this process. It is important that reporters and journalists be able to investigate and publish important information about government's activities, or for citizens to freely express their concerns and report on cases of misconduct from government authorities. However, some governments have implemented numerous forms of censorship in order to conceal corruption and control the public, such as blocking websites, strict regulation process, even harassment, imprisonment or assasination of journalists.

Based on Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the right of access to information is the right to seek, receive and impart information held by public bodies". This is crucial to preventing corruption, as citizens are entitled to key information and data from governments, ensuring that governments would be held accountable of misconduct and illegal activities, including corruption. Although some governments have been trying to enforce the access to information law, citizens are still denied access to certain documents due to lengthy, intimidating processes, misuse of information security, low public awareness and technical challenges.

Media ownership, licensing and registration:

Media ownership is one of the ways governments can regulate the information given to the public. In some countries, state-owned media has the largest outreach, meaning that information broadcasted would be biased and heavily edited in favor of the government. Private media can still be influenced by business interest and government. For instance, since private media revenue relies on advertisement and sometimes politician endorsement, they are more likely to abide by censorship requirements from the government.

The media licensing and registration process is another means for governments to eliminate media that reports on information they deemed unfavorable. The process is usually complicated, including unreasonable rules that may hinder freedom of expression. For example, Malaysian newspapers would need to renew their licenses every year, or African newspapers need to pay astronomical registration fees. Governments also monitor journalists through registration and licensing. In Saudi Arabia, the government needs to approve of position appointments and holds the power to dismiss editors-in-chiefs of newspapers.

Consequences

Harm to individuals involved:

CSOs and individuals may face harassment, harm and compromises in their fight against corruption. Journalists investigating corruption has often faced intimidation, prison punishments to death threats and murder. In 2020, according to UNESCO, 62 journalists have lost their lives. Although efforts have been made to protect reporters from violence, there has yet to exist a concrete and effective law, as well as implementation, for this issue. The persistence of this issue would also mean the hesitance to publicly criticize acts of corruption from CSOs and individuals, setting back progress in the fight against corruption.

Lack of citizen participation:

The participation of civilians in reporting corruption can put immense pressure on governments to hold itself accountable and curb its level of corruption. However, in some countries, there appears to be a decline in criticism, and even the normalization of corruption. Countries where high rates of corruption have persisted witnessed citizen distrust and apathy towards authority. Some even see corruption as a necessary means to obtain favors and goods. The lack of civic participation in preventing corruption would only allow for corruption to spread.

Core Issues

Fake news

The term "fake news'' refers to the distribution of falsified information to aim at discrediting the correct reporting, re-directing the attention to other issues, and possibly causing conflicts between readers. This concept had frequently appeared in history, especially by politicians, it had increased rapidly in the new age of technology and social media. It could potentially be a major public threat in citizens' trust in the government, journalists, and news reporters. While the entire impact of false news is ambiguous and could potentially be further elaborated in future occurrences, it is causing anxiety among anti-corruption advocates. Anti-corruption activity is heavily reliant on public faith in independent media sources and the usage of social media, and false news has the potential to erode that trust. Furthermore, activists may be targeted by false news operations, jeopardizing their credibility and validity in the eyes of the general public.

The ability of misleading information to spread via online media channels, particularly social media, has been attributed to much of the recent popularity of fake news in public debate. False news may often throw doubt on the integrity of persons or institutions that are the subject of a fake article.The phrase "fake news" gained a lot of traction after the 2016 US presidential election. Following the election, a heated dispute developed about the impact of fake news on the election outcome, specifically how much false news dominated social media and impacted voting behavior. Some websites were actively promoting fake news to appeal to Trump supporters in order to boost their advertising earnings.

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Misinformation campaigns have also been launched against anti-corruption campaigners. According to The Economist, fake newspapers and magazines have been targeting anti-corruption activists at NGOs and officials at anti-corruption authorities in Ukraine, with the apparent goal of undermining public trust in them. Many individuals have questioned the

integrity of activists as a result of the disinformation campaign, and it has contributed to a new age of media in which it is difficult to tell the difference between true and false news items.

Another situation in which false news is thought to have influenced voter decisions is the United Kingdom's referendum on leaving the EU, sometimes known as Brexit. Fake news was notably noticeable in so-called "dark advertising" placed on both conventional media and social media by campaigns working for the UK to exit the EU. These advertisements are tailored to certain user groups and are thus only displayed to those individuals. Several of these advertisements employed targeted disinformation to persuade a certain demographic to vote against Britain's EU membership. This affected the opposing parties as they were unable to respond to this information, which made the process of Brexit difficult to assess and threatened accountability in political advertising.

The most prevalent and concerning impact of false news is a loss of faith in the media. Fake news adds to a rising distrust of conventional media such as television, newspapers, business magazines, and radio as they were often the formats that could be put out without credibility or worked with corrupted officials. In terms of social media platforms such as the Internet itself, citizens typically regard social media contributors as less prejudiced and unaffected by special interests since they are ostensibly independent. However, as the majority of false news articles are spread via social media, there is a rising skepticism of any news disseminated via these platforms. According to a Pew Research Center poll done in early 2019, around 70% of US people believe fabricated news and information has a significant influence on Americans' trust in political institutions. Over a third of the population claims to routinely encounter false news online, with 59 percent claiming to have spread fake news online, intentionally or unwittingly, at some time. This issue of inability to differentiate news also poses a concern in countries with lower digital literacy such as Sub-Saharan Africa, in which readers are more likely to be influenced by incorrect information. In this way, the lack of confidence in media outlets and

social media platforms makes it difficult for individuals who wish to utilize them to fight corruption to do so.

Media Freedom and Right to Media Accessibility

The media provide an information platform that can be read and observed by many around the world, which can be used as a tool to fight against corruption by monitoring government performance on a daily basis or by examining specific violations that may put pressure on decision-makers to act. The media may name and condemn those public representatives who use their authority to hide instances of corruption or keep silent when well-founded evidence of corruption is offered to them by providing inspection over persons and intuitions.

Independence is the most essential requirement for any media genre to be a successful anti-corruption instrument. The legal framework (freedom of information laws, licensing laws, and press freedoms), financial and economic pressures, media concentration, governmental control, and the level of direct repression towards journalists all influence media independence. Some of the most prevalent limits on press freedom also include restrictive laws, threats, physical harassment, verbal abuse, financial extortion, censorship, media consolidation, intimidation, violent attacks, high entrance charges, and access restrictions to the media market.

The information made available by the media must be accessible and understood to the public in order for it to fulfill its job of monitoring and criticizing those in power. The degree of state censorship, the quality of technical infrastructure for broadcasting and digital content, the plurality of media and extent of circulation, strong ethical standards and skills that promote unbiased, non-ethnocentric, context-sensitive, and comprehensible language, citizen confidence in the credibility and authenticity of the data provided, literacy rate, and social consciousness about the detriment can all affect media accessibility.

Though there is substantial evidence that its presence inside a society may assist keep people aware of corruption, it is impossible to tell whether media freedom alone can be sufficient to combat corruption in the absence of other political freedoms. To put it another way, individuals may be knowledgeable of corruption, but what if they are still unable to stop it?

Professionalism in reporting

Because the media is most people's primary source of information, it is a powerful tool for swaying public opinion in favor of vested interests. Malfeasance, clientelism, and embezzlement, among other things, can be concealed through various media platforms. As a result, attempts to control the media for personal gain are dangerous in both emerging and established countries. In severe circumstances, this might include direct in-kind gifts, coercion, or financial payments to journalists and editors in exchange for (non-)coverage. Bribery, nepotism, and misappropriation are the main causes in possible corrupted work ethics that lead to media coverage for corruption. Administrative and legislative policies (for example, licensing legislation) that favor specific political or corporate interests can likewise be used to capture the media. Another technique to sway media coverage is to place concealed advertisements, which is typically the result of extensive coordination between journalists, public relations firms, and advertising agencies.

Lack of journalistic training and technical skills, poor work ethics, financial constraints on media institutions and individual reporters, making them vulnerable to bribes, and controlling shareholders aligned with economic interests may all provide fertile ground for corruption. While it is ideal to think of the media as an observer providing information for people, in reality, media companies have the same motivation as any other private company to engage in corrupt practises with a government body, not to mention the potential opportunity for these companies to release false campaigns and accusations against the government and the

country's state of corruption if these stories are likely to attract public attention and generate income.

Current Issues

Amidst the COVID-19 crisis, governments are urged to adopt quick decisions and implement drastic measures to protect communities at risk and limit the economic consequences that might follow. In such health and economic emergencies, integrity violations are on the rise. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), an economic aid package of USD 2.5 trillion would have to be made available to help limit the pandemic's disastrous effects on many developing countries. Such a vast amount of resources allocated to respond to the urgent needs, combined with relaxed oversight and accountability measures, also create ample opportunities for corruption to grow and thrive. Rapidly shifting priorities, disrupted supply chains, and a lack of information and accessibility, among other issues, further exacerbate the crisis and increase corruption risks.

In times of crisis, corruption leads to the diversion of funds and supplies vital to combat COVID-19; fraud and mismanagement result in a shortfall of aid for the most vulnerable. Corruption reduces the impact of remedial measures targeted to address and respond to the effects of COVID-19, including those designed across the five pillars of the UN Framework for the Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19 (UN SDG Framework) and the economic stimulus and relief packages implemented by Member States. Corruption in this context may manifest itself in a variety of ways, including the embezzlement of emergency funds as well as the manipulation of procurement processes for crucial health sector resources, such as personal protective equipment (PPE), with little to no transparency and accountability.

In addition, as governments transition from addressing the immediate crisis to focusing on economic recovery, integrity violations may continue to rise and undermine recovery efforts. Hence, it is imperative that fundamental safeguards of public integrity are not weakened or disregarded in both the immediate response as well as the longer-term recovery from COVID-19.

Fraud and corruption practices can be curbed with more robust systems for accountability and transparency. A vibrant civic space and wide access to information are essential. In this regard, the media remains one of the key tools of holding authorities to account.

Presently, social media is more widely accessible, and is believed to be more resistant to top-down control compared to traditional media. Social media addresses corruption by providing information in the form of analysis, commentary and advocacy and through investigations and crowdsourcing. Social media platforms empower "citizen journalism" where citizens can share information on corruption, which then becomes a subject for investigation by government authorities or journalists.

However, as the spread of information surged, dissemination of false information (fake news) has become a major threat to public trust in news media outlets over the past years. While anti-corruption activism relies strongly on trust in independent media outlets and the use of social media, the impact of fake news might undermine this trust. With COVID-19, the amount of Fake News has increased substantially, and has generated situations that negatively impact public health in multiple regions of the world. There have also been cases of organized criminal groups finding ways to profit from the pandemic when people stay at home and heavily rely on digital solutions.

To oppose the "infomedia", several actions have already been taken; the WHO has increased their efforts in monitoring social media platforms and has collaborated with Instagram, Facebook and Twitter to develop links to official pages any time someone searches for "COVID-19" or "coronavirus". Besides, governments play a key role here, in providing detailed, clear, and transparent official information that crowds out fake news.

Past Actions

Even before COVID-19, corruption risks demonstrated that efforts to combat and prevent corruption were proving insufficient. As outlined in the UN Common Position paper to address global corruption - towards UNGASS 2021, complex, multi-jurisdictional corruption scandals perpetrated by organized networks involved the public, private, and informal sectors and were, in some cases, traced to the highest levels of government, resulting in the loss of enormous amounts of resources and undermining public trust in democracy and the rule of law.

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC, or the Convention) is the only universal, legally-binding anti-corruption instrument. It embodies innovative and globally accepted anti-corruption standards applicable to both the public and private sectors and provides a comprehensive approach to preventing and combating corruption. The Convention is a remarkable international achievement, which bears witness to the global extent of the problem of corruption. As of 1 October 2013, UNCAC has been ratified by 168 Parties, and is steadily approaching universal ratification. Countries that are not yet parties to the Convention have been called upon or encouraged to ratify or accede to it at all major fora, including the General Assembly, the Group of 8 (G8) and the Group of 20 (G20). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the guardian of UNCAC and has been entrusted with its advancement and implementation.

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provide key entry points for Member States to recover better, including by:
1. Prioritizing anti-corruption measures as an integral aspect of all COVID-19 and future pandemic responses, and long-term development frameworks;

2. Developing, strengthening, using and providing access to technology and open data for all sectors of society to increase social auditing, participation and transparency, enable sound decision-making and afford appropriate oversight and accountability; and

3. Creating strong legal, regulatory and policy frameworks and enforcement measures, including transparent, inclusive and effective emergency response plans.

Under the United Nations Convention against Corruption(UNCAC), each State party shall:

ARTICLE 5(3) Endeavor to periodically evaluate relevant legal instruments and administrative measures with a view to determining their adequacy to prevent and fight corruption;

ARTICLE 9(2) Take appropriate measures to promote transparency and accountability in the management of public finances [which] shall encompass, inter alia: (c) A system of accounting and auditing standards, and related oversight; (d) Effective and efficient systems of risk management and internal control;

ARTICLE 13(1) Take appropriate measures … to promote the active participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector … by such measures as: (a) Enhancing the transparency of and promoting the contribution of the public to decision-making processes; (b) Ensuring that the public has effective access to information;

ARTICLE 10(b) Take such measures as may be necessary to enhance transparency in its public administration, including with regard to its organization, functioning and decision-making processes, where appropriate. Such measures may include, inter alia: (b) Simplifying administrative procedures, where appropriate, in order to facilitate public access to the competent decision-making authorities.

The implementation of the above mentioned mechanisms is one of the responsibilities of The Conference of the States Parties (COSP). COSP is the main policy-making body of the Convention, supporting States parties and signatories in their implementation of the Convention and giving policy guidance to UNODC to develop and implement anti-corruption

activities. The actual implementation of the Convention into domestic law by States parties is evaluated through a unique peer-review process, the Implementation Review Mechanism.

Major Bloc Positions

Transparency International, an NGO founded in order to combat global corruption, indicates that countries with higher rates of corruption tend to have weaker democratic institutions and less political rights. To this end, it is suggested that such states ensure a civic space that is safe for civil society to engage in dialogue with governments and authorities without fear of retaliation. It is also imperative to protect press freedom to promote the crucial role that media plays in democratic processes.

    a.   Least corrupt countries

Fourteen of the top 20 countries on 2019's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) are from Western Europe and the European Union (EU). With 88 points, Denmark returns as a global leader on the CPI, despite its score remaining unchanged from last year. In the region, Denmark is closely followed by Finland, Sweden and Switzerland, which each score 85.

At the bottom of the region, Bulgaria scores 42, dropping one point since last year. Bulgaria is followed by Greece (45), and Hungary (46). With an average regional score of 66 out of 100, Western Europe and the EU are performing far better than other parts of the globe.

    b.   Average performers

With an average score of 44 for three consecutive years, the Americas region continues to fail in delivering any serious responses to corruption. Compared to other regions, the Americas is similar to Asia Pacific (average score: 44), but behind Western Europe and the European Union.

Following up, with an average score of 39, are the Middle East and Northern Africa. Scoring 70, United Arab Emirates (UAE) leads the region on the CPI, and are followed by Qatar (62).

    c. Most corrupt countries

Eastern Europe and Central Asia is the second lowest scoring region in the index, ahead of Sub-Saharan Africa which has an average score of 32.

Sub-Saharan Africa represents a gloomy picture, only eight of 49 countries score more than 43 out of 100 on the index.

Seychelles scores 66 out of 100, to put it at the top of the region. Seychelles is followed by Botswana and Cabo Verde, with scores of 61 and 57 respectively. At the very bottom of the index for the seventh year in a row, Somalia scores 10 points, followed by South Sudan (13) to round out the lowest scores in the region.

Suggested Solution

➢ Enforce the rule of law so that all public powers act within the constraints set out by law, in accordance with the values of democracy and fundamental rights, and under the control of independent and impartial courts.

➢ Protect whistleblowers so that all citizens can safely report wrongdoing in the public and private spheres.

➢ Improve legislative transparency and access to information that is required for effective public oversight.

➢ Ensure a civic space that is safe for civil society to engage in dialogue with governments and authorities without fear of retaliation.

➢ Protect press freedom and the crucial role that media plays in democracy

➢ Protect human rights defenders, political analysts, anti-corruption activists and investigative journalists and enable them to speak out on corruption issues.

➢ Keep a close watch on political speech that falsely uses the fight against corruption to undermine democracy and propel authoritarian or populist individuals to power

➢ Engage citizens in monitoring government spending

➢ reform the judicial system and improve integrity and accountability across government institutions

➢ Review electoral laws to ensure parliaments are strong and effective, with a special focus on transparent political campaign financing.

➢ Grant independence to oversight agencies and judicial institutions to help rebuild trust between people and their countries.

Questions to Consider

1. What tools and/or frameworks should the Member States implement to ensure the accountability of the authorities?

2. How can public opinion assist in ensuring integrity, transparency, and accountability?

3. How can the issue of fake news and misinformation be effectively addressed?

4. What parties can be involved in creating or alleviating corruption through the media?

5. What is the role of citizens in using the media against corruption? Even if individuals acknowledge or are aware of the corruption situation, what if they are unable to stop it?

6. What are the connections between various media genres and anti-corruption efforts? Think about a broad spectrum: gender equality, political ideas, educational opportunities, etc.

7. Can free media or free press lead to lower levels of corruption? How and why in certain cases and might not be all?

8. In the cases of journalism or individual reporters, is it true that journalists' capacity to be critical, unbiased, and objective is harmed when they participate in behaviors that have been characterized as 'corrupt and bribery'?

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