

**International Association of Anticorruption Authorities
5th Annual Conference
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**Address by Mr. Pradeep Kumar,
Central Vigilance Commissioner of India**

Honourable Chair person Mr. Stephen Polaris, dignitaries and delegates from various anti-corruption authorities, colleagues from the global fraternity fighting against corruption, Ladies and Gentlemen. NAMASKAR.

At the outset I wish to thank the IAACA Secretariat for giving me the opportunity to address this august gathering. I also thank the Central Authority for Corruption Prevention, Morocco for their warm and wonderful hospitality in this beautiful and historical city of Marrakech. My greetings to the government and the people of Morocco.

Corruption has become a major governance challenge in today's world. While corruption is undesirable in any society its effect on the developing economy is more debilitating as it hampers socio-economic development.

Corruption being a complex socio-economic and cultural phenomena, calls for innovative and localised solutions. However, it is highly encouraging and motivating for an anticorruption agency to find the support of the global community through a multilateral organisation like the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA).

The value of IAACA as a unifying force and a rallying point for all anti-corruption authorities is well appreciated by us.

While the socio-economic context and the specifics of corruption may be different in different countries, certain basic regulatory and institutional frameworks are necessary. The UN Convention Against Corruption provides this minimum standard for countries to follow. The anti-corruption authorities need to further develop the standards according to the needs of their countries and ensure their effective implementation. Thus, the IAACA has to play a pivotal role in implementing and carrying forward the principles of the UN Convention Against Corruption.

We are witnessing increasing public anger and frustration spreading across the world. People are protesting against political and economic inequality, corporate greed and the undue influence of private money on Government decision making. Whether it is the revolution across the Arab world, the ongoing “Occupy Wall Street” protests which has spread to 78 cities around the world or the Anna Hazare Movement in my own country; there is one common thread in all of them, and that is the failure of governments and corporations to create a system of fair, honest, transparent and market based principles and practices. I am reminded of a famous verse from an Indian epic which says “yatha raja tatha praja” – which implies – if the king is immoral so would be his subjects.

It is a wakeup call for the anti-corruption community, as in some ways it reflects our inability in tackling the malaise of corruption.

I am glad to note that during the last five years of its existence, the Association has made commendable progress in uniting the anti-corruption authorities across the globe as one community with shared goals and ideas. The Government of India and the Indian anticorruption agencies are committed to the global anticorruption efforts.

- a. India has ratified the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in May this year.
- b. The Central Vigilance Commissioner of India has been a member of the Executive Committee of the International Association of Anti Corruption Agencies (IAACA) since its inception in 2006.
- c. India is an active member in the Asian Development Bank- OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for the Asia Pacific Region and recently hosted the 7th Regional Conference of the initiative at its capital New Delhi.
- d. India participates regularly in the Anti-Bribery Working Group of OECD as an 'Observer'.
- e. India is also actively involved in the anti-corruption initiatives of various groups of countries like the G-20, BRIC i.e Brazil Russia India China and IBSA i.e India-Brazil-South Africa.

The Central Vigilance Commission of India which is the independent Anti Corruption Commission of the Federal

Government of India has always evinced keen interest in the development of the Association.

- a) We envision the role of IAACA as a global standard setting body for all anti-corruption work. It should establish standards, formulate guidelines and compile best practices to be adopted and applied by organisations and countries in their anticorruption work. It should help in wider dissemination of knowledge; and tools and techniques developed by various agencies so that people across the globe can benefit.
- b) I feel the association should actively help in the capacity building of anti-corruption authorities especially in those countries where resources are limited and the challenge of corruption is high. The establishment of the International Anti-Corruption Academy at Vienna in 2010 has fulfilled an important need of having a global institute for training human resource and developing new tools and techniques of anti-corruption. The Academy should become an integral part of our association. The Central Vigilance Commission is willing to support the development of the Academy in terms of knowledge and resources.
- c) The IAACA could play a leading role in promoting the professional development of anti-corruption as a discipline, by undertaking research and study on various facets of anti-corruption. It could host international or regional seminars on major anti-corruption issues.

Forming of regional or issue-based working groups may be explored.

I am glad that the Work Plan of the association which was proposed during the 4th annual Conference at Macau has been finalised and approved by the Executive Committee of the Association. The Work plan is an important guiding document that lays down the blue print for action to achieve the objectives of the Association. If the work plan is implemented effectively it will build a strong foundation for mutual cooperation and exchange of knowledge among the Anti corruption Authorities. I would like to request and urge all the members to come forward and participate actively in the five areas identified by the Work Plan.

The Central Vigilance Commission has offered to lead a task force on Knowledge Management which is an important activity of the work plan. Creation of the Knowledge Management System would involve (a) collecting and compiling the terms of reference and procedures of anti-corruption authorities across the globe (b) creating a searchable digest of concluded cases (c) creating a directory of anti-corruption agencies across the world along with details of contact and nodal officers (d) creating a digest of good practices. This is aimed at adding value to the anti-corruption initiatives of different countries through collection and analysis of experience and lessons learnt. It is proposed to set up a 10 member Task Force with due regional representation. A formal proposal in this regard would be put up to the IAACA secretariat shortly.

As the world's largest democracy India faces a unique challenge. India is presently going through an era of far reaching reforms in anti-corruption, prompted by popular anti-corruption movements. The movement is demanding the creation of a new Anti-Corruption Authority to be known as the LOKPAL which means "people's patron" to focus on grand corruption involving high level public officials including senior politicians. A Bill to deal with bribery of foreign public officials in international business is under consideration of the Parliament. Government is also proposing a Public Procurement Act, False Claims Act, Whistle Blower Protection Act and a Judicial Accountability Act to address corruption in various spheres of activities.

Citizens in the developing countries have to face the menace of Petty corruption in the delivery of public services. A slew of measures like creation of Grievance Redressal Authority for strict enforcement of Citizens Charter by all departments and public authorities are being contemplated. India has successfully demonstrated that the use of information technology and right to information can reduce corruption in public services to a great extent.

It is very appropriate that "Asset Recovery" has been selected as the theme of the 5th Annual Conference. Recovering the proceeds of corruption and preventing the corrupt and their associates from enjoying the fruits of corruption, is a fundamental principle of UNCAC and a major obligation of the state parties. Recovery of stolen assets provides a strong deterrence to corruption and

makes it a high risk business. There is a need for IAACA to coordinate and strengthen the ongoing efforts in this area.

In India besides the Central Bureau of Investigation which is the premier investigating agency there is a separate Prevention of Money Laundering Act and a dedicated Enforcement Directorate involved in detecting and recovering illegal assets. India is also an active member of the Financial Action Task Force.

Development of new methods of financial flows and communication technology has made it easier for the corrupt to conceal and stash away stolen wealth. On the other hand differences in legal systems, high costs in coordinating investigations, inadequate international co-operation and bank secrecy laws have made the task difficult for the anti-corruption authorities. The World Bank estimates the cross border flow of money from criminal activities including corruption and tax evasion to be around US\$ 1.5 trillion, annually. Half of this flow is from the developing countries. Around US\$ 40 billion of this flow is on account of bribes paid to public officials in the developing countries.

Tracing, freezing, confiscation and then repatriation of stolen assets is a legal challenge. Managing the asset recovery investigation is complex, time consuming, costly and most importantly requires expertise and political will.

I am sure the workshops scheduled during the conference will deliberate on the issue and come up with a road map to make the daunting task of “Asset Recovery” more effective and efficient.

I wish to conclude with the famous words of Mahatma Gandhi - who said – “You must be the change you wish to see in the world”. Corruption is rooted in human greed and cannot be eradicated unless there is change in human behaviour and mind set and we need to work towards it.

Thank you.
