

*Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

We would like to express our gratitude towards the initiative – Secretariat and Member States - for opening a door to Georgia to become a part of the initiative, which we believe will serve as an excellent platform for strengthening anticorruption policy, promoting good governance tools and sharing experience among member states in the region.

We are honored to have a possibility to contribute to the common goal of eliminating and preventing corruption in the region with a status of a Member of the Initiative.

We have already cooperated with the Anticorruption Initiative of Asia-Pacific region as an observer. Upgrading our status from an observer to a full member would demonstrate sustainability of our engagement and a long-standing commitment to the Initiative's primary mission of being an international platform for exchanging successful anticorruption practices, promoting national anticorruption agendas and aligning with the best international standards.

Fighting against corruption, upholding transparency, accountability and rule of law with a view of building an institutional democracy needs to be a continued process and Georgia expresses its readiness to be fully involved in the work of the initiative with a collaboration and partnership with the Member States.

Georgia's anticorruption policy has a long history of inter-institutional cooperation and cocreation. Our national experience highlights the importance of pursuing effective Anti-Corruption policy that is vested in the Inter-Agency Coordination Council which is supported by its Secretariat (operating under the Ministry of Justice) and the working group.

Inter-agency council, which is responsible for adoption and monitoring of national anticorruption strategy and action plan, carries out its work based on a co-creation principle, which is ensured by representation of all three branches of state power at the Council along with the involvement of civil sector, business sector and international organizations.

Anticorruption strategic documents are devised based on the analysis of international recommendations such as GRECO, OECD delivered to Georgia and commitments declared by Georgia at an international level (UNCAC, London anticorruption summit commitments, etc). Georgia is a member of GRECO, OECD-ACN, OGP.

As Georgia's anticorruption policy priorities largely incorporate international anti-corruption commitments, we believe that membership in the Initiative will have a significant effect for our national anticorruption policy by aligning with the strategic principles and the action plan of the initiative.

Fundamental anticorruption reforms turned Georgia into a leader among the East European countries with one of the lowest corruption indicators in Europe, which have been achieved by improving channels for citizen participation in decision-making and monitoring which resulted in strengthening accountability of the public sector.

In the World Bank Doing Business survey 2020 overall Georgia ranks 7th among 190 states; According to the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2020 Georgia is the strongest overall rule of law performer within Eastern Europe and Central Asia holding 1st place and globally 41st place among 126 states.

One of the reasons of Georgia's success includes applying innovative tools in corruption prevention. Georgia has actively deployed e-tools in various policy areas (*inter alia* delivering services, land registrations, establishing reporting channels in public and private sectors, strengthening transparency of judicial system, asset declaration monitoring system, public procurement etc.). Sharing experiences among Member States in the field of e-governance (especially in Covid era), will be particularly crucial.

Fast evolving world requires policy answers to the complex and rapid changes. Cooperation among the Member States of the Initiative will play an overarching role in addressing common objectives, challenges and commitments in the region and will substantially drive the work towards fulfilling SDGs forward.

We believe that a true progress can be achieved through exploring venues for meaningful inter-state and inter-institutional cooperation. We look forward to a fruitful collaboration with the Initiative.

Thank you