

The 2nd Global Conference on Harnessing Data to Improve Anti-Corruption Measurement

High Level Statement Sierra Leone

Madam Chair, distinguished representatives of the different countries, I bring you warm greetings from the Republic of Sierra Leone. We in Sierra Leone are very pleased with a desire to develop a mechanism or formula that will be acceptable for countries in terms of being able to measure corruption. When I was on the African Union Advisory Board on corruption and served as president of the network of anti corruption institutions in West Africa, one of the things that we had challenge with was whenever indexes come out, particularly the TI index and other indexes like the Afro Barometer, countries were concerned about how it depicted our efforts as heads of anti corruption agencies or the anti corruption agencies themselves and governments in terms of fighting to control corruption. We believe that perception alone was not a very good way to measure the existence of corruption because many things influence perception, which may not necessarily be what we do. Also, There are indexes like the TI index really does not cover a lot of the things that we do in our effort against corruption, like tax fraud, money laundering, or illicit financial flows. Since these important indicators are not taking into consideration or more generally, efforts are not taking into consideration, it would appear that we felt that the system or mechanisms or formulae that were in place were not representative of what we were doing. And therefore, we welcome this announcement that came a while ago, and now we are here to agree on a system that can work. Measuring corruption is very important, particularly prevalence because it helps us measure our efforts, hold our governments accountable, and gives particularly those who aid our efforts in the fight against corruption, like civil society a powerful rhetorical tool to hold governments accountable using data. Data is the touchlight of the 21st century. Helps us organize ourselves, it helps us plan, it helps us be able to compare what we are doing in our respective countries to what other countries are doing and learn from their efforts so that we can apply it where we believe we can learn from them. But that data has to be credible, it has to be acceptable. The formula has to be transparent, it cannot rely on desk reviews alone. It cannot rely on experts that are not transparent enough for us to know who the experts are. Therefore, while we do not yet have the full picture of what has been agreed or what we are about to agree in this meeting, We believe that just the idea of creating a formula or measurement system or process that is accountable or acceptable to countries is very welcome. And we, representing the people of Sierra Leone, we are very pleased to be here to participate in this conference and I wish all of us fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.