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HIGH LEVEL STATEMENT: HARNESSING DATA TO IMPROVE CORRUPTION MEASUREMENTS

**Adv. Andy Mothibi, Head and Chief Executive of the Special Investigating Unit, South Africa
and Co-Chairperson of G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group during the South African
Presidency**

**Distinguished Delegates.
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

As someone who works daily at the intersection of investigations, governance reform, and institutional strengthening, I have seen firsthand how limited we are when we fight corruption without the right information.

And I have also seen the power of data — when it is collected well, analysed well, and used well. Today, Africa stands at a turning point. We can no longer rely on perceptions or sporadic case outcomes to tell us whether our governance systems are improving. We must move toward evidence-based integrity systems, where decisions, policies, and reforms are all driven by reliable data.

Why Data Must Lead the Anti-Corruption Agenda?

Corruption is not static. It evolves, hides, and adapts. But data exposes what would otherwise remain invisible.

In our work, whether in investigations, oversight, or civil recoveries, data has allowed us to:

- Identify patterns across multiple cases
- Spot recurring weaknesses in procurement and supply-chain systems
- Strengthen referrals to law enforcement partners such as the South African Police Services, the South Africa's National Prosecuting Authority, the South Africa's Assets Forfeiture Unit, and Auditor-General South Africa.
- Improve turnaround times and performance
- Provide leadership with insights that drive real reform

Simply put, data gives us a roadmap — not just of what went wrong, but what must change.

In terms of Africa's Emerging Data Momentum, across the African Continent, we are beginning to see practical innovations such as:

- Electronic procurement systems generating automatic red flags
- Financial intelligence units fusing data to track cross-border flows
- Case management tools improving investigative efficiency
- Sectoral dashboards highlighting high-risk areas in health, infrastructure, and local government
- The African Union's move toward standardised anti-corruption indicators

These developments are not just technical upgrades — they are governance reforms.

The Gaps We Must Address, BUT we must be honest: Africa's data landscape is still uneven.

We face:

- Fragmented systems
- Limited interoperability
- Inconsistent data quality
- Shortage of advanced analytics skills

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- Weak cross-institutional data sharing

Without solving these challenges, our measurements — and therefore our reforms — will always be incomplete.

2025 G20 South Africa's Presidency

From the **2025 G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group, under the South Africa's Presidency and the first-ever G20 Presidency on the African soil**, South Africa has seized the opportunity to underscore the vital linkages between the G20 anti-corruption agenda, and the priorities outlined in the African Union's Agenda 2063.

We have issued the Chair's Statement during the Ministerial Meeting held on 30 October 2025. **In the Chair's Statement, we have included a paragraph on measurement of corruption.** This paragraph is under Paragraph 17 and I quote: *"Representatives encouraged cooperation with UN bodies, relevant institutions, and experts to continue the work in the area of measuring corruption and assessing the effectiveness of anti-corruption policies and measures and support international initiatives in this regard. They looked forward to the outcome of the second session of the global conference entitled "Harnessing Data to Improve Corruption Measurement" scheduled for December 2 - 4, 2025, in New York, USA and encouraged participation of relevant stakeholders."*

We are indeed, looking forward to the outcome of this Conference.

We are also pleased that paragraphs 113 and 114 of the G20 2025 South Africa Summit: Leaders' Declaration included paragraphs on the outcome documents of the Anti-Corruption Working Group.

Once again, allow me to extend heartfelt thanks to our knowledge partners, whose technical expertise and unwavering support have greatly enriched the quality and depth of our work, and my dear friend, Marcelo, for his exemplary leadership, wisdom, and partnership.

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A Practical Way Forward

From the work we do daily, it is clear what Africa needs:

1. Integrated data ecosystems that connect procurement, audits, investigations, and financial systems
2. Real-time and predictive analytics, so that we detect risks before losses occur
3. Reliable beneficial ownership data, to trace corruption networks across borders
4. Continental measurement standards, so we compare performance objectively
5. Open, accessible public data, because transparency strengthens trust and accountability

These shifts will not only strengthen institutions — they will strengthen the social contract between government and citizens.

In Conclusion

Colleagues, if there is one message I want to leave with you today, it is this:

Data is no longer a support tool. It is a reform instrument.

It tells us where systems are failing, where controls are weak, and where corruption is taking root.

And it gives us the leverage to change those systems — decisively and sustainably.

Let us build a continent where corruption has nowhere to hide because our data tells us where to look, what to fix, and how to improve.

I thank you.

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