

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL****MESSAGE ON INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY****9 December 2013**

Corruption suppresses economic growth by driving up costs, and undermines the sustainable management of the environment and natural resources. It breaches fundamental human rights, exacerbates poverty and increases inequality by diverting funds from health care, education and other essential services. The malignant effects of corruption are felt by billions of people everywhere. It is driven by and results in criminal activity, malfunctioning state institutions and weak governance.

Good governance is critical for sustainable development, and vital in combating organized crime. Every link in the trafficking chain is vulnerable to corruption, from the bribes paid to corrupt officials by dealers in arms and drugs to the fraudulent permits and licenses used to facilitate the illicit trade in natural resources.

Corruption is also rife in the world of sport and business, and in public procurement processes. In the last decade, the private sector has increasingly recognized its role in fighting corruption. A Call to Action launched by the United Nations Global Compact and partners is mobilizing businesses and Governments to engage in transparent procurement. Guidelines are also being developed to help business fight corruption in sport sponsorship and hospitality.

The UN is strongly committed to fulfilling its own obligations. Operating in some of the world's most unstable environments, the UN faces multifaceted corruption risks that can undermine our efforts to advance development, peace and human rights. We have developed a robust system of internal controls and continue to remain vigilant and work hard to set an example of integrity.

Corruption is a barrier to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and needs to be taken into account in defining and implementing a robust post-2015 development agenda. The UN Convention against Corruption, adopted 10 years ago, is the paramount global framework for preventing and combating corruption. Full implementation depends crucially on effective prevention, law enforcement, international cooperation and asset recovery. On this International Anti-Corruption Day, I urge Governments, the private sector and civil society to take a collective stand against this complex social, political and economic disease that affects all countries. To achieve an equitable, inclusive and more prosperous future for all, we must foster a culture of integrity, transparency, accountability and good governance.