



Sixth Global Conference of Parliamentarians against Corruption - Program Brief -

Theme: Bringing perpetrators of grand corruption to justice for a sustainable world where all citizens can live in prosperity and dignity

Tagline: Justice, Dignity and Prosperity

Motivation: The GOPAC membership unanimously mandated GOPAC to establish grand corruption as a crime at international law, to enable international institutions and alliances to apprehend, prosecute, judge, and sentence the guilty. This mandate was unanimously adopted at the [Fifth Global Conference of Parliamentarians Against Corruption](#), held in Manila, Philippines, in February 2013. The issue was further explored in a [discussion paper](#) released by GOPAC in mid-November 2013, and again at the [Forum of Parliamentarians](#), an event parallel to the Fifth Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, at the end of November 2013. Participants at the forum unanimously adopted a Declaration that set out GOPAC's path to take this issue forward. GOPAC is now recognized as the lead organization working against grand corruption, due to the firm decisions taken by our membership.

In addition, in September 2015 the United Nations will adopt its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Goal 16 includes commitments to accountability and fighting corruption. GOPAC believes that combatting grand corruption is not only a keystone to achieving the SDGs but is also part of a larger agenda for justice. There can be no sustainable development without measures to fight corruption.

Our theme for the Sixth Global Conference will further consolidate our position on these issues and continue to build momentum. It will create a brand that will resonate with our members and anti-corruption stakeholders. In addition, due to the complexity and broad nature of the fight against grand corruption and its relationship to the SDGs, our panel sessions will incorporate issues relating to our Global Task Forces as well as our regional and national chapters.

Panel Sessions: The Sixth Global Conference of Parliamentarians will include six panel sessions (2 running concurrently). Below are suggestions for topics, as well as potential speakers and moderators.

Session 1: Stop Stealing from Us: Tools and mechanism to build anti-corruption prevention systems

This panel will look at existing tools to prevent crimes of grand corruption before they can happen. It will provide participants with knowledge of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) processes, both internationally and domestically, and what steps legislators can take to prevent kleptocrats from capturing state institutions. In particular it will examine the international cooperation section of the UNCAC and existing mechanisms in place in Europe through GRECO. It will also provide participants with a country perspective from Ukraine.

Session 2: Grand Corruption: Let us bring them to justice

In [GOPAC's discussion paper](#), released in lead-up with the Forum of Parliamentarians held in Panama in 2013, GOPAC outlined the mechanisms the international community could use to bring to justice those who commit crimes of grand corruption: universal jurisdiction, regional courts, an international treaty, and a free-standing anti-corruption court. This panel will further exam these options with an emphasis on implementation. It will also discuss the actions national legislators can take in the international arena.

Session 3: Paralyzing Grand Corruption and Recovering Stolen Assets

This panel will invite civil society to the conversation and examine partnerships that can be formed to help citizens who have been victims of grand corruption. Panelists will discuss efforts in civil actions as well as public campaigns aimed at stifling further acts of grand corruption. They will also discuss asset recovery and share success and challenges in this regard.

Session 4: Ethics, Conduct, and Governance for Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at All Levels

This panel will address the 16th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), on developing accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. Ethics and conduct codes are crucial tools to fighting corruption and ensuring accountability and transparency, yet many countries across the world have yet to develop and implement meaningful codes in their legislatures. This panel will examine how parliamentarians can take active roles in creating ethics and conduct codes and ensuring that they are successfully implemented. It will also help guide participants through first-hand accounts of successes and challenges encounter in countries with existing codes.

Session 5: Increasing Women Parliamentarians' Leadership on Non-Traditional Issues

This panel will address the 5th Sustainable Development Goal, on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. Women's representation in parliaments around the world remains insufficient, considering women make up over 50 per cent of the population. The women that do take office often end up involved in portfolios related to "soft" issues. Their involvement is often limited concerning issues relating to finance, defence and intelligence, yet these are key areas where oversight is critical to the fight against corruption. This panel session will examine the causes behind this limited

involvement and seek to find solutions to encourage participation in these portfolios by women parliamentarians.

Session 6: The High Cost of Institutionalizing Democracy

Critics to the system of campaign financing argue that the high cost of running for office and the current ways of meeting those costs not only distract elected officials from their primary task of lawmaking, but leave the door open to the influence of special interests. By soliciting contributions from special interests groups to finance a costly election campaign, politicians may feel a sense of obligation to their benefactors and no longer represent the interests of his or her constituency. This panel will discuss the downside of democracy in terms of high cost political campaign and seek possible options in making democratic process more efficient.

Partner Sessions: Following the 5th Global Conference, debrief conversations with staff showed that it would be beneficial to the organization and our members to offer partner organizations opportunities to host panel sessions on topics of their choosing. Given the short time frame for this conference, we would approach individual potential partner organizations as opposed to opening up a bid-process for proposals. We will offer 4 sessions which would run concurrently at the end of the second day of the conference once all GOPAC sessions are completed.