

Concept Note

Virtual Consultation Session - Cooperation and Settling Disputes

8 May 2020, 15:00 – 16:00 (UTC)

via Zoom, registration is required *

Background

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development emphasizes the importance of mobilizing sufficient financing, both at the domestic and international level, for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Insufficient financial accountability, transparency and integrity is eroding the ability of States to generate resources and directly undermines the efforts of the global community to successfully achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The challenge will also be exacerbated by the economic downturn and financial turmoil due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ensuring effective implementation of the Addis Agenda to realize the transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals requires global cooperation on financial accountability, transparency and integrity. The High-Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda (FACTI Panel) was therefore convened by the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council. The Panel includes 17 high-level people from policy making, academia, civil society and the private sector. The Panel is mandated to explore further actions that may be needed by the international community in the following areas: financial and beneficial ownership transparency, tax matters, bribery and corruption, money laundering, confiscation and disposal of the proceeds of crime and the recovery and return of stolen assets.

The Panel will hold a number of consultations, which will be held virtually due to COVID-19, to solicit comments and suggestions from interested stakeholders. Together, these deliberations and inputs will feed into an interim report of findings to be presented in September 2020 and the final report expected in February 2021. In this session, the FACTI Panel welcomes all suggestions and comments from experts in the field of cooperation and settling disputes. To guide the discussion, the first background paper prepared by the FACTI Secretariat, as well as a short issues note provide an initial review of some challenges and trends related to financial accountability, transparency and integrity. In their first meeting held on 31 March 2020, Panel members agreed to organize their work plan around three main areas, which will be discussed during three consecutive consultations with experts: cooperation in tax matters; transparency, public reporting and anti-corruption measures; and cooperation and settling disputes.

At the meeting the Panel would like to hear from experts what they view as the priority actions for improving cooperation and standardization on bribery investigation and prosecution, examining options to strengthen peer review processes, exploring options to improve capacity and improving international cooperation on asset recovery and return. The Panel would also like to solicit ideas on

which areas the Panel can generate sufficient political support to tackle the challenges the world is facing in relation to cooperation and settling disputes.

Objectives

The specific objectives of this virtual meeting are:

1. Apprise participants of the main areas of focus that were discussed in the FACTI Panel's first virtual meeting and the Panel's draft work plan;
2. Solicit inputs and get feedback from civil society on the key priority issues and challenges proposed by the Panel, particularly in the area of cooperation and settling disputes; and
3. Solicit ideas on generating political momentum for advancing actions on improving international cooperation and settling disputes.

Format/Programme

The virtual meeting will be structured as an interactive discussion.

Opening remarks (7 min)

- *FACTI Panel Co-chairs*

Overview of work progress (10 min)

- *Irene Ovonji-Odida, FACTI Panel cluster co-coordinator*
- *Thomas Stelzer, FACTI Panel cluster co-coordinator*

Open discussion (40 min), initial interventions:

- *Emile van der Does de Willebois, Coordinator, Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative*
- *Hennie Verbeek-Kusters, Head, Financial Intelligence Unit – Netherlands & Interim Chair of the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units*
- *Hon. Mark Wolf, Integrity Initiatives International*
- *Abiola Makinwa, The Hague University of Applied Sciences*
- *Stephen Karangizi, Director, African Legal Support Facility*

Closing remarks by FACTI Panel Co-chairs (5 min)

* Invitations and instructions to join a Zoom meeting will be sent to participants included in the email distribution lists of the Secretariat. IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE INVITATION CONTAINING THE LINK, PLEASE PROVIDE THE CORRECT EMAIL ADDRESS on the [registration form](#).