

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

--

**MESSAGE ON INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY**

**New York, 9 December 2020**

In recent years, anger and frustration have erupted at corrupt leaders and governments. In some countries, people have taken to the streets with demands for social justice and accountability.

Amidst these deep concerns, the COVID-19 crisis creates additional opportunities for corruption. Governments are spending rapidly to get economies back on track, provide emergency support and procure medical supplies. Oversight may be weaker. And the development of vaccines and treatments adds to the risk of bribery and profiteering.

Corruption drains resources from people who need them, undermines trust in institutions, exacerbates the vast inequalities exposed by the virus, and hinders a strong recovery. We cannot allow stimulus funds and vital emergency resources to be diverted.

Recovery from the pandemic must include measures to prevent and combat corruption and bribery. We need broad partnerships to strengthen oversight, accountability and transparency, building on the global anti-corruption tools provided by the United Nations Conventions against Corruption.

Action against corruption should be part of broader national and international reforms and initiatives to strengthen good governance, tackle illicit financial flows and tax havens, and return stolen assets, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. We must take the opportunity for ambitious reforms and initiatives at the first-ever General Assembly special session against corruption next year.

On International Anti-Corruption Day, all of us – governments, businesses, civil society and all stakeholders – must resolve to work together to promote accountability and end corruption and bribery for a more just and equal world.