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Your Excellency,

In my capacity as the Executive Secretary of the Assembly of Parties, I have the honour to inform you that **the fourth session of the Assembly of Parties to the International Anti-Corruption Academy (AoP to IACA)** will take place in **Vienna, Austria, from 9 to 11 December 2015**, at the Vienna International Centre (VIC) and/or at the seat of IACA in Laxenburg/Vienna, respectively. I would also like to draw your attention to a number of relevant matters regarding the preparation of this session.

Established on 8 March 2011 as an intergovernmental organization, IACA comprises a constituency of 64 Parties to date (with 53 original Signatories), bringing together two thirds of the global population. Since the last session of the Assembly until now, four more countries have joined the organization.

Pursuant to Article V of the *Agreement for the Establishment of IACA as an International Organization* (the Agreement), the Assembly serves as the forum for Parties to consult on the overall policy of the organization and on other matters of interest. As with previous sessions of the AoP, it is intended that the General Discussion will start with a **High-Level Segment** at the beginning of the session so that representatives of ministerial (and/or higher/equal) rank have an opportunity to address the conference, afford guidance for its deliberations, and set the political direction for the work of the organization.

Parties and observers are therefore encouraged to be represented at the highest possible political level and include in their delegations policymakers and experts on the issues to be covered by the Assembly.

Furthermore, I would like to underline that all States and International Organizations which have not yet done so are kindly invited to deposit their instrument of accession, ratification, acceptance, or approval with the Depositary of the Agreement, the Austrian Federal Minister for European and International Affairs, at their earliest convenience. In accordance with Article XVIII of the Agreement, for every State or International Organization which ratifies, accepts, approves, or accedes to the Agreement, it shall enter into force sixty days after the date of deposit of the respective instrument. In this context, States and International Organizations wishing to be Parties in time for the fourth session and thus enjoy, *inter alia*, voting rights are reminded to submit their respective instrument not later than **Friday, 9 October 2015**.

Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession have to be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government, or Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State, in accordance with its domestic law, or in the case of an International Organization, by the competent authority of that organization. Upon request, certified copies of the Agreement as well as templates of instruments of ratification/accession can be provided by the Secretariat and the Depositary, respectively.

One of the agenda items foreseen for the fourth session of the Assembly of Parties is the election of the Board of Governors, in line with Article V, paragraph 3, of the Agreement. Six places are up for election, as five Board members will end their first regular term of three years in 2015 (re-election is possible for one additional term of six years, if the AoP wishes to do so) and one member has resigned due to professional reasons. In accordance with Article VI of the Agreement, the members of the Board of Governors shall serve in their *individual capacity* and be elected for a six-year term, taking into account their qualifications and experience. In line with the Agreement and, in particular, referring to IACA Resolution AOP1-Res-2 of 29 November 2012, the principle of equitable and stable geographical diversity shall be observed. We therefore encourage Parties that wish to nominate candidates for membership of the Board of Governors to circulate and consult their intended nominations with their respective (United Nations) regional groups.

Parties are kindly requested to provide information on nominations to the Executive Secretary of IACA's AoP at the earliest convenience. It is also recalled that the Assembly in previous sessions wished to be provided with comprehensive CVs of respective personalities running for Board membership and that they should be prepared to present themselves *in persona* to the Assembly.

Please note that, as in previous years, informal rounds of consultations among IACA's constituency are intended to be organized in preparation for the session. It goes without saying that the Secretariat will also offer its services to the (chairmanships of the) regional groups. The dates of the consultations, the provisional agenda and annotations, as well as information on accreditation, pledges, and other relevant matters will be submitted in due course. Relevant documents (including the ones from previous sessions of the AoP) are/will also be available in the *Assembly of Parties* section of our website, www.iaca.int.

On a final note, I am pleased to attach the latest edition of our newsletter, containing information on programmes and events, in particular the **third Master in Anti-Corruption Studies (MACS)**, for which applications close on **30 June 2015**. As with previous classes, participants from LDCs may - on a competitive basis - be supported by tuition fee waivers and/or scholarships. At the same time, IACA will ensure broad cultural and geographical diversity among the student body. Also enclosed is an invitation for a festive evening on 10 July 2015 in celebration of IACA's fifth Summer Academy, the graduation of MACS students, the Best of Luis Moreno Ocampo Seminar, and the second Alumni Reunion.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my sincere appreciation for your support as well as the assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration,

Sincerely,

