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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 fifth [regular] session of the Assembly of Parties to the International Anti-Corruption Academy (AoP to IACA)**, as confirmed by the Bureau of the Assembly, will take place in **Vienna** (and/or at the seat of IACA in Laxenburg/Vienna, respectively), Austria, from **10 to 11 November 2016**. I would also like to draw your attention to a number of relevant matters regarding the preparation of this session.

Established as an intergovernmental organization on 8 March 2011, IACA comprises a constituency of 67 Parties to date. Since the last session of the Assembly, three 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 starts with a **High-Level Segment** at the beginning of the session, so that representatives of ministerial (and/or higher or equal) rank have an opportunity to address the conference, afford guidance for its deliberations, and set political direction for the work of the organization.

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

Furthermore, I would like to kindly invite all States and International Organizations which have not yet done so, 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 fifth session and thus enjoy, *inter alia*, voting rights, are reminded to submit their respective instrument not later than **11 September 2016**.

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 Depository, respectively.

Further to the formal communication to constituency Members of 22 April and 17 June 2016, respectively, which - in line with Rule 4 para 1. of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure - informed Member States about both the Board of Governors' and the Dean's recommendation to the Bureau, respectively, to convene for a special session of the Assembly, and which, consequently and after a meeting of the Assembly's Bureau at the end of May, invited Member States to inform whether they concur, it is my duty to notify constituency Members that such **a special session is not to be convened**. Though a majority of responding Parties [69,6% *pro* vs. 30,4% *contra*] expressed their concurrence to such a convention, the Assembly's Rules of Procedures (Art. 4) would have required a majority of the total number of Parties to concur. That quorum was not met. The Assembly's Bureau, at its session in the last week of July, therefore decided to call for the regular, fifth session of the Assembly of Parties to be convened earlier than last year, *in concreto* 10 to 11 November 2016, as outlined above. The Bureau also proposed that the Assembly of Parties may wish to convene the 6th session in 2017, and subsequent ones, at an earlier stage in the course of a given year.

As for the upcoming regular **2016 session** of the organization's Assembly of Parties, please be informed that, as in previous years, informal rounds of consultations among IACA's constituency will 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. Pertinent documents will also be sent to constituency Members shortly after the next meeting of the organization's Board of Governors, which is scheduled in the last days in September. All relevant documents (including the ones from previous sessions of the AoP) are/will be available, at your convenience, in the *Assembly of Parties* section of our website, www.icaa.int.

Wishing you an enjoyable end of the season, also please accept, Your Excellency, my sincere assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration,

