**Intervention from Dr. Joe Maloof, Commissioner, National Anti-Corruption Commission**

**3RF Working Group on Anticorruption, Public Procurement, Public Financial Management, and Civil Service Reform**

**January 11, 2024**

As you all know, the Commission made a 2023-2024 annual action plan (it is on our website ) on supporting the capacity development of the national Anti-Corruption Commission. I will be discussing with you today, what we have achieved during the year 2023 and what we will be doing during the 2024 and not limited to that. The contents of the action plan consist of 10 pillars. I will be discussing with you what we have achieved in each pillar consecutively.

**Pillar One:** Represents the joint tasks, number 1.4, regarding communicating with the public and stakeholders concerned with the NACC’s scope of work: In 2023 we have accomplished the task of laying out an integrated communication strategy for NACC along with an implementation plan. this communication strategy will be focusing on awareness and working with our partners such as GIZ and others. We have accomplished also the designing and developing a brand identity and basic communication materials, such as logo, official seal, identification cards. We have accomplished also designing and creating a website where we have launched it on 9 December 2023 to introduce NACC and its activities, publish its public and private reports, and enable it to perform its tasks, provided that the website includes specialized features that enable it to receive interest and financial disclosures, as well as all kinds of complaints, reports, notices and information. disseminate all visual educational and awareness materials and carry out surveys and engage with users, and finally receiving whistleblowing disclosures, and communicate securely with whistleblowers. We have also developed general promotional, educational and awareness materials in accordance with the communication strategy. Here we are talking about visual, auditory, and written. Point 1.5 in our annual action plan regarding organizing, internal work and joint prioritized logistics: we have acquire, operate and maintain a server and related necessary supplies to connect all NACC departments and ensure information security and work efficiency. We also acquired, operate and maintain a renewable energy system, supported by an emergency backup power system (of course along with a generator provided by expertise France) that will facilitate our work having said that we never have electricty. We have set up offices for the NACC’s president, vice president and the secretary general and their assistants and provide them with the necessary offices, supplies and digital work tools. Here we are talking about the fourth floor that is made for conferences and training and the seventh and eighth floors that will be furnished within three weeks. I would like to mention also that the sixth floor was made already fully equipped and well operational and is assigned for the asset recovery department. This project was made by the UNODC.

Before I continue, allow me to thank all the partners that help us and continue to help us in every step and I would like to mention here the EU, UNDP, Danida, UNODC, Expertise France, World Bank and GIZ. Excuse me if I have forgotten any.

**Pillar Two:** Investigating corruption crimes will be on our agenda for 2024 where we will be setting up two rooms dedicated to investigation procedures, including relevant interviews, calls, and meetings and equipping rooms with necessary office supplies and digital work tools, including a separate camera and recording system to ensure confidentiality efficiency and compliance with laws. This will be on the first floor.

**Pillar Five:** Education and awareness raising activities. I would like to mention here that we have met with the educational center for research and development, and agreed to work together on introducing the concepts of integrity and transparency into the curricula and to organize regional workshops in association with UNDP and GIZ. We have also made the anticorruption code with IACD (International Association for Community Development). In 2024 we will be also working with GIZ on training the members for a better communication skills in public and interviews.

**Pillar Six**: Enforcing the asset and interest declaration system: as you all know, we started receiving the asset declaration forms from day one and it is now online on our website where the users can register and save their data, as well as print the form and submit it to us. All the data entered on our website will be saved in our database while waiting to adopt the e-signature in the government so it can save a lot of work and allow all the users to apply online without having to submit it in paper. In 2024 will be also working on an asset declaration system, that will enable the commission to analyze and study all the asset declaration forms in our data. this project will be supported by the World Bank, UNDP, EU and Danida.

**Pillar Seven**: Contributing to the enforcement of the whistleblower protection law: in 2023 we have coordinated with the public prosecution and NACC in order for the commission to benefit from the case management system later on (sop). This project will be followed up in 2024.

**Pillar Eight**: Contributing to the enforcement of the right of access to information: in 2023 we have designed a digital system to receive complaints regarding the right of access to information law through the NACC’s website, including features that allow collecting ,organizing and analyzing this as well as issuing related reports and statistics. We have also received many requests for the right of access to information, whereby the commission have treated all cases.

Regarding developing and publishing an annual report and special reports, we have signed a contract in 2023 with ARA, with the support of the UNDP, to evaluate the extent of the administration’s commitment to enforcing provisions of the right to access information law. Their work requires a comprehensive survey of the public administration, which exceeds 300 departments and 1100 municipalities. This job will be accomplished during 2024.

**Pillar Nine**: Enforcing the asset recovery law: I can only mention that the unit was fully equipped as I have mentioned before, by the UNODC. During the year 2023 the members went over a training regarding this matter.

**Pillar Ten:** Monitoring the proper enforcement of the law and enhancing transparency in the petroleum sector: in 2024 we will be having a guide on the law and the role of the NACC in order for us to be efficient and active.

More over, the NACC is committed to report all the requirement reports such as the annual report that was done already in 2023 and is published on our website. we are in the process of finalizing and publishing the one of 2024.

This month, we are in the process of submitting a circular to all departments for reporting on asset declaration. And we will be reporting also any other reports mentioned in our action plan.

In brief, I would like to mention that the Commission has also developed scientific and technical cooperation with many local and international bodies where the President and all members of the Commission have participated in many regional and international seminars and conferences specialized in combating and preventing corruption, with the aim of exchanging information, developing the expertise of the Commission’s members, and acquiring best practices in its management. The number of conferences and seminars in which the Commission participated exceeded 20 seminars and conferences, which were organized in Lebanon, the Kingdom of Jordan, France, Austria, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the USA. These seminars and conferences were formed an opportunity for the Commission to communicate with anti-corruption bodies in many countries and with international and non-governmental bodies and organizations that have established cooperation relations and projects to sign memorandums of understanding with them.

I would like also to mention that we have participated in the conference organized by the World Bank in Washington DC and in the COSP10 in Atlanta last month.

In the same context of cooperation with other commissions, during the first quarter of 2024, we are working on signing MOU’s with Nazaha in Iraq , the commission in Egypt and some cooperation with Morocco.

Finally, I would like to **highlight on the obstacles that prevent the commission to work properly**: until now and over almost 2 years since starting, we are six members only that are working, hardly without any employee in the Commission. As you all know, the Commission requires a minimum of 80 employees spread across its departments to be properly functional. The main problem was the delay of the bylaws. The good news, is that this week , we got the approval of the bylaws from the State Council (مجلس الشورى ). It was a long way, but it is finally done. I would like to thank the State Council, the Civil Service Council, the Minister of Finance, the international and civil societies for their help and ongoing support to accomplish our bylaws.

Ladies and gentlemen, the challenges and difficulties are still many. Whether in terms of the commission’s ability to employ with salaries that do not exceed $150 dollars per month for the employee, or in terms of the Commission’s budget, which does not exceed $300,000 in the 2024 budget, in which the commission will not have the ability to expand and meet its needs to perform well.

As you can see, the action plan 2023-2024 is in place, the President and all the Commission’s members are enthusiastic and ready to work in all conditions and difficulties that our country is facing. I will leave our case in your hands, and I thank you for your time to listen to me. Thank you.