

Towards a Corruption-Free Future: Insights from the G20 1st ACWG Technical Meeting

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The G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG) is important in the global fight against corruption, addressing issues that transcend borders and impact nations worldwide. As South Africa assumed the G20 Presidency from December 1, 2024, to November 30, 2025, the ACWG has emerged as a vital platform for collaboration among member states to strengthen international anti-corruption efforts.

Established in 2010 in response to the increasing complexity of corruption and its detrimental effects on economies, governance, and public trust, the ACWG is guided by the St. Petersburg Strategic Framework. This framework allows the ACWG to develop action plans focused on practical contributions to combat corruption. The 2025-2027 ACWG Action Plan outlines a comprehensive approach to anti-corruption measures, emphasizing transparency, accountability, and cooperation among diverse stakeholders.

The first G20 ACWG Technical Meeting under South Africa's Presidency, held in the Western Cape from March 3 to 5, 2025, paves the way for upcoming meetings in June in Brazil and the final Technical Meeting in October in Mpumalanga, leading up to the G20 ACWG Ministerial Meeting.

The Inaugural ACWG Technical Meeting provides member states an important opportunity to establish the agenda and lay the groundwork for future discussions, encouraging dialogue and collaboration to enhance an-



Above: Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Inkosi Mzamo Buthelezi, delivers the keynote address on the first day of the 1st Technical Meeting of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group in Cape Town.



Left: Advocate Andy Mothibi, Co-Chairperson of the ACWG (centre) with delegates at the Technical Meeting

ti-corruption strategies.

During this inaugural Technical Meeting, participants focused on several key priorities:

1. Strengthening Public Sector Integrity: A primary objec-

tive is to promote transparency and accountability within public institutions. By sharing best practices and developing standards of conduct for civil servants, member states aim to enhance ethical governance and restore public trust.

2. Increasing Asset Recovery Efficiency: The ACWG will address the challenges of recovering stolen assets, which is necessary for combating corruption. The United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) underscores the importance of returning these assets.

3. Inclusive Participation: Recognizing that combating corruption requires a multi-stakeholder approach, the ACWG seeks to enhance participation from public and private sectors, civil society, academia, and youth. Engaging diverse groups fosters a comprehensive understanding of corruption's societal impact and encourages collective action.

4. Whistle-Blower Protection: Protecting whistle-blowers is critical in the fight against corruption. The ACWG will explore measures to strengthen legal frameworks and enforce-

ment mechanisms that safeguard individuals who report corrupt practices.

As we prepare for the upcoming Ministerial Meeting in October, the outcomes of the inaugural ACWG Technical Meeting will serve as a foundation for discussions to solidify commitments against corruption. The October 2025 Ministerial Meeting in Mpumalanga is particularly significant, as it will bring together G20 leaders and ministers to reaffirm their global commitment to combating corruption.

South African Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Inkosi Mzamo Buthelezi, stated, "As Co-Chair of the ACWG, South Africa is using its Presidency to emphasize the need for harmonizing national laws with international standards, enhancing transparency, and building robust legislation to restore public confidence in our justice systems."

"Open communication about our progress is key, as combating corruption is not just a legal challenge but also a fight for public trust. By keeping citizens informed, we reinforce that corruption has no place in our societies and that integrity must be the foundation of governance worldwide."

As the host nation, South Africa is uniquely positioned to leverage its G20 Presidency to tackle local and international corruption challenges. The ACWG's focus on promoting good governance aligns with South Africa's commitment to enhancing democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

South Africans must be informed and engaged in these discussions, as the government aims to strengthen public trust and create an environment conducive to sustainable development. By nurturing transparency and accountability, the South African government reinforces the message that corruption has no place in society.

The ACWG aims to create a more equitable and sustainable world through collective action and a commitment to integrity. South Africa's leadership in these discussions will advance the country's anti-corruption efforts and contribute significantly to the global fight against this pervasive issue.

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Panel Members at the 1st Technical Meeting of the G-20 Anti-Corruption Working Group held in the Western Cape from March 3 to 5, 2025



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