Doha, Qatar - As countries negotiate policy and financial commitments at the 26th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC), Corruption, as with climate change itself, looms as one of the greatest threats to Planet Earth.

Corruption hampers climate actions and its financial commitments. A corrupt system raises the vulnerability of countries to the negative impact of climate change and environmental destruction.

In climate-related sectors, Corruption has caused the loss of annual estimates of $29bn in the forestry sectors. A minimum of $11bn is gained by criminals from the illegally harvested timber trade. While bid-rigging, undue influence, bribery, mark up in the infrastructure development also potentially occurred in the renewable energy sector.

The tangible achievement in lowering the global temperature as advised by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will also depend on countries’ success in maintaining national integrity, promoting good governance, and preventing Corruption.

As Corruption exists in all sectors of climate change interventions, GOPAC calls upon Parties to the Conference to enable a more robust structure of climate governance and better transparency for climate interventions. The Paris Agreement adopted six years ago has recognized the importance of climate engagement of all levels of government and various actors. At COP26, such recognition needs to be manifested by forging stronger climate governance with the involvement of the parliamentary community both at the global and national levels.

Parliaments and parliamentarians are key stakeholders in getting the future deals of COP26 be implemented. Their involvement showcases the genuine commitments to advance climate interventions through national accountability and regular constitutional monitoring. It also represents citizens’ aspirations coming from all parts of life, groups, ages, and interests.

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GOPAC also emphasizes the need to provide stronger transparency, accountability, better governance, and commitment tracking towards financial mobilization delivery and innovation, including in the carbon market and the existing pledge of resources mobilization of at least $100bn from developed countries. A solid regulatory framework to manage conflict of interest and influence peddling is also needed to prevent emission reduction actions and or policies to become the new breeding ground of corruption.

It is imperative for countries to keep up with their climate promises. For this reason, GOPAC encourages national parliament and parliamentarians to strengthen their oversight mechanism to ensure such international commitments are met and that national accountability is preserved. In addition, GOPAC emphasizes the need for countries to fully implement the UN Convention against Corruption obligations including those related to combatting bribery in public sectors and foreign public officials, trading in influence, as well as conflict of interest.

GOPAC supports the preliminary draft of the outcome document of the IPU Parliamentary Meeting on the Occasion of the COP 26 to be held on 7 November 2021 as a shared responsibility of the parliamentary community to the world we live in.

Corruption is real, as is the adverse impact of climate change on our planet. Let us commit to fighting Corruption in climate through stronger accountability and transparency in action and policies of all the current and upcoming climate rulebooks.