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Egypt's Anti-Corruption and Asset Recovery Capacities Further Enhanced by UNODC



20 March 2013 - As another significant contribution to the Egyptian efforts on combating corruption and stolen asset recovery, UNODC, together with Basel Institute on Governance are implementing a training programme to enhance the capacity of the key Egyptian law enforcement agencies and judiciary to analyzing, investigating and prosecuting international corruption cases, at the Training Centre of the Administrative Control Authority.

The eight-day course on "Financial Investigation and Asset Tracing and Recovery" is the second in a series of seven courses organized by the two partners which are planned to take place all over 2013. The course content has been tailored to the reality and legal technicalities in Egypt, on the basis of a need identification mission conducted last year of all institutions involved in fighting corruption.

Thirty two participants from the Administrative Control Authority, the International Cooperation Department and Illicit Gain Department in the Ministry of Justice, Money Laundering Combating Unit, and the Central Auditing Organisation as well as trainers from the National Center for Judicial Studies attended the training. It is anticipated that by the end of the training, participants will be equipped with a package of knowledge and skills that will bring real added value to their daily work.

Moreover, five professionals will be selected from among the participants to be involved in a longer programme aimed at forming a team of Egyptian trainers on financial investigation and asset recovery.

The opening speeches were given by Leif Villadsen, UNODC Deputy Regional Representative, Phyllis Atkinson, Head of Training, Basel Institute of Governance and Hosam Rashwan, Deputy of Admin Control Authority. Stressing that the fight against corruption is central to the struggle for human rights and development, Villadsen stated that "Corruption has always undermined social progress and propagated inequality and injustice." He added that "UNODC is highly honored to support Egypt in its endeavor to limit consequences of corruption and to embrace your enthusiasm to make change and reach progress".

Asset recovery is a relatively new field of expertise in both the requesting and the requested countries and, as a result, the balance is not always met between the resources and time allocated compared to the results. Like in all other countries going through the same challenges, the Egyptian authorities face technical and legal obstacles in relationship with many of the requested countries that host Egyptian stolen assets. Such obstacles have so far slowed down the process and put a question mark on its outcome. Yet, the Government of Egypt has shown commitment and receptiveness in reaching progress in this case.

As an outcome of this training, participants will be better equipped in conducting thorough investigations, collecting and interpreting evidence, handling international requests and succeeding in the cooperation with foreign jurisdictions for seizing, confiscating and repatriating stolen assets.

The training is part of the European Union-funded project " Supporting Measures to Combat Corruption, Money Laundering and to Foster Asset Recovery in Egypt", signed between the Government of Egypt and UNODC in 2011. In addition to fostering measures on asset recovery, the project aims to provide anti-corruption authorities in Egypt necessary assistance to develop a legal and institutional reform, capacity to detect, investigate and prosecute corruption, means to build the public confidence and empower civil society to take action in this field.

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