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## **International Anti-Corruption Day 2020 marked with notable achievements for the Cayman Islands**

2020 has been a challenging, complex and disruptive year for most countries around the world and the Cayman Islands is no exception. Together we have overcome numerous natural disasters, watched contentious international elections, and faced the global health pandemic COVID-19, each presenting evolving opportunities for increased corruption.

As a result, countries around the world are now looking to develop plans to reopen under a “new normal”. Fittingly the United Nations celebrates International Anti-Corruption Day 2020 under the theme *Recover with Integrity*, encouraging member states to move forward with integrity and accountability.

As we look to move forward we are reminded to consider where we have come from and all that we have achieved. 2020 has been fortified by significant strides in the fight against corruption in the Cayman Islands. The 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2020, marked 10 years since the inception of the Anti-Corruption Commission (the “Commission”) which was created in accordance with Part 2, Section 3 of the Cayman Islands Anti-Corruption Law (2008) (the “Law”). The Law (now the Anti-Corruption Law (2019 Revision)) itself has seen amendments in order to strengthen the independence and powers of the Commission.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of March we welcomed the commencement of the Standards in Public Life Law 2014, Amendment Law 2016, and Regulations 2020. These pieces of legislation seek to assist with establishing and promoting standards in public life (including the introduction of measures to prevent conflicts of interest), expanding the collection of declarations for the Register of Interests, and providing directions on the appointment, responsibilities and compensation of board members.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of July the Anti-Corruption Commission (the “Commission”) was formally accepted as an Associate Member of the International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre allowing the exchange of intelligence to assist with the development of the intelligence picture on grand corruption cases and receipt of further support to partners across the world with grand corruption investigations, unique training opportunities, and the facilitation of Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) requests between jurisdictions.

As 2020 draws near to a close, the Cayman Islands heralds a final notable achievement as the UK Government will soon extend its ratification of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (the “Convention”) to the Cayman Islands. The Convention is a unique tool for developing a comprehensive response to a global problem which covers five areas: preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation, asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange. The extension will provide the Commission, amongst other law enforcement agencies, with another tool to combat corruption in the public and private sectors alike.

His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Martyn Roper OBE said: “I very much welcome the announcement that the UK Government will extend its ratification of the UN Convention against Corruption to the Cayman Islands and will today send the notification of extension to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Convention is the only legally binding international anti-corruption instrument and a unique tool for developing a comprehensive response to a global problem. The extension demonstrates international recognition that the Cayman Islands has the necessary good governance policies and mechanisms in place to address corruption domestically and internationally.” His Excellency further commented “Through the work of oversight bodies such as the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Commission for Standards in Public Life the jurisdiction will continue to make notable strides toward stability, prosperity and good governance.”

The Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly in October 2003 and entered into force in December 2005. It “is the most comprehensive international treaty on anti-corruption...[and]...is widely accepted as the international framework guiding the fight against corruption. It not only provides for punishment of perpetrators of corrupt acts but also seeks to promote preventative measures and to facilitate the recovery of stolen assets”<sup>1</sup>

Chairman Sophia Harris said, “The anticipated extension of the Convention to the Cayman Islands will provide the Commission with a legal framework of cooperation from over 185 other Member States in criminal matters and in investigations of and proceedings in civil and administrative matters relating to corruption”. Mrs. Harris further commented, “The Commission continues to grow from strength to strength and the forthcoming extension of the Convention speaks to the calibre of work being carried out in our jurisdiction and will provide the Commission with a further tool to combat corruption, and to promote integrity and accountability throughout the Cayman Islands.”

The Commission wishes to thank the Honourable Attorney General Samuel Bulgin, QC, JP, the former Chairman of the Commission Richard Coles, and Legal Research Analyst in the Attorney General’s Chambers Ms. Shari Walton for their efforts in seeking the extension of the Convention to the Cayman Islands.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/anti-corruption/guidance-note---uncac-self-assessments-going-beyond-the-minimum/>

# ACC ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

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The Commission joins with the United Nations and affiliate anti-corruption organisations around the globe today recognising International Anti-Corruption Day and the fight against corruption. Members of the public are encouraged to report any suspicions of corruption with any supporting evidence to the ACC. Reports can be made in person or anonymously. Civil servants are also reminded of their obligation to report any suspicion of corruption to the ACC as soon as they become aware. For more information about the Commission visit [www.anticorruptioncommission.ky](http://www.anticorruptioncommission.ky), email [info@anticorruptioncommission.ky](mailto:info@anticorruptioncommission.ky), or call 244-3685.

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