

22nd session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration

Written statement by The American University in Cairo, Egypt

Agenda item 4: Peer Exchange with voluntary national review countries and voluntary local review cities on experiences and promising practices in implementing Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 17

SDG 16 calls for building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions and therefore it is the goal that is of most interest to public administration and public policy academics. Although a lot of positive achievements have been recorded as regards the implementation of SDG 16, yet there is still more that can be done and improved upon. This is especially the case for the reporting process in place. Different countries are very selective in reporting on their performance, notably when it comes to SDG 16. They pick and choose which indicators to report on, and how, and after they publish and present their reports, there are no questions asked, or any significant discussions that occur.

There is already shadow reporting by civil society for SDG 16, including a consortium of international civil society organizations under the title of ‘SDG 16 Data Initiative’. The consortium includes International IDEA, Open Society Foundation, Peace Research Institute Oslo, Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Transparency International, the World Justice Project, and others. The inaugural report by the SDG 16 Data Initiative, pointed out to several challenges in trying to track progress, not only related to governments refraining from reporting on specific aspects of performance, but also the limited capacity and resources available for data collection and reporting.

Suggestions Going Forward:

- The UN Committee of Experts for Public Administration needs to be more inclusive and recognize the work done by civil society organizations and academia and incorporate their shadow reporting in the tracking of implementation progress for SDG 16.
- More capacity building and investment in statistical bureaus of nation states is needed to help them overcome the hurdles related to data collection and development of the different needed indicators, and to enable them to report on achievements, or lack of.