

UN HLPF – Session on SDGs 3, 10, 16 and 17

Margit Kraker, Secretary General of INTOSAI

I would like to thank you for the invitation to this session.

The contributions today have underlined that the pandemic has increased social inequalities and weaknesses in many areas – like health care, education, or gender equality.

At the same time, the crisis has shown us that institutions that are ensuring transparency and accountability have become more important than ever.

Supreme Audit Institutions – SAIs – can carry out audits at all levels of government. They have the essential task of assessing how taxpayers' money is used and whether the measures taken are transparent, sustainable and inclusive.

In doing so, they contribute in particular to SDG Target 16.6.

In the light of the challenges imposed by the crisis, SAIs all over the world have adapted their audit plans and methodologies: They have not only carried out numerous audits on national support measures.

The scope of SAIs' audit work goes much further. Transparent decision-making is essential to ensure citizens' trust in government institutions. SAIs are therefore, for example, also assessing the procurement of the necessary medical equipment.

INTOSAI – the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions – has supported its member SAIs in many ways in their important tasks. For example, through:

- Audits of crisis preparedness and response;
- Audits of vaccine rollouts; and

- The performance of cooperative audits linked to SDGs 3, 5 and 12 – addressing resilient national health systems, gender equality and sustainable public procurement.
- INTOSAI is also very active in the fight against corruption and mismanagement – in particular through the cooperation with UNODC.
- And INTOSAI continuously promotes the financial and operational independence of SAIs.

SAIs' engagement as a response to the crisis has further emphasized the interlinkages between the SDGs 3, 10, 16 and 17 – for example

- through their audits in the areas of health and social care,
- by ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of crisis funds, and
- by examining if these funds reach the intended people for the intended purposes.

INTOSAI's and SAIs' lessons learned from the crisis include that in order to be prepared for future crises, transparency and accountability mechanisms and national contingency plans have to be established early on.

In the future, SAIs will have a key role to play in assessing their governments' recovery plans – also based on the principle of “leaving no one behind”.

SAIs have therefore a vital role in contributing to building “more peaceful, equal and inclusive societies”.