

## **FOREWORD**

In 2024, the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) performed its duties in a pragmatic manner and gave full play to its functions as a graft fighter and an ombudsman. It also achieved positive results in the work of preventing and combatting corruption and improving the relevant regimes.

As regards the work related to the fight against corruption, 113 cases were placed on file for investigation and 33 new cases were placed on file for mutual case assistance in the year, which recorded an increase compared to 2023. There was also an increase in the percentage of cases referred to the Public Prosecutions Office for handling. Among these cases, two were corruption cases that took place in the private sector. Throughout the year, there were, for the first time, cases where several integrated resort enterprises took the initiative to file complaints about suspected cases of corruption in the private sector committed by their employees, reflecting a change in society's attitude towards the handling of corruption cases in the private sector. Furthermore, the CCAC continued with perseverance to look into the illegalities detected in the cases from the previous year. It also carried out the investigation of a public fund on its own initiative and notified the entities concerned of the administrative problems and the loopholes of supervision detected so that improvement measures can be taken.

In recent years, there has been a significant decrease in typical corruption cases in the public sector where public servants take advantage of their powers and functions to accept bribes. Nevertheless, some public servants have continued to take chances in fulfilling their general duties such as the duty of assiduity. As a result, the CCAC handled several relevant cases during the year. As executors of public power, public servants' conduct directly affects the credibility and the level of integrity of public services. Therefore, public servants should, from the beginning of their duties, remain loyal and dedicated, and should avoid becoming reckless or negligent due to the increase of their seniority or professional progression. This is why the traditional professional ethics of leaders lay emphasis on "prudence", which means they must be prudent when acting alone, dealing with every detail and exercising power. Only when actions

begin with prudence and are not carried out negligently can troubles be avoided.

As regards ombudsman actions, 147 cases were processed last year. They mainly involved the areas of public service regime, municipal affairs and people's livelihood, and land and public works. Among them, the public service regime remained the focus of attention, particularly about the disciplinary matters of public service workers, management and operation of public services and personnel recruitment, among other issues. In addition, the areas of municipal affairs and people's livelihood covered environmental hygiene, noise problems, administrative licences and occupation of public land and so forth. As to the area of land and public works, the issues mainly involved illegal works, land concession procedures and inadequate supervision on public works, among others.

In order to support the government to continuously improve its governance, the CCAC takes advantage of its dual function as a corruption fighter and an ombudsman in a timely manner. In 2024, the CCAC opened a comprehensive investigation file in the scope of ombudsman's office to follow up cases of claiming false sick leave initially investigated in the scope of corruption fighting. As regards the operation and the regime pertaining to sick leave of workers of the Public Administration operated by the Medical Inspection Committee, it put forward its opinions for improvement and law revision proposals with a view to helping the Public Administration prevent problems from arising at their root. The CCAC will continue to uphold the principle of legality and will, in conjunction with the principles of adequacy and proportionality, strengthen the supervision of public affairs, so as to meet public expectations.

The CCAC is delighted to witness the increasing proactiveness of the society in preventing corruption in the private sector, and it hopes to build an integrity firewall together with various sectors. In 2024, the CCAC launched an extended integrity training activity entitled "Workshop on Value of Integrity" and also produced, in collaboration with a youth association, an information programme on corruption prevention, with a view to taking forward the

development of a probity culture in the private sector. Other focused promotion work included strengthening support for educators in integrity education and implementing the “youth-oriented” approach so as to allow young people to have more opportunities to directly participate in the work of integrity building.

As mentioned at a meeting related to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, effective and timely communication and cooperation between States Parties are important factors to effectively suppress cross-border crime and the flow of people involved in corruption crime. In response to the increasing complexity of the tasks in the area of integrity building, in 2024, the CCAC actively strengthened international and regional exchanges, accumulated experience in integrity building and mastered the latest technologies so as to better face new challenges in the fight against corruption and in the carrying out of the ombudsman’s work.

It is worth mentioning that the year 2024 marked another milestone of the CCAC’s development. With the entry into force of the revised law and administrative regulation of the CCAC, the mission and scope of activity of the CCAC have been further clarified. In addition, the regime for investigators has been optimised and the organisation structure has been improved. It is believed that all these changes will help the CCAC better fulfil its duties and safeguard public interest and will take forward the development of a more fair, transparent, and clean society.

Integrity building is not only a goal of governance, but also an important means of realising social fairness and justice and a basis for long-term social development. Therefore, the CCAC will continue to strengthen its capacity for unity and cooperation, uphold the principles of impartiality, punishing every corrupt act and fighting every corruption phenomenon, and combat all types of corruption crimes in accordance with the law in a pragmatic manner. It will also strengthen its supervision so as to resolutely uphold the legality and reasonableness of public administration actions. In addition, the CCAC will continue to raise public awareness of integrity through innovative means and

actively participate in regional and international exchanges and cooperation. Through the multidimensional integration of systems, cultures and technologies and through innovation, it will further promote the fairness and justice of the Macao society and help the Macao SAR improve its governance efficacy, so as to build a highly efficient and fair society underpinned by the rule of law.

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The Commissioner Against Corruption

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