

2ND VIRTUAL LAUNCH OF THE BOOK

"Taxing Crime: A Whole-of-Government Approach to Fighting Corruption, Money Laundering and Tax Crimes"

January 18, 2023

First, I would like to thank the JVI and Markus in particular, for hosting this event. WU has worked for many years with the JVI and in the tax work our two organisations have a complementary agenda.

The book we launch today is part of a joint WB, UNODC, and WU project on improving good governance in Africa. This project has been running for 7 years and focuses on the ways that governments can counter all forms of IFF: money laundering, bribery, tax evasion, and other financial crimes.

It brings together almost more than 250 officials from 30 African governments from tax and customs administrations, FIU, MOF, Justice, and others, as well as representatives from the private sector and academia.

Its focus has been on:

- Access to information on BO
- Misuse of client-attorney privilege
- Exploring the potential of new free trade agreements to open up new avenues for IFF
- UWO: a powerful tool to counter IFF
- Using new technologies in this area
- And the key role of IAC; a theme which had dominated our discussion over these 7 years

Why is this so important:

- It is a low-hanging fruit
- a Whole-of-government approach is the best way for governments to respond to the spread of IFF
- as is an effective exchange of information between different law enforcement agencies
- But whilst governments are good at talking the talk they are less good at walking the walk.

What then are the main barriers:

- Different depts have different cultures which influence their approach to this problem
- Laws and regulations can limit the EOI
- competition rather than cooperation: who claims the credit for a successful case!
- incompatible technological platforms

This joint WB/WU book which we are launching today explores these issues and takes the analysis beyond Africa and provides practical case examples based upon the experiences of a wide range of governments.

My colleagues Sid and Yara will go into more detail.