Cairo, 29 December 2015

- The League of Arab States convened the first Session of the Conference of States Parties to the ?Arab Convention against Corruption? (ACAC) at its headquarters in Cairo on 27-28 December 2015. The State of Kuwait was unanimously chosen to preside over the Conference, with the Republic of Iraq acting as the Deputy and the Arab Republic of Egypt as the Rapporteur. The Conference was attended by ministers and heads of national authorities concerned with anti-corruption from the 12 Arab States Parties to the Convention, in addition to two observers including the ?Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network? and the Kingdom of Bahrain, which has signed but not yet ratified the Convention. This comes as part of the efforts to implement the provisions of the ACAC, which was adopted on 21 December 2010 and has so far been ratified by 12 out of the 22 Arab countries including Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates. At its first Session, the Conference adopted its internal rules of procedure and established an open-ended governmental group to follow up on all matters related to the implementation of the Convention. The Conference shall convene every 2 years to discuss progress achieved and take the necessary decisions to support related efforts. The ACAC, which is the most recent multi-lateral anti-corruption treaty to be adopted in the world, is very similar to the UN Convention against Corruption of 2003, albeit with less detail on certain issues. Nevertheless, given that it is the only legally binding Arab framework in this regard, the Convention holds great value that could be utilized to strengthen related measures at the national level in the countries of the region.