



STABILITY PACT
FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

ANTICORRUPTION INITIATIVE
REGIONAL SECRETARIAT LIAISON OFFICE

Organized with the support of:



Republic of Montenegro
Directorate for Anti-corruption Initiative

11th SPAI Steering Group Meeting

09-10 October, 2007

Draft Agenda and background information

Podgorica, Republic of Montenegro



AGENDA

Tuesday, October 09, 2007

Morning	Arrival of participants and Hotel registration
12:30 – 14:30	Lunch – Restaurant in Hotel “Crna Gora”
14:30 – 15:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Opening remarks:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sorin Sterie, Expert Coordinator, Stability Pact Office, Brussels- Igor Luksic, PhD, Minister of Finance, Republic of Montenegro- Start-up session – General presentation of the Meeting and the Agenda- Overview of the RSLO Vision, Mission and Strategic directions- Future of SPAI and RSLO, regional responsibilities and further steps in applying the MoU
15:30 – 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Discussion – New structure of the Initiative, New Chairman- Nomination/Election of the new SPAI Chairman- Introducing the new staff of SPAI RSLO office in Sarajevo
17:00 – 17:30	Coffee break
17:30 – 19:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Discussion – Work plan 2008-2009 - Identifying countries' needs- The expected results of the Work plan for 2008-2009, (if expected results reflect the national priorities and countries' needs; areas for focused trainings within the Work plan; opportunities for RSLO involvement)
19:00 – 20:30	Free time
20:30	Official dinner offered by the Host, Restaurant TBC



Wednesday, October 10, 2007

9:00 – 09:30	Review of the first day
09:30 – 10: 30	Adoption of the Strategic Documents: Internal rules (Office policy Manual) and General rules of the entire initiative
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee break
10:45 – 11:45	Discussion – Strengthening the role of SPAI Senior Representatives
11:45 – 13: 00	Possibilities for the regional cooperation and ensuring the full coordination of the envisaged activities
13:00 – 13:30	Questions and Answers
13:30	Lunch break- Restaurant in Hotel “Crna Gora”
Afternoon	Departure of participants from Podgorica



GENERAL PRESENTATION

I. Background information

The Stability Pact Anti-corruption Initiative (SPAI) was adopted in Sarajevo in February 2000 to address one of the most serious threats to the recovery and development of South East European (SEE) countries. Corruption is highly detrimental to the stability of democratic institutions, discourages foreign direct investment, hampers economic growth, and can undermine the European Union accession process.

SPAI represents a focused forum where coordination and dialogue on the many facets of corruption can take place among the countries of the region and the donor community. SPAI's multidisciplinary approach incorporates issues such as the adoption of international legal instruments, promotion of good governance, strengthening the rule of law, promotion of transparency and integrity in business operations, and development of an active civil society in the fight against corruption.

The Anti-corruption Initiative recognizes the goal of EU integration as the main driving force and incentive for structural reforms in the region, and makes the best use of its resources to support this goal. In all its efforts, the Initiative stresses the importance of achieving practical results and showing the impact of the measures adopted by the SPAI countries.

During the five years of the Anti-corruption Initiative, member states have launched consistent and complex reforms of their institutional and legislative framework aimed at decreasing the levels of corruption and improving the efficiency of their policies.

The rhythm of reforms is now stronger. Romania finalized its European Union (EU) accession negotiations and is expected to join the EU on January 1, 2007. Croatia recently started EU accession negotiations and the other SPAI member countries are moving toward the same goal.

In this context, all of the SPAI member countries have approved national anti-corruption strategies and action plans that underline their political commitment to address the issue of corruption and state capture. Furthermore, their legal frameworks have largely been harmonized with European standards set by international conventions, and sensitive areas are now regulated (e.g., conflict of interest, assets disclosure, free access to information, financing of political parties, public procurement and money laundering). In addition, in each SPAI member country, specialized anti-corruption bodies have been created or are now in the process of being established.

In all these areas, the SEE countries still have a long way to go in implementing this new legislation and in overcoming specific challenges, such as: reform of the judiciary and public administration; the negative perception regarding levels of corruption, both from the public and business communities; the lack of sound projects dealing with education and public awareness raising; the issues of understaffed anti-corruption structures and low salaries; and the important role of preventative anti-corruption measures.



2. RSLO: Creation of a Regional Anti-corruption Center

In September 2003, the SPAI Steering Group agreed to establish a Regional Secretariat Liaison Office (RSLO) in Sarajevo to promote regional ownership of the initiative and enhance regional capabilities to lead the fight against corruption in SEE. (Initially, SPAI's secretariat functions were performed by the Council of Europe [CoE] and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD]). Six months later, RSLO became operational and it is currently the only center in SEE devoted solely to fighting corruption at the regional level. Staffed by experts from the region, RSLO tailors its activities to directly support the efforts of SPAI countries to meet the standards and requirements related to the Justice and Home Affairs field in the European Union accession process.

RSLO's major focus areas include:

- supporting and enhancing regional cooperation among anti-corruption agencies and institutions involved in anti-corruption;
- promoting the adoption of relevant international anti-corruption standards;
- developing specific training programs, such as regional seminars for judges, prosecutors, investigators, auditors, governmental officials, and police; a summer school for junior staff; and twinning-type activities;
- promoting thematic agendas focused on fighting high-level corruption in vulnerable areas, such as judiciary, public administration, public procurement, privatization, and political party financing;
- facilitating expert networking in all sectors, including government, NGO, business, civil society and mass media; and
- providing a clearinghouse for sharing best practices and exchanging relevant information.

3. Activity brief description

3.1. Time framework

09 – 10 October, 2007

3.2. Venue

Hotel "Crna Gora", Podgorica

3.3. Discussion themes:

- Nomination/Election of the new SPAI Chairman;
- Introducing the new staff of Sarajevo Office;
- The expected results of the Work plan for 2008-2009, (if expected results reflect the national priorities and countries' needs; areas for focused trainings within the Work plan; opportunities for RSLO involvement);
- Adoption of Strategic Documents (Internal rules (Office policy Manual) and General rules of the entire initiative);
- Possibilities for regional cooperation and ensurment of the full coordination of the envisaged activities;
- The main overall goal of this meeting is to discuss future of SPAI and RSLO regional responsibilities and further steps in applying the MoU.



The **answers** and **comments** on the following main topics that will be discussed should be **prepared in advance**.

3.4. Working language:

All courses will be conducted in English. No translation will be provided.

4. Participants

- Up to 9 SPAI Senior representatives from the member countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia), representatives of SPAI partner countries and partner/donor organizations.
- Organizers – SPAI RSLO staff and representatives of Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative (DACI).

5. Costs:

Having in mind that, according to Memorandum of Understanding, the Parties agreed to accept joint responsibility for the SPAI and to ensure the financial sustainability of SPAI RSLO, please be informed that costs related to your participation (visa, international travel, accommodation/bed & breakfast) should be **covered by your respective countries/ministries**. Other expenses e.g. transportation airport-hotel-airport, welcoming dinner and other official meals will be borne by the host.

Upon your notification the organizers will provide the support in ensuring visas for entering the Republic of Montenegro.

6. Organizers/hosts:

The organizers of this event are: Stability Pact Anticorruption Initiative–Regional Secretariat Liaison Office (SPAI RSLO) from Sarajevo (financed by USAID through ABA ROLI) and the Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative (DACI) from Podgorica.