

REGIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVE

24th STEERING GROUP MEETING



Summary, Conclusions and Decisions

*Belgrade, Serbia
5 December, 2016*

24th Regional Anti-corruption Initiative (RAI) Steering Group Meeting took place in Belgrade, Serbia on 5 December, 2016. It was organized by RAI Secretariat and hosted by the Ministry of Justice of Republic of Serbia

Participants

24th RAI Steering Group Meeting was chaired by the RAI Chairperson Mr. Davor Dubravica. It was attended by 9 member states' representatives:

- **Albania** – Ms. Lorena Pullumbi – Senior Representative, Adviser to the Minister, Minister of State on Local Issues/National Coordinator on Anti-Corruption;
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (via video link) – Ms. Branka Banduka – Senior Representative, Expert Adviser, Department for Combating Organized Crime and Corruption, Ministry of Security;
- **Bulgaria** – Ms. Dora Zgurovska – Deputy Senior Representative, Head of Internal Security and Police Cooperation at the EU and International Co-operation Directorate, Ministry of Interior;
- **Croatia** – Ms. Maja Baricevic - Senior Representative, Head of Anti-corruption Sector, Ministry of Justice;
- **Macedonia** – Ms. Elena Dimovska – Deputy Senior Representative, Associate, Unit for Coordination of Anti-corruption Activities, Ministry of Justice;
- **Moldova** – Mr. Valeriu Cupcea – Deputy Senior Representative, Head of the Anti-corruption Policies and Programmes Division, National Anti-corruption Center;
- **Montenegro** – Ms. Mirela Bakalbasic – Deputy Senior Representative, Senior Advisor, Department for International Cooperation and Standards Agency for Prevention of Corruption;
- **Romania** – Ms. Anca-Luminita Stroe – Senior Representative, Legal counsellor, National Office for Crime Prevention and Asset Recovery, Ministry of Justice;
- **Serbia** – Mr. Branislav Stojanovic, Delegated Representative, Counsellor, Ministry of Justice.

RAI Secretariat was represented by:

- Mr. Tomislav Curic – Anti-corruption Expert / Acting Head of Secretariat;
- Ms. Aida Bulbul – Finance and Administrative Officer;

Summary of Discussions

RAI Chairperson Mr. Davor Dubravica welcomed and greeted all members of the Steering Group and expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Justice of Republic of Serbia for their hospitality.

On behalf of the hosting authority, Counsellor at the Ministry of Justice of Republic of Serbia, Mr. Branislav Stojanovic opened the Steering Group Meeting and welcomed all participants by wishing a successful and fruitful meeting.

After the welcoming remarks, RAI Chairperson introduced the Agenda which was adopted by the members of the Steering Group.

1. Selection procedure for Head of Secretariat position

RAI Chairperson, Mr. Davor Dubravica recalled the 23rd RAI Steering Group Meeting when it was decided by consensus to reopen the call for applications in order to broaden and strengthen the pool of applicants.

Mr. Dubravica pointed out that the position reopening resulted in increased number of eligible applications that were received and evaluated and that there had been a broader pool of applicants that were considered for evaluation. Moreover, the Chairperson informed the Steering Group that, out of five shortlisted candidates, two candidates will be present in person for the interview, while the other three would be interviewed via Skype.

Questions for the interview were designed to evaluate and reflect the necessary competences and values listed down in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the position and were approved by the Steering Group. Interviews were facilitated by the Finance and Administrative Officer. Chairperson addressed the interview questions with candidates, while the Steering Group members evaluated all interviewed candidates. All interviews followed the same procedure, including core questions and timing, to ensure all candidates had an equal opportunity to present themselves.

The candidate that received the highest total score out of technical evaluation and interviews was Mr. Vladan Joksimovic. Following the selection procedure and subject to satisfactory reference and background screening, the Steering Group decided that the contract shall be offered to Mr. Joksimovic

2. Exchange of views with the Anti-corruption Agency of Serbia

Representative of Anti-corruption Agency of Serbia, Ms. Milica Bozanic, Assistant Director for International Cooperation, elaborated on the current work of the Agency, with emphasis on the new Law on Anti-Corruption Agency, which is expected to be approved by the Parliament

in upcoming period. She also informed the Steering Group about results in conducting anti-corruption assessment of legislation and development of integrity plans in Serbia. In terms of strengthening cooperation with national and international bodies, Ms Bozanic emphasized that the Agency signed Memorandum of Understanding with many national institutions involved in anti-corruption, as well as with anti-corruption bodies of Macedonia, Montenegro, Italy and Anti-fraud Office of Catalonia. Country representatives raised several questions, referring to cooperation with the Prosecutor's Office, monitoring of the Anti-corruption Action plan implementation, role of the Agency in controlling of party funding and cooperation with misdemeanour courts in Serbia. Acting Head of RAI Secretariat informed the Steering Group about the fruitful cooperation with the Agency in implementation of the Regional Programme on Strengthening the Capacity of Anti-corruption Authorities and Civil Society to Combat Corruption and Contribute to the UNCAC Review Process.

3. Request by Georgia for observer status in RAI

Mr. Aleksandre Baramidze, First Deputy Minister of Justice of Georgia gave a short presentation of Anti-Corruption Reforms in Georgia with focus on the Anti-Corruption Council, Open Government Partnership and Institutional Framework.

Moreover, Mr. Baramidze used the opportunity to present the request of Ministry of Justice of Georgia for joining RAI in the capacity of an Observer.

Following Mr. Baramidze's presentation, the Steering Group welcomed Ministry's request and openness to partner and collaborate with RAI. It finally decided to grant Observer status to Georgia.

4. Information from the Secretariat: RCC Programming Cycle (2017-2019) and initiative to sign MoU with RAI; Proposal of the new activity in 2017 Raising integrity in law enforcement

Mr. Tomislav Ćurić, Acting Head of Secretariat informed the Steering Group that RAI Secretariat took part in the South East Europe 2020 Strategy programming cycle for 2017-2019, and provided contribution to the Programming Document by proposing actions to be part of the Programme. All actions are in line with RAI Work Plan and objectives envisaged within

the Regional Programme, which is currently implemented by RAI. It will be on a three-year rolling basis, with regular updates.

Mr. Ćurić also informed that the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) proposed to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with RAI, as Regional Dimension Coordinator for the implementation of the Strategy 2020 for South East Europe. The aim of MoU is to enable better cooperation between the RCC Secretariat and RAI Secretariat, to define the working arrangements, mutual activities, coordination and monitoring within the SEE Strategy 2020 implementation. Steering Group approved the initiative to sign MoU with RCC and to adjust the text of MoU, taking into consideration suggestions provided by representatives of Romania and Macedonia.

Acting Head of Secretariat proposed a new activity to be added to RAI Working Plan (2016-2017) – *Building integrity capacities of law enforcement agencies and strengthening regional cooperation*. Proposed activity is in line with RAI Strategic Document and it aims to support national law enforcement bodies in preparing for the GRECO Fifth Evaluation round. The objective of the activity is also to establish a regional cooperation in the field of integrity and professional standards in law enforcement. Considering that this specific topic needs to be treated multi-disciplinary, RAI Secretariat will seek for partnership and co-financing in implementation of the presented activity, including with the South East Europe Police Cooperation Convention (SEE PCC) Secretariat. The Steering Group endorsed Secretariat's initiative to add proposed activity to RAI Working Plan (2016-2017).

Other Business

Under this Agenda item, Ms. Aida Bulbul, Finance and Administrative Officer, presented the request for reallocation of approved 2016 Budget. Following the explanation, the Steering Group approved the request.

Conclusions and Decisions

The RAI Steering Group:

- Following the selection procedure, selected Mr. Vladan Joksimovic for the position of Head of Secretariat;
- Accepted request of Georgia for the observer status in RAI;

- Approved the initiative to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Regional Cooperation Council;
- Endorsed Secretariat’s initiative to add a new activity to RAI Working Plan (2016-2017) – “Building integrity capacities of law enforcement agencies and strengthening regional cooperation”;
- Accepted proposal for budget reallocation of the approved 2016 budget.