



REGIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVE
◦ SECRETARIAT ◦

South - East European Regional Conference

“Suppression of Corruption in Public Procurement Systems”

Draft Agenda

November 12 – 13, 2008

Venue: Hotel “Croatia”, Cavtat, Croatia

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Background:

Regional Anti-corruption Initiative (RAI) is initially adopted in Sarajevo in February 2000 under the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SEE) to face corruption – one of the most serious threats to the recovery and development of the countries in the region. Currently the Initiative consists of 9 member countries from the region – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia and one observer – UNMIK/Kosovo, providing all of them with a general framework for coordination, optimization of efforts and permanent dialogue with the partner community involved in the fight against corruption.

RAI Secretariat is established in 2004. It is located in Sarajevo. Staffed by experts from the region, the Secretariat is the executive implementing body of the Initiative. It is currently the only center in SEE devoted solely to fighting corruption at a regional level. RAI Secretariat has as a priority among its activities on the anti-corruption field setting up transparent and efficient Public Procurement (PP) systems.

About the Conference:

The Conference will focus on the recent developments and problems in PP systems – one of the areas extremely vulnerable to corruption. PP, or the governmental purchases of goods and services from the private sector, has grown substantially in recent decades. In most European States, procurement purchases are estimated at 10-15 per cent of GDP, or some 25-30 per cent of public expenditure, representing many billions of euro. In this light, PP legislation has been improved. EU *Procurement Directives* set legal obligations for national procurement systems and practices. The countries from SEE seeking EU membership made significant reforms in their PP systems in order to prevent corruption and meet the standards of transparency, integrity, and of open, and fair competition. Nevertheless these efforts, PP remains an area exposed to corruption and further anti-corruption measures should be applied.

The conference on PP will have two main components. The first one is dedicated to the European standards in the area of PP. Experts from OECD, SIGMA and OLAF will intervene in topics related to assessment of the existing PP systems, tools to detect and investigate corruption in PP, in particular “red flags”, as a new tool taken from the practice of international organizations and multilateral investment banks, etc. The second component will give floor to the national representatives to present and discuss the strong and the weak points of the respective national PP systems, as well as some current issues like e-procurement, application of “red flags”, etc.

The main objective of the conference is to provide PP practitioners with a more detailed view of the status of the PP systems, to gain from the experience of experts coming from OECD, SIGMA and OLAF, and to enrich them with more ideas in setting up transparent and efficient PP systems towards the main goal – EU accession.

Participation:

Participants from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and UNMIK/Kosovo are expected to attend the event.

Partners:

The Conference is organized by RAI Secretariat with the financial support of USAID through ABA – ROLI.

Working language:

The Conference will be held in English language only. Simultaneous interpretation won't be provided.

9.00 – 9.15	Registration of participants
9.15 – 9.30	<p><i>Opening Session</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Edmond Dunga</i> – Head of RAI Secretariat; <i>Mr. Drazen Ivanusec</i> – Head of the Public Procurement Directorate of Croatia; <i>Ms. Michelle Barrett</i> – Regional Program Officer, USAID regional Services Center Budapest: USAID support to the concept of RAI. <i>Mr. Sorin Sterie</i> – Senior Political Advisor in Brussels Liaison Office on Security, Defense and JHA, Regional Cooperation Council; <i>Mr. Stanislav Aleksandrov</i> – Anti-corruption Expert in RAI Secretariat.</p>
	<p>Session 1 – <i>“EU and international organizations’ requirements for a sustainable fight against corruption in the area of Public Procurement”</i></p>
9.30 – 10.15	<p><i>“EU standards in PP procedures”</i>- the Utilities Directive 2004/17/EC and Directive 2004/18/EC on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts – legislative history and overview of main provisions.</p> <p><i>Peter Bennett</i> – Principal Administrator, Public Procurement, SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management)</p>
10.15 – 10.30	Coffee break
10.30 – 11.15	<p><i>“Assessment of the current status of Public Procurement systems in South – East Europe in the light of the EU requirements”</i> – based on the Commission’s progress reports and assessments done by SIGMA for each country.</p>

	<p>Peter Bennett – Principal Administrator, Public Procurement, SIGMA</p>
11.15 – 12.00	<p><i>“OECD” Recommendation on Enhancing Integrity in Public Procurement:</i> OECD countries agreed in October 2008 on a pioneer policy instrument to help governments prevent mismanagement, fraud and corruption in public procurement.</p> <p>Mrs. Elodie Beth – Policy Advisor, Innovation and Integrity Division, OECD Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate</p>
12.00 – 12.30	Discussions on Session 1
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
	Session 2 – <i>“Tools to detect and investigate corruption”</i>
13.30 – 15.00	<p><i>“Red Flags – indicators providing warning signals at different stages of the procurement process, that problems have already appeared or might arise”.</i></p> <p>Mrs. Nicola Ehlerman-Cache – Senior Policy Analyst, OECD</p>
15.00 – 15.30	Discussions on <i>“Red Flags”</i>
15.30 – 19.00	Free Time
19.30	Official Dinner

	Session 2 – <i>“Tools to detect and investigate corruption”</i>
9.30 – 10.45	<p><i>“Detection and investigation of fraud and corruption in PP procedures within European Institutions” + discussions</i></p> <p>Mr. Borut Markosek – Expert from OLAF</p>
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 – 12.30	<p>Session 3 – <i>“National experience in setting up efficient and transparent PP systems”</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Stana Dolenac</i> – senior Advisor in Department for Development and Education of Public Procurement System, Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, Croatia: <i>“New Public Procurement System in the Republic of Croatia”</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Djinita Foco</i> – Director of the Agency for Public Procurement in Bosnia and Herzegovina: <i>“Implementation of the PPL – anti-corruption measures”</i></p> <p><i>Mrs. Polyta Petrova</i> – Ognyanova – Chief Expert in Department <i>“Methodology and Audit”</i>, National Audit Office of Bulgaria: <i>“E-Procurement”</i> and <i>“Challenges and Weak Points in PP systems to overcome”</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Cicerone Stan</i> – Counselor, National Authority for Regulating and Monitoring PP of Romania: <i>“National Experience in Setting up Efficient and Transparent PP Systems”</i></p>
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.30	<p>Session 3 – <i>“National experience in setting up efficient and transparent PP systems”</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Aleksandar Argirovski</i> – Public Procurement Bureau, Ministry of Finance of Macedonia: <i>“The Implementation of the new PP law</i></p>

	<p>in Macedonia”</p> <p><i>Mrs. Etleva Kondi</i> – Public Procurement Agency of Albania: “Public Procurement and E-Procurement System in Albania”</p> <p><i>Mr. Borisav Knezevic</i> – PP Office of the Government of Republic of Serbia: “Serbian PP System – Actual Moments and Anti-corruption Issues”</p>
14.30 - 15.00	<p><i>Conclusions of the PP Conference</i> – Participants are expected to make a review of the outcomes of the event, as well as to identify issues of common interest for SEE countries in the area of Public Procurement object for further improvement.</p>