



STABILITY PACT ANTICORRUPTION INITIATIVE
REGIONAL SECRETARIAT LIAISON OFFICE

***Anti-Corruption Conference on UN Convention against Corruption
09 December 2005, Sarajevo
Parliamentary Assembly BiH, BiH Square 1***

Rationale

While corruption remains one of the biggest obstacles for economical and social development in many countries in the world, world's leaders in fight against corruption has recognised the problem and work, for more than a decade, towards world free of corruption.

United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), adopted on 31 October 2003 by the UN General Assembly, represents a global response to corruption. It is a first global, legally binding instrument about corruption and a comprehensive document which contains measures for prevention, criminalization and international cooperation.

The signing ceremony of this key instrument was held on 9th December 2003, in Merida, Mexico. Ever since, increasing number of countries around the globe are celebrating this day as the International Anti-corruption Day.

Transparency International (TI) had given a significant contribution during the UNCAC negotiation process and is active today in promotion of signing, ratification and implementation of the UNCAC in many countries. Further more, TI is a partner organisation for creation of mechanisms for successful monitoring of the UNCAC implementation. TI calls on anti-corruption practitioners and activists world wide to join in advocating these steps.

Recognising the vital importance for this instrument to be adopted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, TI BiH organised on the 09 December 2004 a UN Convention against Corruption conference, in Sarajevo, BiH, in order to call upon prompt the signing of UNCAC by the BiH authorities and to help establishing the International Anti-Corruption Day as an occasion for the country's leaders to discuss the progress in signing of the UNCAC, its ratification and general progress in curbing corruption in the sectors covered by the UNCAC. This also represents a good opportunity to evaluate the anti-corruption measures and operations of all the responsible authorities in the country during the past years and to raise public discussions about efficiency of certain institutions in dealing with corruption.

The Regional Secretariat of the Stability Pact Anticorruption Initiative (based in Sarajevo) implements a *Regional Project for supporting the process of signing, ratifying and implementing the UN Convention against Corruption*. Within the Project framework series of Pre-ratification and thematic conferences were held and a standard regional compliance matrix was developed. Since the initiation of this project all 8 member countries became signatories and four of them already ratified it focusing more on implementation.

Furthermore, it is expected that through the continued enhanced level of information exchange and professional experience, the countries of the region will be in the position to speed up the process of harmonizing the national legislation with the standards set forth within the UN Convention against Corruption.

The political will of the SPAI member countries to implement the Merida Convention was expressed as the highest political level during the Ministerial Conference organized by SPAI within the European Parliament, in Brussels, May 2005. The 8 participating ministers endorsed the Declaration on 10 Joint measures to curb corruption in SEE. The first measure refers to “signing, ratifying and starting implementing UN Convention against Corruption” within one year timeframe.

In cooperation with the Stability Pact Anti Corruption Initiative, on 09 December 2005, TI BiH is marking for the second time the International Anti-Corruption Day in BiH by organising the UN Convention against Corruption Conference. The conference is a follow up from the last year’s conference and is dedicated to discuss the progress BiH has made towards the UNCAC. While BiH has meanwhile signed the UNCAC the real work is still ahead. Therefore, the aims of this year’s conference are:

- to present the global UNCAC progress report,
- to share experiences with the more experienced countries,
- to discuss, with the representatives of relevant institutions and organizations, areas covered by the UNCAC which may be of particular importance for BiH (such as the measures for curbing corruption in business sector, international cooperation, asset recovery), and
- to discuss mechanisms to be applied in order to ratify and fully implement the UNCAC in BiH.

The Conference will host a number of the relevant parties for curbing corruption in different fields and the expected outcome is a clear action plan for ratification and monitoring of the UNCAC in BiH.