



## CONCLUSIONS

### Conference “Promoting Incorporation of International Anti-Corruption Standards into Serbian Legislation”

The conference, held on 20-21 September in Belgrade and attended by 140 participants, was opened by Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, Minister of Justice Zoran Stojkovic, Ambassador Maurizio Massari, Head of OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro, H.E. Hugues Pernet, Ambassador of the Republic of France to Serbia and Montenegro and Prof. Ugo Draetta, SPAI Chairman. It was organized by the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Montenegro and the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Serbia, in co-operation with the Stability Pact Anti-Corruption Initiative/Regional Secretariat Liaison Office (SPA/RSLO). The conference was funded by a voluntary contribution of the French Government. It gathered representatives from main Ministries, the National Assembly, bodies in charge of preventing corruption and the civil society. International organizations active in the fight against corruption were represented by senior officials: the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the Council of Europe, the Stability Pact Anti-Corruption Initiative, the OSCE and the OECD. Representatives from Montenegro, Slovenia and France presented their experience as well.

Conclusions of the conference were two-fold.

First, it was underlined that all international anti-corruption instruments adopted in the past ten years are now framing a comprehensive set of standards that help legislators and policy-makers to design their legislation and improve their practices in accordance with good governance principles. The necessity of co-ordination among the international organizations active in the anti-corruption field was highlighted as well.

Second, the progress of the Republic of Serbia in adopting some crucial anti-corruption legislation was stressed: during the past few years, fields of public procurement, financing of political parties, prevention of conflict of interest and free access to public information have been regulated by new legislation. Currently, the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and the Criminal Code are pending for adoption. The Law on Establishing a Specialized Anti-Corruption Body and the Law on a Supreme Audit Institution are being finalized. Remaining loopholes in the Serbian legislation and some difficulties in implementation were highlighted by experts and practitioners, in particular in the field of criminalization and effective investigating, prosecuting and sanctioning of corruption-related offences.

As main conclusion, the conference participants urged the Parliament of the State Union to ratify as soon as possible the UN Convention against Corruption, Council of Europe Civil Law Convention and Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention on Corruption. In parallel they urged the Republic of Serbia to further harmonize legislation and practices with international anti-corruption standards.

During the autumn, three expert seminars will be held in the OSCE Mission premises as a follow-up to the Conference. Organized jointly with the Ministry of Justice, the seminars are expected to build on the momentum achieved at the Conference and will aim at making concrete proposals for amendment in Serbian legislation. Their topics will be areas identified during the conference as most urgently requiring legislative improvements:

- Liability of legal persons for acts of bribery
- Adequate criminalisation and effective sanctions for active and passive acts of bribery and bribery-related acts, including criminalisation of bribery of foreign public officials
- Practical aspects of implementation of anti-corruption regulations (investigation, prosecution, judgement, effective sanctioning).