



RAI Secretariat's

NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

October – December 2007

Sarajevo, BiH

January 15, 2008



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I. INTRODUCTION

The time between October – December 2007 was a period of transformation and setting new challenges for the Stability Pact Anticorruption Initiative (SPAI). Since October 9, 2007, through a decision of the member countries, approved at the 11th Steering Group Meeting in Podgorica, the Anti-corruption Initiative of the Stability Pact was renamed as **Regional Anti-corruption Initiative (RAI)**, in line with the transformation of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe into Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the Regional Secretariat Liaison Office (RSLO) became simply the Secretariat.

However, the office in Sarajevo continued the implementation of the Work plan for 2006 – 2007 looking forward the new Work plan for 2008 – 2009, by conducting activities in several key areas:

- providing Secretariat services for the Regional Anti-corruption Initiative;
- executing and implementing RAI specific decisions, policies and strategies;
- assessing the individual country needs and priorities on the anti-corruption field and enhancing the regional cooperation in the fight against corruption;
- assisting the member countries in the process of adopting and implementing the international standards related to the fight against corruption;
- consolidating the relations with partner organizations.

The current report is analyzing the main activities conducted by RAI Secretariat in the last quarter of 2007, highlighting - objective by objective - the activities carried out and the results achieved both in programmatic and organizational development areas.

II. RAI SECRETARIAT'S PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

During the observed period of 3 months RAI SECRETARIAT carried out activities on the following programmatic objectives, envisaged within the Work plan for 2006 – 2007:

Objective I – Supporting the process of adoption and implementation of the UN Convention against corruption by the RAI countries

MEETING WITH THE BIH CHAPTER OF TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

A meeting with Mr. Ljubinko Lekovic - Transparency International program manager, was held in the Sarajevo based office of RAI Secretariat on November 8, 2007.



It was a preparatory meeting for the marking of the International Anti-corruption Day. A big event on the occasion was envisaged in co-organization between the RAI Secretariat, Transparency International (TI), Open Society Fund and American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA-ROLI).

INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY MARKED IN SARAJEVO

The Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative Secretariat co-organized together with Transparency International, Open Society Fund and American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative the commemoration of the International Anti-corruption Day. The event took place on December 10, 2007, in the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH and was attended by representatives from the local state institutions, civil society, private sector, academic community and the media. Mr. Edmond Dunga – head of the office and Mr. Stanislav Aleksandrov – anti-corruption expert took part in the meeting on behalf of the RAI Secretariat. Mr. Stanislav Aleksandrov delivered a power point presentation on the “Role and Importance of the Regional Anti-corruption Initiative”. The following presentations were made by other co-organizers and participants: “Findings and recommendation of the project “Improvement of the National Integrity System”, “The 2007 Global Corruption Barometer” and “Presentation of project law on anti-corruption agency”. After the official part, a comprehensive discussion was held on the draft law on anti-corruption body. BiH has the obligation to adopt this law under United Nations Convention against corruption (UNCAC).

The event was also used by the new staff of RAI Secretariat for establishing close professional relations with the representatives of Transparency International, Open Society Fund and American Bar Association - Rule of Law Initiative, looking for fruitful future cooperation on the anti-corruption field.

Objective 2 - Supporting the process of developing and implementing Regional and National Anticorruption Programs for Raising Public Awareness

Based on its experience in this area, RAI Secretariat reformulated this programmatic objective included in the Work plan for 2006 – 2007. Having in mind that RAI Secretariat has no resource to finance the expensive public awareness campaigns, as well as that, it is impossible to persuade donors for their support in that regard, national resources for public awareness should be identified and ensured by member countries. RAI Secretariat will focus more on supporting existing initiatives and involving the national counterparts in developing further activities as video clips, posters, banners etc.

As a major pillar in its raising public awareness activity, RAI Secretariat maintained and regularly updated its official web site. The web site serves as comprehensive resource center for all the people who show interest in the fight against corruption. It contains information about relevant events, publications, anti-corruption country resources and library, etc.

A new design and address of the web site are envisaged in order to match the changes within the Initiative and the Secretariat. Further updating will also be accompanied by translation of, at least, the home page in every regional language.



Objective 3 - Assessment of the regional anti-corruption needs and specific requirements

One of the main decisions taken at the 11th Steering Group Meeting of the Initiative was the adoption of the new Work plan for 2008 – 2009. The elaboration of the new Work plan had begun during the Strategic Planning Meeting in Sarajevo, June 21-22, 2007, which had been envisaged as a preparatory discussion for the 11th Steering Group Meeting, held in the first half of October, 2007. The SPAI senior representatives had shared the latest information about the current status in anti-corruption activities and national priorities, out of which the types of activities in which SPAI RSLO could provide assistance had been identified. Following the meeting, the Sarajevo based office had been in permanent contact with the Senior Representatives aiming to provide substantial input and suggestions on the regional/countries needs and specific requirements. Finally the Secretariat had delivered the Initiative's draft Work plan for 2008 – 2009 to the SPAI senior representatives. This document was improved with inputs from member countries before, during and after the Steering Group Meeting.

The adopted RAI Work plan for 2008 – 2009 contains information about the regional trends and expectations on the anti-corruption field, as well as a chapter dedicated to the member – states national priorities, based on the challenging calendar set forth within the Ministerial Declaration on 10 joint measures to curb corruption in South Eastern Europe. The senior representatives - in cooperation with all national stakeholders and in consultation with the Secretariat - envisaged the practical steps to be taken in order to ensure the implementation of the commitments endorsed by the Ministers of Justice in Brussels, May 2005. Every member – state defined at least three measures to take up and relevant envisaged actions. In a tabular form inserted in the Work plan, the RAI countries also formulated their focus areas for trainings and conferences for 2008 – 2009, both on national and regional level.

III. RAI SECRETARIAT'S ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Taking into consideration the progress achieved by the office in Sarajevo from its establishment, as well as regarding the RAI Secretariat as the driving force of the Anti-corruption resource center, the Steering Group of the Initiative approved, within the Work Plan for 2006 and 2007, fundraising and sustainability of the office and the institution building process as organizational objectives and priorities.



I. Institution - building process

THE 11TH STEERING GROUP MEETING OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVE

The 11th Steering Group meeting of the Anti-corruption Initiative took place on October 9 – 10, 2007, in Podgorica Montenegro. The main decisions taken in Podgorica concerned the structure, capacity, staff and functional rules of the Sarajevo based Secretariat. The senior representatives agreed on the following:

1. Adoption of the new name of the Initiative as Regional Anti-corruption Initiative (RAI), in accordance with the transformation of the Stability Pact to the Regional Cooperation Council;
2. Election of Mrs. Vesna Ratkovic as the new Chairperson of the Regional Anti-corruption Initiative;
3. Approval of the appointment of Mr. Edmond Dunga as the new Head of the Office and Mr. Stanislav Aleksandrov as the new Anti-corruption Expert of the RAI Secretariat;
4. Adoption of the new Strategic document of the Initiative, Chairman Terms of Reference (ToR), Secretariat ToR, Office Policies Manual, Work Plan for 2008-2009.

The agenda and the conclusions of the meeting are available on www.spai-rslo.org

MEETING WITH GOVERNMENTAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOSTING COUNTRY

The RAI Secretariat staff had a meeting with Mr. Edin Jahic – expert advisor for organized crime in the Ministry of security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, sector for combating terrorism, organized crime and drug abuse. The meeting took place on November 7, 2007, in Sarajevo and was mainly focused on providing a new broader office from the hosting country, as the Secretariat's needs are expected to grow in line with the attempts to increase its capacity to serve as a focal point in the fight against corruption in the region. It was explained to the local official that a fundraising and outreach assistant was in the process to be recruited, which meant that there would be no room for a second anti-corruption expert and possible interns.

Mr. Edin Jahic considered it a serious problem that might affect the normal everyday work of the office and promised his assistance for addressing this issue to his authorities.

II. Fundraising and sustainability of the RAI Secretariat

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on April 13, 2007 in Zagreb, Croatia, and its implementation secured the financial sustainability of RAI Secretariat. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro and Romania already made their annual contribution of 24 000 Euro for 2007, thus financing the operational and



programmatic budget of RAI Secretariat. It is expected that Macedonia (the country has already started a procedure to join MoU) and Serbia will sign the MoU in next months of 2008 and will, together with Moldova, contribute financially to the budget as well.

RAI Secretariat took some measures aiming to strengthen the fundraising policy for programmatic activities and the visibility of the Initiative. In November 2007, RAI Secretariat announced a vacancy and started a selection procedure for the newly established position of fundraising and outreach assistant. The recruited personnel should assist RAI Secretariat in developing and achieving strategic fundraising goals, playing an active role in managing relations with donors, researching and responding to requests, creating and disseminating related outreach materials. More than 40 candidates entered the competition and after a pre-selection 10 were invited to an interview. The main criteria were related, among others, to prior work experience with an international organization especially on the field of fundraising and outreach, previous experience in writing funding proposals and donor reports, familiarity with drafting or managing budgets or other financial procedures and knowledge of international donor community, including EU mechanisms. The competition ended with the selection of Mr. Veselin Jovanovic. Mr. Jovanovic has rich experience in related field including work for International Relief and Development – USA, United Nations Development Program, the Center for Free Access to Information, International Organization for Migration and Refugee Trust Ireland. Some of the key areas of assistance for the newly recruited employee will be:

1. Updating strategic fundraising plan, identifying targets and action items to be completed within specific timeframe;
2. Managing and building relationships with donors, providing outreach materials and other information about RAI upon request;
3. Responding to formal proposal requests that match the strategic fundraising plan and assisting in drawing related budgets;
4. Coordinating outreach efforts to promote awareness – raising of the RAI activities to donors, ensuring wide distribution of outreach materials;
5. Defining ways for using the official web site of RAI as fundraising and outreach tool and assisting the update of its content.

Mr. Veselin Jovanovic officially joined the Secretariat on December 1, 2007. During December, there were already set up some inputs in this area by the development of the following documents:

1. Forms of Project Proposal and Budget Breakdown;
2. Monitoring Guidelines written for Regional Anti-corruption Initiative staff members in charge of monitoring the implementation of Anti-corruption projects. The procedure described in these guidelines has been compiled by the RAI staff members as part of their task to provide accurate and appropriate information on the level of progress of implementation of Anti-corruption projects. This procedure is about monitoring at a project level, i.e. monitoring progress and performance until the end of the operation and final payment is made. The purpose of these monitoring procedures is to guide the RAI staff members through the monitoring process, which begins where the contracting procedures ends;
3. Narrative Report Form;
4. Guidelines for Project Evaluation - these guidelines formalize the evaluation process by breaking it down into a sequential set of discrete steps. This material also provides



guidance in the completion of the project evaluation information sheet, which is the basic source of data for the RAI database. The guidelines, which are to be provided to the team of consultants together with the terms of reference and the project evaluation information sheet at the outset of the evaluation mission, are to be used as a handy reference throughout the evaluation exercise;

5. Donors Matrix;

6. Development of Project Concept for Designing and establishment of RAI's member countries anti-corruption web sites.

IV. EVENTS OF THE RAI PARTNERS

OECD ROUNDTABLE ON THE CHECKLIST FOR ENHANCING INTEGRITY IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN TURIN, ITALY

The head of the Secretariat, Mr. Edmond Dunga, participated in the OECD roundtable on the checklist for Enhancing Integrity in Public Procurement on November 22 – 23, 2007, in Turin, Italy. It was a follow up of OECD Symposium and Global Forum on Integrity in Public Procurement in 2006, where experts had called for a non – binding instrument at the international level for reforming public procurement systems to reinforce integrity and public trust in how public funds are managed. In order to respond to this demand, a checklist for Enhancing Integrity in Public Procurement had been developed. The checklist aims at guiding policy makers at central governmental level in instilling a culture of integrity throughout the whole public procurement cycle, from needs assessment to contract management and payment.

Given that procurement systems across countries reflect various international and national rules, the checklist focuses primarily on policy and practice. It is designed as a non – binding instrument that does not intend to provide a basis for legal regulations such as the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement, the UNCITRAL Model Law or the European Commission Procurement Directives.

Mr. Edmond Dunga participated actively on the second day of the event as a part of the Focus Group on integrity in public procurement. He delivered a power point presentation on OECD checklist stressing at its goals, applicability, target groups and possible users.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE REGIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVE PRESENTED DURING THE WORKING TABLE III MEETING IN TIRANA, ALBANIA.

The meeting of the three Working Tables of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, hosted by the Albanian government, took place on December 3 – 4 in Tirana International Hotel.

The meetings marked the next milestone in the transformation process of the Stability Pact into Regional Co-operation Council (RCC).



During the discussions, special attention was given to the past achievements, lessons learnt and the challenges remaining for the RCC with regards to the Stability Pact's various initiatives and task forces.

The topics discussed within the Working Table III meeting (Justice and Home Affairs) included:

- The role of Stability Pact's Initiatives (and future RCC) in facilitation regional co-operation in the perspective of European integration;
- The need for these initiatives to focus their work on priorities for the region itself and to ensure that this work complements that of other efforts provided by regional and international partners;
- The way in which the RCC may support the initiatives and strengthen their links with the activities of international partners, especially the EU.

RAI chairperson, Mrs. Vesna Ratkovic , took an active role as one of the panelists during the Working Table III meeting focused on Justice and Home Affairs issues. During her speech Mrs. Ratkovic made an overview of the up to date work on the achievements of RAI along with the future steps and envisaged activities in the field of strengthening the regional capacities and co-operation in the fight against corruption through the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the RAI member countries on April 13, 2007, in Zagreb, Croatia.

In this context, the representative of Austria informed the participants about the Anti-Corruption Academy, which has been established on the basis of the Cooperation Agreement signed between Interpol and Austria. As he also underlined, RAI could serve as a regional contact point for the future activities of the Anti-Corruption Academy.