



**STABILITY PACT**  
FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE



**STABILITY PACT**  
**ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVE**

***MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON  
JOINT MEASURES TO CURB CORRUPTION IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE***

**Declaration  
on 10 joint measures to curb corruption in  
South Eastern Europe**

**May 12, 2005**

**Brussels**

**DECLARATION  
ON 10 JOINT MEASURES TO CURB CORRUPTION IN  
SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE**

Recalling the Stability Pact Anticorruption Initiative (SPAI) adopted in 2000 by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and in 2001 by Moldova and Serbia,

Recognizing the progress made by participating countries in implementing anti-corruption reform in five priority areas laid down in the SPAI Compact and Action Plan : adoption and implementation of international instruments; promotion of reliable public administration; strengthening of national legislation and the rule of law; promotion of integrity in the business sector, and active civil society,

Reaffirming that, in order to have an impact on corruption, the recently adopted policy, legal and institutional anti-corruption measures need to be implemented and enforced,

Taking into account the requirements of the United Nations' Convention against Corruption, the Council of Europe's Criminal Law Convention on Corruption and the Civil Law Convention on Corruption, as well as any other relevant international legal instruments,

Observing the "10 principles for improving the fight against corruption in acceding, candidate and other third countries" promoted by the Resolution of the Council of the European Union, concerning a comprehensive EU policy against corruption,

Drawing on the recommendations made by the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption in implementing "the 20 Guiding principles for the fight against corruption" – approved by the Council of Europe resolution (97) 24,

Welcoming the signing in Luxembourg on April 2005 of the Treaty of Accession to the European Union with Bulgaria and Romania,

Recognizing the importance of EU Accession Process of Croatia and of Stabilization and Association Process for the Western Balkans,

Reaffirming recent anti-corruption initiatives, including the London Statement on organized crime (November 2002), Thessaloniki Declaration on Western Balkans (June 2003), South Eastern Europe Co-operation Process Joint Statement on Fighting Organized Crime and Corruption (May 2004) and the EU Presidency Statement on Western Balkans (December 2004),

Acknowledging that the opening of the SPAI Regional Secretariat Liaison Office (SPAI RSLO) in October 2003 was a key step in the process of conveying leadership and ownership of the Anticorruption Initiative to the countries of the region, and that the SPAI RSLO serves as a concrete and visible demonstration of the commitment of the regional states to the continuing, concerted and coordinated fight against corruption in South Eastern Europe,

Drawing on, recognizing with gratitude, and calling for further on-going support of and co-operation with donor countries and international organizations, including the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the United States Department of State through the United States Agency for International Development and with

international financial institutions, including the World Bank, dedicated to fight corruption in South Eastern Europe,

Taking into account the valuable contributions and recommendations of the senior experts participating within the *Conference on Fighting Corruption to Improve the Business and Investment Environment in South Eastern Europe, held in Brussels on May 11,*

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We, ministers coordinating anticorruption activities in South Eastern European countries, gathered in Brussels on 12 May 2005, in the presence of the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, SPAI Chairman and of high level representatives of international partner organizations and donor countries agree to take actions over the next one year aimed to,

in addition to the SPAI Compact and Action Plan,

implement the following 10 measures to strengthen efforts to curb corruption in the South Eastern Europe:

1. Sign, ratify and start implementing the UN Convention against Corruption;
2. Refine and update the existing anticorruption strategies in line with the international conventions, general principles and specific recommendations made by the European Union's institutions and the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption;
3. Set high integrity standards and control mechanisms to address and reduce opportunities for corruption within the public administration, justice system and political parties;
4. Ensure a fair and competition based business and investment climate by combating private-to-private corruption, promoting corporate liability on the basis of international standards, introducing clear rules for whistle blowing, guaranteeing the independence and celerity of the justice act, as well as setting the practice of "white lists" of companies of demonstrated integrity;
5. Enhance the free access to public information and ensure regular cooperation, coordination and consultation among public authorities, the business community and the civil society by establishing an accountable and transparent institutional framework;
6. Strengthen the bilateral and multilateral cooperation and exchange of information at operational level among specialized anticorruption bodies in South Eastern Europe;
7. Support the allocation of sufficient financial and human resources, as well as improved investigative tools, to public sector institutions responsible for the prevention and control of corruption, including governmental, justice sector and independent audit and other oversight institutions;
8. Promote and support research and analysis of corruption phenomena including assessment of the forms, patterns and drivers of corrupt practices in targeted sectors and institutions (e.g. the justice sector, legislative processes, political parties and elections, local government, public

procurement, energy, education, health, infrastructure, tax administration, customs, business registration and licensing, banking, insurance and pensions);

9. Develop and disseminate targeted public awareness campaigns designed to prevent and control corruption in specific sectors and institutions, including those targeting the implementation of prioritized reforms and alternatives to corrupt practices;

10. Participate actively within the regional activities conducted by the SPAI RSLO, partner organizations and institutions to foster the exchange of best practices and lessons learned on measures to prevent and control corruption, including high level corruption, management of conflict of interest, public procurement procedures, business integrity and role of civil society.

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In order to ensure the fulfillment of the above commitments the following immediate actions are to be taken:

1. Within the following month, countries of the region will ensure wide dissemination at national level of this Declaration by organizing public debates with the participation of business community, NGOs, academic institutions and professional associations;
2. Within the next three months Governments will undertake necessary measures to strengthen the role of the SPAI Senior Representatives as national anticorruption coordinators and focal points for international partners by means of providing them with political support and adequate human and financial resources;
3. On an on-going basis, countries of the region will support the SPAI RSLO's efforts to become a Regional Anticorruption Center of Excellence by providing regular updated information about the progress reached in the implementation of the Declaration, as well as contributions to the regional anticorruption network and library;
4. By the 9<sup>th</sup> SPAI Steering Group Meeting, the SPAI RSLO is tasked to provide a comprehensive "*Work Plan for 2005 and beyond*" aiming to ensure the monitoring and implementation of the Declaration. The Work Plan is to be developed with the support of the SPAI Senior Representatives and in cooperation with the SPAI partner organizations. Among other priorities the following areas of reform will be addressed:
  - a. Public procurement mechanisms;
  - b. Business operations and investment climate;
  - c. Integrity within the justice sector and public administration;
  - d. Transparency and involvement of the civil society, business community and NGO sector.