



**Conclusions of the Annual Anti-Corruption Conference in Bosnia and Herzegovina
“Combating Corruption through Improvement of Legislative Framework and
Strengthening Capacities of Anti-Corruption Institutions”**
Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 27 March 2018

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina organised on 27 March 2018 in co-operation with the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption and Co-ordination of the Fight against Corruption (APIK), the Annual Anti-Corruption Conference in Bosnia and Herzegovina entitled “Combating Corruption through Improvement of Legislative Framework and Strengthening Capacities of Anti-Corruption Institutions”.

After presentations and panel discussions with the participants¹, the following Conclusions were reached:

Keynote Speakers:

Hasim Šabotić, APIK Director; Mladen Bosić, First Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina (PA BiH); Ljilja Zovko, Chair of the Committee for Finance and Budget of the House of Peoples of PA BiH and Deputy President of the GOPAC Group at PA BiH; Mr. Alexander Chuplygin, Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Conclusions:

- Corruption represents the most serious problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina and appeared as a result of insufficient functionality of relevant institutions; therefore we call upon all institutions that deal with prevention and repression to engage more actively in the fight against corruption;
- Co-operation and co-ordination of all institutions in BiH is a prerequisite for an adequate and consistent fight against corruption and, therefore, needs to be additionally improved;
- Sharing experience as to the establishment of mechanisms and modalities of the fight against corruption is encouraged through organising various fora on this topic;
- In order to have a comprehensive fight against and prevention of corruption ensured, it is necessary to work on raising awareness of the importance of roles of all individuals taking part in this effort;
- While BiH has been dropping down on the Corruption Perception Index ranking², this trend may be interpreted in the manner in which to say that the citizens have become more aware of corruption;
- The OSCE Mission to BiH remains committed to providing support to all levels of authority in their efforts to fight corruption.

¹ Conference was attended by the representatives of both PA BiH Houses, entity and cantonal governments and assemblies and those of the District of Brčko of BiH and of their anti-corruption bodies, BiH Ombudsmen, cities and municipalities, international organisations and local non-governmental organisations, and by representatives from Serbia.

² BiH holds 91st place on the Corruption Perception Index scale currently (Transparency International)



Progress in Enforcing Recommendations of Last Year's Conference – Main Recommendations

Conclusions:

- During the course of 2017, significant progress has been made³ in corruption prevention at all levels of the government, as suggested in recommendations resulting from the last year's conference. Ongoing promotion of such progress in the media and through public campaigns is recommended;
- Considering an ongoing character of corruption prevention, it is necessary to ensure that persons dealing with corruption prevention activities are employed on full time basis, rather than as volunteers;
- Given the fact that both corruption prevention and fight against corruption are ongoing processes, it is necessary to build a network of anti-corruption teams and bodies that would also include individuals active in specific communities;
- With the view of prevention of corruption and increase of transparency of operations of specific institutions, it is necessary to introduce and use information technology in public administration to improve provision of services to citizens (digitalisation and networking), decrease the need for direct contact between civil servants and service users and monitor implementation of adopted strategic documents and plans;
- Following 2018 general elections and establishment of the government, it is necessary to implement the programme of training of newly elected officials on roles and competences of the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption and Coordination of the Fight Against Corruption (APIK), anti-corruption teams and committees, as well as on the nature and types of corruption and ways to prevent it.

Key anti-corruption legislation in BiH and experiences in the region (Serbia)

Panellists: Ljilja Zovko, Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee of the House of Peoples (HoP) of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH (BiH PA), and Deputy Chair of GOPAC⁴ group, BiH PA; Niko Grubešić, Assistant Minister of Justice of BiH; Adnan Dlakić, Senior Advisor in the Ministry of Security of BiH; Zlatko Minić, Transparency Serbia;

Conclusions:

- The Conference confirms that anti-corruption legislation represents fundamental precondition for more efficient fight against corruption and it is thus necessary to continue strengthening legal framework in BiH⁵, in accordance with the EU regulations;
- It is necessary to continue building capacities of APIK, as well as the capacities of proponents of different regulations at different levels, to enable adequate and timely assessment of anti-corruption potential of drafted regulations;

³ Anti-corruption teams have been appointed at almost all levels of the government. Most contact persons in institutions have been appointed. Integrity plans are in place in most institutions. Methodology and IT system are in place for monitoring of implementation of strategies and action plans. Activities are regularly coordinated. Law on Protection of Whistle-blowers has been adopted in the RS. Process of development of new anti-corruption strategies initiated in the RS and BD. Parliamentary procedure initiated to adopt two key laws in BD. The process of development of the FBiH Law on Protection of Whistle-blowers is underway.

⁴ Branch of the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) operating in the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH

⁵ Conflict of Interest Law, Law on Parliamentary Oversight, Law on Lobbying, Law on Political Party Financing,



- The Conference welcomes the process of development and adoption of the Law on Parliamentary Oversight in the BiH PA. With adoption of this law, BiH will set positive example in the region.
- With the view of creating realistic perception on the level of implementation of GRECO⁶ recommendations, all institutions in BiH are requested to present complete information in timely manner;
- Positive experiences of the Republic of Serbia, as well as positive experiences of the rest of the region, concerning the adoption of anti-corruption laws, are welcome in the process of development of the remaining BiH anti-corruption laws.

Strengthening the capacities of anti-corruption institutions

Panellists: Vladica Babić, Assistant Director of APIK; Meliha Omerspahić, President of the Anti-Corruption Team of the Zenica-Doboj Canton Government; Šerif Kaljiković, Adviser to the City Mayor of Cazin; Mersiha Jogunčić, Centre for Development of Civil Society in BiH;

Conclusions:

- It is necessary to support the process of normative and institutional strengthening of anti-corruption teams in terms of creating a sustainable anti-corruption system;
- Develop pro-active co-operation with the academic community, as well as with the media, with the aim of awareness-raising amongst the citizens about the necessity to combat corruption together;
- Continue with the positive practice of organising co-ordination meetings between APIK and Entity, cantonal and Brčko District teams;
- Good practices regarding the prevention of corruption in areas of public finance management, spatial planning, and property relations, are already recognisable at the local level and need to be promoted. On the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen the existing mechanisms, such as public debates;
- Co-operation with the non-governmental sector led to positive results, leading to improved quality of the prevention of corruption. It is necessary to build and expand upon those by establishing partnerships.

The conference showed that all levels of government in BiH share the following views regarding the fight against corruption: joint activities and constant co-operation are necessary; critical assessment of important achievements needs to be conducted by all institutions; promote positive examples from all levels of government which could motivate the society as a whole.

Any stance, statement or opinion, presented in this document, if not expressly indicated as originating from the OSCE Mission to BiH, does not necessarily reflect the official policy of the OSCE Mission to BiH.

⁶ Sekretarijat Grupe država protiv korupcije Vijeća Evrope