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THE PRESS COUNCIL IN BIH

Organized the Workshop and Round Table for Journalists

“MEDIA COVERAGE ON ANTI-CORRUPTION”

08-09 December 2011

Hotel Garden City, Konjic

The Press Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in cooperation with EUPM Mission to BiH, organized the Workshop and Round Table “**Media Coverage on Anti-Corruption**”, for 25 journalists and editors from BiH’s print, electronic and online media,

08 and 09 December 2011 in Konjic

, at the Garden City hotel.

Besides the journalists and editors from BiH, participants were prominent international and domestic experts from EUPM Mission to BiH, EU delegation to BiH, the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption and Coordination of the Fight Against Corruption, the Ministry of Security of BiH, the Slovenian Embassy in Sarajevo, the World Bank in BiH, the Center for Investigative Journalism and the Directorate for European Integrations of BiH.

The organizer's purpose was to provide journalists with information about the importance of reporting on corruption, the prevention and the fight against corruption, steps which BiH has taken in the fight against corruption, the operational cooperation amongst the agencies which deal with enforcement of laws on the fights against corruption, as well as establishing regulative norms, standards, institutions and legislation, in the process of BiH's EU accession.

The Workshop and Round Table were opened by Ms. Ljiljana Zurovac, Executive director of the Press Council in BiH, and Ms. Sladjana Lizdek, spokesperson of EUPM mission to BiH.

Ms. Lara Scarpitta, political advisor at the EU delegation to BiH, acquainted the participants with the EU Strategy for the fight against corruption as well as its impact on BiH. Taking into consideration the efforts BiH has made towards accession to the European Union, Ms. Scarpitta's lecture was an excellent introduction to the continuation of the discussion and conversation about the current state in BiH with regards to the fight against corruption.

Mr. Sead Lisak, director of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption and Coordination of the Fight against Corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina, introduced the newly formed Agency, which he heads, and spoke about the legal framework, the challenges and future outlook of the fight against corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He indicated the jurisdiction of the Agency, introduced the Law on the Agency for Prevention of Corruption and Coordination of the Fight Against Corruption, and stated all the obstacles which currently stand in the way of executing the planned activities of the Agency.

In front of the Ministry of Security of BiH, Mr. Tomislav Curic, expert advisor on the fight against corruption, who held a lecture on the topic "Operational Cooperation Amongst Agencies for Implementation of Laws in the Fight Against Corruption and Coordination of the Fight Against Corruption in BiH", turned to the participants and presented the manner in which bodies in charge of the fight against corruption in BiH operate, introduced the institutional framework, emphasized the importance of international cooperation, and stated the current activities and plans undertaken by this Ministry.

During the Round Table “Importance of Reporting on Anti-Corruption for the Development of Society and Democracy”, participants had the opportunity to speak about various aspects of corruption in BiH’s society and beyond. Indicated was the way in which every citizen can contribute to the fight against corruption, as well as the impact which corruption has on an economy of a country. Panelists during the Round Table were Mr. Goran Tinjic, senior operative officer at the World Bank in BiH, Mr. Boris Mrkela, assistant to the main editor at the Center for Investigative Journalism and Mr. Konstantin Karadjov, journalist-investigator at BTV, Bulgaria.

On the second day of the Workshop EUPM’s strategy for the fight against corruption was introduced. The strategy was presented by EUPM Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina senior expert for the fight against corruption, Mr. Dirk D’Hulst and expert for the fight against corruption, Mr. Raoul Dancu.

An interesting lecture about what awaits a country in the EU accession process was presented by Mr. David Brozina, plenipotentiary of the Minister of the Slovenian Embassy in BiH. Through the lecture on the topic “EU Development in Justice and Home Affairs Combating Corruption-Institutional Development”, Mr. Brozina indicated what are the EU’s competencies in the fight against corruption, what is the political criteria for accession to EU in regards to the fight against corruption, as well as how the accession process looks, from monitoring of the progress of political parties, to structural dialog, negotiation process etc.

Ms. Marina Kavaz-Sirucic, spokesperson of the Directorate for European Integrations in BiH, presented the manner in which EU financing functions, through the theme “Demystifying EU Pre Accession Assistance”. Part of this lecture regarded the pre accession assistance programs which relate to media in BiH.

The efforts which await BiH on the road to reaching EU standards in the field of anti-corruption, defining the term corruption as the first step in determining the policy for the fight against corruption, serious approaches to the realization of strategies for the fight against corruption, non-competitiveness of BiH’s industry, inefficiency of law enforcement organs, affirmation of citizens as initiators and carriers of democratic changes, were only some conclusions from the two day Workshop and Round Table in Konjic.

The media make a significant contribution to the plan for preventing and discovering corruption

and its actors in BiH's society, but they alone are powerless in the fight, hence it is important for all institutions responsible for solving and processing criminal deeds of corruption to become engaged in this fight, so we could reach at least the minimum standards which the EU has.