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ACTIVITY BRIEF

Stability Pact Anti-corruption Initiative (SPAI): Regional Secretariat Liaison Office (RSLO)

USAID

Regional Services Center



Ministers of SEE after signing of the Declaration on 10 Joint Measures to Curb Corruption in SEE. May 2005, Brussels

Partners:

American Bar Association Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI)

Geographic Targets:

SPAI members: Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and UNMIK (observer status).

Project Duration:

2004-2007

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U.S. Agency for International
Development

Activity Background

Corruption is a core issue throughout Southeastern Europe (SEE) hindering economic growth, foreign investment and the European Union accession process. The American Bar Association's Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI) provides assistance to the Stability Pact Anti-corruption Initiative's nascent Regional Secretariat Liaison Office (RSLO) in Sarajevo – the only regional center in SEE devoted solely to the fight against corruption. RSLO's mandate is to be a center of excellence for the region – as well as a clearinghouse of information on anticorruption legislation, best practices, projects, and experts. Managed by experts from SEE, RSLO enjoys the firm support of the region. This \$1.14 million activity is funded through funds transferred from the Department of State to USAID in support of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

Core Interventions

- ABA CEELI helps to establish RSLO as an organization capable of transparently managing donor funds.
- RSLO works with the SPAI representatives from SEE to identify anti-corruption priorities as the basis for RSLO's workplan.
- Through regional forums, technical assistance, and peer support, RSLO increases the political will to adopt and the technical capacity to implement the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), now signed by all eight SPAI countries, ratified by six.

Activity Results

- In May 2005, ministers from eight SEE countries demonstrated their political will to curb corruption by signing a joint declaration to implement 10 concrete measures to curb corruption and to support RSLO.
- Recognized as a "soft monitoring mechanism," RSLO provided input and regional coordination regarding development of a monitoring mechanism for the UNCAC.
- With support from Romania, RSLO organized the first annual summer school for junior judges and prosecutors from SEE.
- RSLO's anti-corruption message has reached over 3000 constituents through more than 60 workshops, events and high-level government meetings. Recent events shared best practices for prosecuting high-level corruption, the role of supreme audit institutions, and electoral fraud.
- RSLO has leveraged contributions from other partners and SPAI member countries to cover 43% of its program costs.
- In response to a proposal instigated by SPAI representatives from SEE, Albania, Moldova, Montenegro and Romania have agreed to continue funding RSLO operations after USG funding ends. Responses from other countries pending.