Strasbourg, 22 August 2005

Greco (2005) 13E

24th Plenary Meeting of GRECO
(Strasbourg, 27 June – 1 July 2005)

SUMMARY REPORT
I. Opening of the meeting

1. The 24th Plenary Meeting of GRECO was chaired by the President, Mr Drago KOS (Slovenia) and by the Vice-President, Ms Isabelle VAN HEERS (Belgium) on Wednesday. The list of participants appears in Appendix I to this report.

2. The President opened the meeting and welcomed all representatives, referring in particular to those who had been newly nominated.

II. Adoption of the agenda

3. The draft agenda was adopted as it appears in Appendix II to this report. The President stressed the need to respect the order of business, due to the large number of items to be covered.

III. Information provided by the President

4. The President reported on the following:

- his participation in the Fourth Global Forum on Fighting Corruption (Brasilia, 7-10 June 2005) where he had presented the GRECO model to a workshop on International Conventions : Building and Evaluating Monitoring Mechanisms. The Executive Secretary and a number of Representatives in GRECO had also participated in the event;

- no clear position had yet been formulated regarding monitoring of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), though possible monitoring methods were under examination. Interest in GRECO was growing but its model would not necessarily be adopted;

- his presentation of GRECO’s Fifth General Activity Report (2004) to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, at a hearing before the 930th Meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies on 15 June 2005. A large number of Ambassadors voiced their interest in and praise for GRECO’s work. A number of interesting points were raised, including relations between GRECO and the European Commission and European Union accession to the Enlarged Partial Agreement. Several statements regarding progress in the fight against corruption in individual member States were also made. GRECO was clearly regarded as a benchmark for anti-corruption efforts.

5. The President also reported on the 30th meeting of the Bureau, held in Brussels on 1 June 2005 (cf. Greco (2005) 11), at which discussions had been almost entirely devoted to the Third Evaluation Round, which would be discussed by the Plenary later in the week. The Bureau’s proposal regarding the content and preparation of the round (Greco (2005) 10 Revised) had been distributed to all Representatives prior to the Plenary.

6. Information had been submitted to the Bureau regarding the on-going First Round non-compliance procedure with respect to Georgia, according to which adoption of the National Strategy against Corruption and of the Action Plan for its implementation was not foreseen until 25 June and before September 2005 respectively. The Bureau had therefore agreed to suggest to the current Plenary that the overall assessment of Georgia’s compliance with GRECO’s First Round Recommendations be postponed to GRECO 25.

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1 The statement delivered is contained in Greco Inf (2005) 6E.
IV. Information provided by the Executive Secretary

7. The Executive Secretary reported on the following developments since GRECO’s 23rd Plenary Meeting (May 2005):

- the very fact that GRECO’s President had been invited to a hearing with the Ministers’ Deputies was a sign of GRECO’s success. The substantive section of the Fifth General Activity Report (2004) had helped to attract interest in GRECO’s work. Copies of the statement delivered by the President were available. During the hearing the President had been asked to comment on GRECO’s visibility and he had indicated that there had been a move in the right direction with the publication of News Flashes on both the GRECO and Council of Europe websites;

- during the above hearing, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the Council of Europe had informed the Ministers’ Deputies that legislation would be brought into line with the Criminal and Civil Law Conventions on Corruption (ETS Nos. 173 and 174), the relevant package of laws was in the process of being finalised and the ratification law would go to parliament very soon. The Russian Federation may, therefore, accede to GRECO in 2006;

- copies of the Declaration and Action Plan adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the member States of the Council of Europe at the Warsaw Summit (16-17 May 2005) were available. The Action Plan calls upon member States which have not already done so to join GRECO and further enlargement to non-member States of the Council of Europe is encouraged. The Council of Europe will step up its cooperation with the OECD and the United Nations to fight corruption on a global level;

- his participation in Global Forum IV at which he made a presentation which focused on Recommendation Rec(2003)4 on Common Rules against Corruption in the Funding of Political Parties and Electoral Campaigns. All important players in the anti-corruption field were represented at the Forum and provided input to the workshops and debates. Quite a number of statements had referred explicitly to GRECO and its monitoring methodology. Copies of the Final Declaration adopted at the Forum were available. In the Final Declaration, Heads of Delegation reaffirmed their commitment to the effective implementation of international anti-corruption conventions and stressed the importance of signing and ratifying UNCAC;

- his participation in a Corruption Monitoring Workshop (Sofia, 17-18 June), organised by UNODC and the Centre for the Study of Democracy, an important Bulgarian NGO. Apart from UNODC, UNICRI, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and OECD participated in the workshop which focused on the monitoring of corruption and of international anti-corruption policies. He had made a presentation of the GRECO mechanism. It was clear that the issue of the format of UNCAC monitoring would take some time to resolve. However, for the time being, there appeared to be a preference for envisaging a simplified, low-level monitoring method which would focus on the measuring of the extent of corruption (understood by reference to the mandatory offences established in the UNCAC).
- Albania, Lithuania and Spain had not yet authorised publication of their respective Second Round Evaluation Reports\(^2\) and Bosnia and Herzegovina of its First Round Compliance Report;

- the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption (ETS 173) had been ratified by 30 States, the Civil Law Convention on Corruption (ETS 174) by 23 States and the Additional Protocol to the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption (ETS 191) by 9 States. There had been no new ratifications since the previous Plenary Meeting;

- forthcoming staff changes.

8. The Plenary was informed that the Luxembourg law ratifying the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption and its Additional Protocol had been adopted in May 2005.

9. The President urged members to authorise the publication of Evaluation Reports concerning them; otherwise, summaries would need to be prepared.

V. Second Round Evaluation procedure

Draft Evaluation Reports on Germany, Bulgaria and Malta

10. GRECO examined the draft (P3) Second Round Evaluation Report on Germany.

11. Members of the Evaluation Team (cf. list of participants) made introductory presentations. The representatives of Germany presented their authorities’ comments, which were followed by a first reading of the draft report (paragraph by paragraph).


13. GRECO noted with satisfaction that Germany authorised publication of this report.


15. Members of the Evaluation Team made introductory presentations. The representatives of Bulgaria presented their authorities’ comments, which were followed by a first reading of the draft report (paragraph by paragraph).


17. GRECO examined the draft (P3) Second Round Evaluation Report on Malta with the Vice-President in the Chair.

18. Members of the Evaluation Team made introductory presentations. The representatives of Malta presented their authorities’ comments, which were followed by a first reading of the draft report (paragraph by paragraph).


\(^2\) The reports on Spain and Albania were subsequently published on 5 July and 8 July 2005 respectively.
20. GRECO invited the authorities of Bulgaria and Malta to authorise, as soon as possible, the publication of their respective Evaluation Reports.

VI. **First Round Compliance procedure**

**Draft Compliance Report on Portugal**

21. GRECO examined the draft (P3) First Round Compliance Report on Portugal. It was based on the Situation Report forwarded by the authorities of Portugal (Greco RS-I (2005) 2E) and additional information provided by the country. GRECO adopted the First Round Compliance Report on Portugal (Greco RC-I (2005) 2E).

22. GRECO invited the authorities of Portugal to authorise, as soon as possible, the publication of this report.

**Draft Addenda to the First Round Compliance Reports on Luxembourg, Spain and the United Kingdom**

23. GRECO examined the draft Addendum to the First Round Compliance Report on Luxembourg. It was based on information provided by the authorities of Luxembourg as required by the conclusions of GRECO’s First Round Compliance Report. GRECO adopted the Addendum to the First Round Compliance Report on Luxembourg (Greco RC-I (2003) 5E Addendum) and thus terminated the First Round compliance procedure in respect of that country.

24. GRECO invited the authorities of Luxembourg to authorise, as soon as possible, the publication of this Addendum.

25. GRECO examined the draft Addendum to the First Round Compliance Report on Spain. It was based on information provided by the authorities of Spain as required by the conclusions of GRECO’s First Round Compliance Report. GRECO adopted the Addendum to the First Round Compliance Report on Spain (Greco RC-I (2003) 7E Addendum) and thus terminated the First Round compliance procedure in respect of that country.

26. GRECO noted with satisfaction that the authorities of Spain authorised publication of this Addendum.

27. GRECO examined the draft Addendum to the First Round Compliance Report on the United Kingdom. It was based on information provided by the authorities of the United Kingdom as required by the conclusions of GRECO’s First Round Compliance Report. GRECO adopted the Addendum to the First Round Compliance Report on the United Kingdom (Greco RC-I (2003) 8E Addendum) and thus terminated the First Round compliance procedure in respect of that country.

28. GRECO noted with satisfaction that the authorities of the United Kingdom authorised publication of this Addendum.

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3 The report was subsequently published on 29 July 2005.
4 The Addendum was subsequently published on 5 July 2005.
29. Pursuant to decision 14 of GRECO 23, the Slovenian delegation provided up-dated information on the proposed dismantling of the Slovenian Commission for the Prevention of Corruption. GRECO reiterated the relevance of this matter with regard to the implementation of GRECO’s First Round recommendation viii to Slovenia and invited the Slovenian delegation to provide a further update at GRECO 25. Consequently, examination of the draft Addendum to the First Round Compliance Report on Slovenia was postponed to a forthcoming Plenary Meeting.

VII. Procedure under Rule 32, paragraph 2 of the Rules of Procedure

30. The Georgian delegation informed GRECO that the National Anti-Corruption Strategy had been adopted on 25 June 2005 and that adoption of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy was not foreseen before 1 September 2005. In the light of this information, it was decided to await the finalisation of the Action Plan, before carrying out the overall assessment of Georgia’s compliance with GRECO’s first round recommendations which was postponed to GRECO 25. The Georgian delegation was invited to submit the additional information necessary for the overall assessment to the Executive Secretary by 10 September 2005.

VIII. “Grand” Corruption

31. Mr Mark RICHARD (United States of America) presented a programme which aims to respond to instances of “grand” corruption, i.e. large scale embezzlement of state funds. It is based on a proposal made by the United States of America to the G8 Summit in 2004. Implementation of the programme is entrusted to the Chair of the G8, currently the United Kingdom. It is being developed with funding from the USA, to provide assistance in preparing mutual legal assistance requests and in tracing embezzled funds which are often secreted in multiple jurisdictions.

The programme provides for a mechanism involving:

- accelerated response teams;
- asset recovery case coordination and
- asset recovery workshops to be convened in order to develop expertise in financial investigation and tracing of assets.

Once all legal steps to secure illegal assets have been taken, it is also important to ensure that they are handed over to the appropriate powers.

32. Mr Richard informed GRECO that the mechanism is available, on request, to provide on-site assistance to any country and he invited governments who wish to participate in the accelerated response teams to express their interest.  

IX Third Evaluation Round

33. The President introduced the proposal prepared by Bureau 30 on the content and preparation of the Third Evaluation Round (Greco (2005) 10E Revised) which was the result of a thorough debate. He recalled that two of the topics proposed to GRECO 23, namely funding of political parties and the corruption incriminations provided for in ETS 173 had each received the support of approximately half those delegations which took part in the discussions. The Bureau’s proposal was designed as a compromise and therefore presented a combination of two topics.

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5 More detailed information is available at: http://www.state.gov/e/eb/rls/fs/33552.htm
34. The Executive Secretary informed the Plenary that the Bureau had also examined in
detail the methodology to be applied. GRECO’s foreseeable workload in 2006 would
make it difficult, if not impossible, for the Plenary to carry out the preparatory work
for the Third Evaluation Round itself. It was therefore suggested that two working
parties be set up to assist GRECO in that work.

35. Some delegations expressed concern about evaluating two different themes within
the same round. However, it was generally accepted that the Bureau’s proposal
regarding the content of the Third Evaluation Round struck a balance which
correctly reflected the views expressed during GRECO 22 (March 2005) and
GRECO 23 (May 2005). GRECO’s Third Evaluation Round would therefore cover
two themes: i. the incriminations provided for by Articles 2-12 of the Criminal Law
Convention on Corruption (ETS 173), in conjunction with Article 19 (1) and, possibly,
Articles 15 and 17 of that Convention and ii. the transparency of party funding
(Articles 11, 12, 13b, 14 and 16 of Recommendation Rec(2003)4 on Common Rules
against Corruption in the Funding of Political Parties and Electoral Campaigns). With
regard to the scope of theme i., it was decided that the appropriate working party
should be requested to propose which Articles of the Criminal Law Convention on
Corruption should finally be included.

36. The proposal to set up two working parties to assist the Plenary in the preparation
of the Third Evaluation Round received wide support. The working parties should
be mandated to prepare a “toolkit” for the Third Evaluation Round (i.e. list of
issues to be addressed; questionnaire; clarifications concerning standards and
criteria to be met by evaluated countries, etc …) to be presented to the Plenary for
consideration during the second half of 2006. The working parties should also
give thought to the desirable composition of delegations, the selection of
evaluators and evaluation teams, the content of on-site visit programmes and
other practicalities. The working parties should be provided with all available
information to assist them in their task. In this connection, specific reference was
made to a Council of Europe publication “Financing political parties and election
campaigns – guidelines” which had been designed as an implementation guide to

37. The Secretariat would prepare draft Terms of Reference for a working party on the
transparency of party funding and a working party on the incriminations provided
for by the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption. The draft Terms of Reference
would be submitted to Bureau 31 and subsequently to GRECO 25 for approval.

X Budget 2006

38. The Executive Secretary outlined the Organisation’s budgetary procedure, which
applied to all Council of Europe bodies. The draft Budgetary Proposals for 2006
(Greco (2005) 14E) presented to GRECO had been approved by the Secretary
General. They included 2% efficiency savings, in line with the Secretary General’s
commitment to the Committee of Ministers, and the increase compared to the
Budget for 2005 did not exceed the inflation rate.

39. Budgetary constraints meant that the proposed budget left very little room for
manoeuvre. It had been impossible to cover the cost of a Start-up Workshop for
the Third Evaluation Round and it would be difficult to provide interpretation for
meetings of the working parties responsible for preparing the Third Evaluation
Round. The efficiency savings mentioned above would need to be made by
reducing, for example, the number of documents printed. He further added that it
would not be possible for GRECO to implement its activities without increased
budgetary resources for 2007.
40. The Plenary felt that the organisation of a Start-up Workshop for the Third Evaluation Round was of significant importance. The President reminded delegations of the possibility of making voluntary contributions which could be used to bear the costs of the Workshop, which should be considered a priority.

41. GRECO approved the Budgetary Proposals for 2006 (Greco (2005) 14E) and instructed the Executive Secretary to transmit them to the Secretary General for consideration by the Budget Committee, prior to their transmission to the Statutory Committee for adoption.

XI Adoption of decisions

42. GRECO adopted the decisions of the 24th Plenary Meeting, as they appear in Greco (2005) 12E.

XII Dates of forthcoming meetings

43. GRECO’s 25th Plenary Meeting would be held in Strasbourg on 10-14 October 2005. GRECO noted that its Bureau would meet in Strasbourg on 8-9 September 2005.
APPENDIX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS / LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS

ALBANIA / ALBANIE
Mr Ardian DVORANI
Judge, Supreme Court, Ministry of Justice, Bul. Ahmet Zog, TIRANA
Tel./ Fax +355 4 257314
E-mail: advorani@yahoo.com

ANDORRA/ANDORRE
M. Frédéric GUTIERREZ LE SAUX
Commissaire de Police, Unitat de Prevenció de Blanqueig (UPB), C/ Prat de la Creu núm. 8 -
despatx 402, Edifici Le Mans, ANDORRA LA VELLA
Tel. +376 806 730, Fax +376 828 842, E-mail: upb@andorra.ad

ARMENIA / ARMENIE
Mr Ashot GALOYAN
Adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government House 2,
Republic Square, YEREVAN 375010
Tel. +374 10 54 40 41 (2 84), Fax +374 10 54 39 25, E-mail: ashot_galoyan@yahoo.com

AZERBAIJAN / AZERBAIDJAN
Mr Kamran ALIYEV
Senior Assistant to the Prosecutor General, General Prosecutor’s Office, N. Rafibayli St. 7, 1001
BAKU
Tel. +994 12 492 15 18, Fax +994 12 492 23 12, E-mail: kam.aliyev@list.ru

BELGIUM / Belgique
Mme Isabelle VAN HEERS
Vice-Présidente du GRECO – Vice-President of GRECO
Magistrat Fédéral, Parquet Fédéral, Rue des Quatre Bras 19, 1000 BRUXELLES
Tel. +32 2 557 77 35 (direct) / 11 (standard), Fax +32 2 557 77 90 / 91
E-mail: isabelle.vanheers@just.fgov.be ou isa.vanheers@swing.be

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE-HERZEGOVINE
Mr Sead TEMIM
Prosecutor, Federal Prosecutor’s Office of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Valtera Perida
15, SARAJEVO
Tel. +387 332 12 529, Fax +387 334 42 614, E-mail: ftuzba@bih.net.ba

BULGARIA / BULGARIE
Mr Georgi RUPCHEV
Head of Department International Legal Cooperation, Ministry of Justice, Slavianska Street 1
1040 SOFIA
Tel. +359 2 980 92 20, Fax +359 2 987 00 98, E-mail: roupchev@mjeli.government.bg

Mr Petar RASHKOV
Director, International Legal Co-operation, European Integration and International Legal
Assistance, Ministry of Justice, Slavianska Street 1, 1040 SOFIA
Tel. +359 2 988 45 89, Fax +359 2 980 92 23, E-mail: peter@justice.government.bg
CROATIA / CROATIE

Mr Marin MRČELA
Judge at the County Court in Zagreb, Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinjskog 5, 10000 ZAGREB
Tel. +385 1 480 1108, Fax +385 1 480 1070, E-mail: marinmrcela@yahoo.com

CYPRUS / CHYPRE

Mr Philipppos KOMODROMOS
Legal Officer, Law Office of the Republic, Counsel of the Republic, 27 Katsoni Street, 1082 NICOSIA
Tel. +357 22 446 018, Fax +357 22 317 063, E-mail: pkomodromos@eudel.law.gov.cy

CZECH REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE

Mr Karel BLAHA
Legal Expert, International Department, Ministry of Justice, Vysehradská st. 16, 128 10 PRAGUE 2
Tel. +420 221 997 942, Fax +420 221 997 919, E-mail: kblaha@msp.justice.cz

Mr Robert FREMR
Judge, Supreme Court, Nejvyšší soud, Burešova 20, 657 37 BRNO
Tel. +420 541 593 158, E-mail: rfr@seznam.cz

DENMARK / DANEMARK

Mr Svend LARSEN
Public Prosecutor, The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Frederiksholms Kanal 16
1220 COPENHAGEN K
Tel. +45 33 12 72 00, Fax +45 33 43 67 10, E-mail: rigsadvokaten@ankl.dk

Mr Flemming DENKER
Deputy Director, The Public Prosecutor for Serious Economic Crime, Anker Heegaards Gade 5
1572 COPENHAGEN V
Tel. +45 33 14 88 88 ext. 53.45, Fax +45 33 43 01 19, E-mail: econ.crime@post.tele.dk

ESTONIA / ESTONIE

Ms Mari-Liis LIIV – Apologised / Excusée
Adviser, Corruption Specialist, Department of Crime Policy, Ministry of Justice, Tõnismägi 5a,
15191 TALLINN
Tel. +372 6208 223, Fax +372 6208 109
E-mail: mari-liis.liiv@just.ee

FINLAND / FINLANDE

Mr Kaarle J. LEHMUS
Inspector General of the Police, Ministry of the Interior, Police Department, P.O. Box 26, FIN-00023 GOVERNMENT
Tel. +358 9 160 425 39, Fax +358 9 160 434 77, E-mail: Kaarle.J.Lehmus@poliisi.fi

Ms Helinä LEHTINEN
Ministerial Advisor, Ministry of Justice, Crime Policy Department, Mannerheimintie 4, PO Box 25
00023 GOVERNMENT
Tel. +358 9 160 676 24, E-mail: helina.lehtinen@om.fi

FRANCE

M. Claude MATHON
Chef du Service Central de Prévention de la Corruption, Service Interministériel placé auprès du
Ministère de la Justice, 129 rue de l’Université, 75007 PARIS
Tel. +33 1 43 19 81 60, Fax +33 1 43 19 81 72, E-mail: Claude.Mathon@justice.gouv.fr
GEORGIA / GEORGIE

Mr Levan KHETSURIANI
Chief Adviser, Anti-corruption Policy Coordinating Department, National Security Council, Ingorokva str. 7, 0134 TBILISI
Tel. +995 32 93 66 01, Fax +995 32 98 99 72, E-mail: levan_at@yahoo.com

GERMANY / ALLEMAGNE

Mr Matthias KORTE
Head of Division, Ministry of Justice, Mohrenstrasse 37, 11017 BERLIN
Tel. +49 30 2025 9214, Fax +49 30 2025 9525 / +49 18 88 10 580 9214
E-mail: korte-ma@bmi.bund.de

Mr Bernd BÖSERT
Bundesministerium der Justiz, Mohrenstrasse 37, 10117 BERLIN,
Tel. +49 1888 580 92 13, Fax +49 1888 10 580 9214
E-mail: boesert-be@bmi.bund.de

Ms Birgit LAITENBERGER
Head of Division, Ministerial Counsellor, Ministry of the Interior, 11014 BERLIN
Tel. +49 1888 681 26 05
E-mail: Birgit.Laitenberger@bmi.bund.de

GREECE / GRECE

Ms Maria GAVOUNELI – Apologised / Excusée
Lecturer in International Law, Advisor to the Minister of Justice, University of Athens
Tel. +30 210 77 67 305, Fax +30 210 36 15 812
E-mail: nomodik@otenet.gr or mgavoun@law.uoa.gr (personal)

Mr Dimitrios GIZIS
Vice Prosecutor
Athens Court of 1st Instance, Hellenic Ministry of Justice, 96, Messogion Av., ATHENS 11525
Tel. +30 2 10 77 67 305, Fax +30 2 10 77 80 317
E-mail: nomodik@otenet.gr

HUNGARY / HONGRIE

Mr Ákos KARA – Apologised / Excusé
Head of Division, Ministry of Justice, Kossuth Tér 4
1055 BUDAPEST
Tel. +36 1 441 37 61, Fax +36 1 441 37 62, E-mail: KaraA@im.hu

Mr Péter STAUBER
Counsellor, Ministry of the Interior, Office for EU Cooperation, József Attila utca 2-4, 1051 BUDAPEST
Tel. +36 1 441 1654, Fax +36 1 441 1597, E-mail: stauberp@bm.gov.hu

ICELAND / ISLANDE

Ms Ragna ARNADOTTIR - Apologised / Excusée
Director of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Arnarhvoll, 150 REYKJAVIK
Tel. +354 545 9000 / 9020, Fax +354 552 7340, E-mail: ragna.arnadottir@dkm.stjr.is

IRELAND / IRLANDE

Ms Nicola MURPHY
Administrative Officer, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Criminal Law Reform
Division, Old Faculty Building, Shelbourne Road, DUBLIN 4
Tel. +353 1 602 8698, Fax +353 1 678 5786, E-mail: nicola_b._murphy@justice.ie
MR. JAMES O’FARRELL
Principal Officer, Department of Finance, 73-79 Lower Mount Street, DUBLIN 2
Tel. +353 1 604 5783, Fax +35316045719, E-mail: Jim.OFarrell@finance.gov.ie

MR. ANTOINE MACDONNCHA
Advisory Councel, Office of the Attorney General, Upper Merrion Street, Dublin 2
Tel. +353 (1) 6314132, Fax +35316314192, E-mail: antoine_macdonncha@ag.irlgov.ie

LATVIA / LETTONIE
Ms Ludmila UZULNIKA, Senior Specialist, Legal Division, Corruption Prevention and Combating
Bureau, Alberta street 13, 1010 RIGA
Tel. +371 735 6165, Fax +371 733 1150, E-mail: Ludmila.Uzulnika@knab.gov.lv

LITHUANIA / LITUANIE
Ms Aušra BERNOTIENE
Director, Department of International Law, Ministry of Justice, Gedimino Pr. 30 / 1, 2600 VILNIUS
Tel. +370 52 66 29 39, Fax +370 52 62 59 40, E-mail: a bernotiene@tic.lt

LUXEMBOURG
M. Jean-Paul FRISING
Procureur d’Etat adjoint, Parquet du Tribunal d’Arrondissement de Luxembourg, BP 15, 2010
LUXEMBOURG
Tel. +352 475 981 432 (441 / 442), Fax +352 460 687, E-mail: jean-paul.frising@justice.etat.lu

MALTA / MALTE
Mr Silvio CAMILLERI
Attorney General, Attorney General’s Office, The Palace, Republic Street, VALLETTA CMR 02
Tel. +356 25 68 3131 / +356 21 22 58 41, Fax +356 21 240 738
E-mail: silvio.camilleri@gov.mt

MOLDOVA
Mme Cornelia VICLEANSCHI – Apologised / Excusée
Procureur, Chef de la Section Générale, Bureau du Procureur Général, Str. Banulescu-Bodoni, 26
2005 CHISINAU
Tel. +373 2 222 3590, Fax +373 2 222 8635 / 3590
E-mail: c vicleanschi@hotmail.com / vicleanmd@yahoo.com

Mrs Elena ECHIM
Head of Directorate of International Legal Co-operation, Department of International Relations and
European Integration, Ministry of Justice, 82, 31 August 1989 St., 2012 CHISINAU
Tel./fax +373 22 20 14 57/20 14 15, Fax +373 22 23 47 97 / 47 88
E-mail: elenaechim@yahoo.co.uk

NETHERLANDS / PAYS-BAS
Ms Eline WEEDA
Senior Policy maker at the Investigation Department, Ministry of Justice, Schedeldoekshaven 100,
2511 EX THE HAGUE, (P.O. Box 20301 - 2500 EH THE HAGUE)
Tel. +31 70 370 6566, Fax +31 70 370 6444, E-mail: e.e.weeda@minjus.nl

NORWAY / NORVEGE
Mr Atle ROALDSØY
Senior Adviser, Police Department, Ministry of Justice, Akersgt. 42 , (Pb 8005 Dep), 0030 OSLO
Tel. +47 22 24 54 17, Fax +47 22 24 95 30, E-mail: atle.roaldsoy@id.dep.no
Mr Bjarn VALVIK
Chief Constable, National Police Directorate, Leikanger Lensmannkontor, Fylkesbygget, 6863 LEIKANGER
Tel. +47 90 85 3263, Fax +47 57 65 6041
E-mail: bjorn.valvik@politiet.no

POLAND / POLOGNE

Mr Cezary MICHALCZUK
Prosecutor, Department of International Cooperation and European Law, Ministry of Justice,
Al. Ujazdowskie 11, 00-950 WARSAW
Tel. +48 22 52 12 804, Fax +48 22 52 12 827, E-mail: michalczuk@ms.gov.pl

Mme Iwona JANOWSKA-MARCINIAK
Senior Specialist, Ministry of Finance, Bureau of Fiscal Documentation, ul. Swietokrzyska 5, 00-950 WARSAW
Tel./fax +48 22 69 43 895, E-mail: agnieszka.konarska@mofnet.gov.pl

PORTUGAL

Mrs Luisa Maia GONÇALVES
Director of Department, International Relations, Ministry of Justice, R. Sousa Martins Nº 21, 6&7º
Andar, 1050-217 LISBON
Tel. +351 21 312 1000, Fax +351 21 312 1055 / 6, E-mail: lmg@griec.mj.pt

ROMANIA / ROUMANIE

Mme Laura-Oana STEFAN
Directrice, Direction des Relations avec le Ministère public, de la Prévention de la Corruption et la
Criminalité, Ministère de la Justice, 17 rue Apolodor - Secteur 5, 70663 BUCAREST
Tel. +40 21 314 6209, Fax +40 21 314 6412
E-mail: laura.stefan@just.ro

SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO / SERBIE-MONTENEGRO

Ms Aleksandra POPOVIC
Assistant Minister, Ministry of Justice, Nemanjina 22-26, 11000 BELGRADE
Tel. +381 11 3620 540, Fax +381 11 3620 596, E-mail: aipopovic@mpravde_sr.gov.yu

Ms Ana NIKOLIC
Senior Advisor, Directorate for Anti-Corruption Initiative, "Rimski TRG" Nº45, Office 28,
81000 PODGORICA
Tel. +381 81 234 395, Fax +381 81 234 082, E-mail: aci@mn.yu

SLOVAK REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE

Mr Jaroslav PAL’OV
Director of Bureau of International Police Co-operation, Presidium of Police Forces
Head of National Central Bureau of INTERPOL, Vajnorská 25, 812 72 BRATISLAVA
Tel. +421 9610 50 300/1, Fax +421 9610 59 002/3, E-mail: palov@minv.sk

SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE

Mr Drago KOS
President of GRECO / Président du GRECO
Chairman, Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, Tržaška 19a, 1000 LJUBLJANA
Tel. +386 1 478 84 83 / 78 (direct), Fax +386 1 478 8472, E-mail: Drago.Kos@kpk-rs.si

Mr Roman PRAH
Senior Adviser, Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, Tržaška 19a, 1000 LJUBLJANA
Tel. +386 1 478 84 83 / 74 (direct), Fax +386 1 478 8472, E-mail: roman.prah@kpk-rs.si
**SPAIN / ESPAGNE**

Mrs Rosalia SERRANO  
Legal Adviser, Ministry of Justice, San Bernardo, 62, 28071 MADRID  
Tel. +34 91 390 44 48 / 09, Fax +34 91 390 22 85, E-mail: rosalia.serrano@mju.es

Mr Atanasio GONZALEZ PASTRANA  
Legal Adviser, International Relations Department, Ministry of Interior, c/ Amador de los Ríos nº 7  
28071 MADRID  
Tel. +34 91 537 17 24, Fax +34 91 537 11 60, E-mail: pastrana@amador.mir.es

**SWEDEN / SUEDE**

Mr Kazimir ÅBERG  
Director of International Affairs, Head of Director – General’s Office, Economic Crimes Bureau,  
Box 820, Hanterkargatan 15, 101 36 STOCKHOLM  
Tel. +46 8 762 00 15, Fax +46 8 613 40 19, E-mail: kazimir.berg@ekobrottsmyndigheten.se

Mr Håkan ÖBERG  
Director, Division of International Affairs, Economic Crimes Bureau, Box 820, Hanterkargatan 15, 101 36 STOCKHOLM  
Tel. +46 8 762 00 00, Fax +46 8 613 40 19, E-mail: hakan.berg@ekobrottsmyndigheten.se

"THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA" / "L'EX-RÉPUBLIQUE YOUGOSLAVE DE MACÉDOINE"

Mr Nikola TUPANCEVSKI Professor Ph. D (Criminal Law)  
Faculty of Law Justinianus “Primus”, Krste Misirkov bb, 1000 SKOPJE  
Tel. +389 23 117 244 ext. 150, Fax +389 23 227 549  
E-mail: nikola@pf.ukim.edu.mk or tupanceski@yahoo.com

**TURKEY / TURQUIE**

M. Ergin ERGÜL  
Magistrat, Chef de Département, Direction Générale du Droit International et des Relations Extérieures, Ministère de la Justice, Adalet Bakanlıği, Ek Bina, UHDİGM, 06659 ANKARA  
Tel. +90 312 414 78 34, Fax +90 312 418 46 70 / 425 02 90, E-mail: eergul@adalet.gov.tr

Mr Süleyman AYDIN  
Assistant Professor, Police Academy Directory, Polis Akademisi, Başkanlıği-Gölbashi, ANKARA  
Tel. +90 312 499 70 02, Fax +90 312 499 70 19, E-mail: saydin60@yahoo.com

**UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME-UNI**

Mr Paul STEPHENSON  
Head of Corruption and Fraud Law, Criminal Law Policy Unit, Home Office, 2nd Floor – Fry Building,  
2 Marsham Street, LONDON SW1P 4DF  
Tel. +44 207 035 6955, Fax +44 207 ........  
E-mail: paul.stephenson@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Ms Pauline PROSSER, Dept. Of Constitutional Affairs

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA / ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE**

Mr Mark RICHARD  
Senior Counsellor for Criminal Justice Matters, US Mission to the European Union, Boulevard du  
Régent, 27, B-1000 BRUSSELS  
Tel. +32 2 508 26 35, Fax +32 2 512 00 69, E-mail: mark.richard@usdoj.gov

Mr Joseph E. GANGLOFF, Senior Counsel, Office of International Affairs, U.S. Department of Justice  
1301 New York Avenue NW, WASHINGTON D.C. 20005  
Tel. +1 202 514 1450, Fax +1 202 514 0080, E-mail: joseph.gangloff@usdoj.gov
Mr William A. KEEFER  
Assistant Commissioner, Office of Internal Affairs, United States Customs and Border Protection  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Room 8.3A, WASHINGTON, DC. 20229  
Tel. +1 202 248 4611, Fax +1 202 927 0828, E-mail: william.keefer@ssa.gov

**SCIENTIFIC EXPERT / EXPERT SCIENTIFIQUE**

Mr Albin ESER – **Apologised / Excusé**  
Professor, Max Planck-Institute for Foreign and International Penal Law, Abteilung Strafrecht, Günterstalstr. 73  
D-79100 FREIBURG  
Tel. +49 761 70 81 200, Fax +49 761 70 81 309 (direct) / 294, E-mail: a.eser@iuscrim.mpg.de  
Other address: ICTY, P.O. Box 13888, NL-2501 EW THE HAGUE  
Tel. +31 70 512 5410, Fax +31 70 512 5252

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**EXPERT-EVALUATORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES / EXPERTS-EVALUEATEURS RESPONSABLES DE L’ÉVALUATION DES PAYS SUIVANTS**

**GRECO EVALUATION TEAMS / EQUIPES D’ÉVALUATION DU GRECO**

**Second Round Evaluation of Germany / Evaluation du Deuxième Cycle de l’Allemagne**

Mr Antoine MAC DONNCHA (Ireland / Irlande)  
Advisory Counsel, Office of the Attorney General, Upper Merrion Street, DUBLIN 2  
Tel. +353 1 631 4132 / Fax +353 1 631 4192 / Email: antoine_macdonncha@ag.irgov.ie

Mr William A. KEEFER (United States of America / Etats-Unis d’Amérique)  
Assistant Commissioner, Office of Internal Affairs, United States Customs and Border Protection,  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Room 8.3A, WASHINGTON, DC. 20229  
Tel. +1 202 248 4611 / Fax +1 202 927 0828 / E-mail: william.keefer@ssa.gov

Mr Atle ROALDSØY (Norway / Norvège)  
Senior Adviser, Police Department, Ministry of Justice, Akersgt. 42, Pb 8005 Dep, 0030 OSLO  
Tel. +47 22 24 54 17 / Fax +47 22 24 95 30 / E-mail: atle.roaldsoy@jd.dep.no

---

**Second Round Evaluation of Bulgaria / Evaluation du Deuxième Cycle de la Bulgarie**

Mr Håkan ÖBERG (Sweden / Suède)  
Director, Division of International Affairs, Economic Crimes Bureau, Box 820, Hantverkargatan 15, 101 36 STOCKHOLM  
Tel. +46 8 762 00 00 (switchboard) / Fax +46 8 613 40 19 / E-mail: hakan.oberg@ekobrottssmyndigheten.se

Mr Joseph E. GANGLOFF (United States of America / Etats-Unis d’Amérique)  
Senior Counsel, Office of International Affairs, U.S. Department of Justice, 1301 New York Avenue NW, WASHINGTON D.C. 20005  
Tel. +1 202 514 1450 / Fax +1 202 514 0080 / E-mail: joseph.gangloff@usdoj.gov

Mr Robert FREMR (Czech Republic / République Tchèque)  
Judge, Supreme Court, Nejvyšší soud, Burešova 20, 657 37 BRNO  
Tel. +420 541 593 158 / E-mail: rfr@seznam.cz

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Page 15
Second Round Evaluation of Malta / Evaluation du Deuxième Cycle de Malte

Mr Ardian DVORANI (Albania / Albanie)
Judge, Supreme Court, Ministry of Justice, Bul. Ahmet Zog, TIRANA
Tel./ Fax +355 4 257314
E-mail: advorani@yahoo.com

Mr Jim O’FARRELL (Ireland / Irlande)
Principal Officer, Department of Finance, 73-79 Lower Mount Street, DUBLIN 2
Tel. +353 1 604 5783 / Fax +353 1 604 5751 / E-mail: Jim.O’Farrell@finance.gov.ie

Mr Philippos KOMODROMOS (Cyprus / Chypre)
Legal Officer, Attorney General’s Office, Law office of the Republic of Cyprus, Counsel of the Republic, 27 Katsoni Street, 1082 NICOSIA
Tel. +357 22 889 100 / 446 018 / Fax +357 22 665 080 / 317 063
E-mail: mokas@cytanet.com.cy

RAPPORTEURS : Compliance Procedure/Procédure de Conformité

RC-I PORTUGAL

Mr Sead TEMIM – Bosnia and Herzegovina / Bosnie-Herzégovine

Mr Flemming DENKER – Denmark / Danemark

PRESIDENT OF THE STATUTORY COMMITTEE OF GRECO / PRÉSIDENT DU COMITÉ STATUTAIRE DU GRECO

Mme Anna LAMPEROVA - - Apologised / Excusée
Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire, Représentation Permanente de la Slovaquie auprès du Conseil de l’Europe, 1 rue Ehrmann, 67000 STRASBOURG
Tel. +33 3 88 36 57 17, Fax +33 3 88 36 54 44, E-mail: misslov@wanadoo.fr

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE / ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DU CONSEIL DE L’EUROPE

Mr Jaume BARTUMEU CASSANY – Apologised / Excusé
Membre du Conseil Général, Casa de la Vall Andorra La Vella, ANDORRE
Tel: +376 877 877 (standard), Fax: +376 86 98 63 (général), E-mail : ps@andorra.ad

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CDCJ / REPRÉSENTANT DU CDCJ

Mr Petar RASHKOV
Director, International Legal Co-operation, European Integration and International Legal Assistance, Ministry of Justice, Sliavanska Street 1, 1040 SOFIA
Tel. +359 2 988 45 89, Fax +359 2 980 92 23, E-mail: peter@justice.government.bg

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CDPC / REPRÉSENTANT DU CDPC

OBSERVER OECD / OBSERVATEUR OCDE

Mr Silvio BONFIGLI
Principal Administrator, Anti-Corruption Division, Directorate for Financial and Fiscal Affairs
Tel: 33 1 45 24 94 43, Fax: 33 1 44 30 63 07, E-mail: silvio.bonfigli@oecd.org

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE SECRETARIAT / SECRETARIAT DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Mr Wolfgang RAU, Executive Secretary of GRECO, Directorate General I – Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 88 41 22 11, Fax +33 3 88 41 27 94, E-mail: wolfgang.rau@coe.int

M. Carlo CHIAROMONTE, Administrateur, Direction Générale I - Affaires Juridiques, Conseil de l'Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 88 41 30 42, Fax +33 3 88 41 39 55, E-mail: carlo.chiaromonte@coe.int

Mr Björn JANSON, Administrative Officer, Directorate General I – Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 88 41 28 85, Fax +33 3 88 41 39 55, E-mail: bjorn.janson@coe.int

M. Spyros TSOVILIS, Administrateur, Direction Générale I - Affaires Juridiques, Conseil de l'Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 88 41 25 51, Fax +33 3 88 41 39 55, E-mail: spyros.tsvilis@coe.int

Ms Lioubov SAMOKHINA, Administrative Officer, Directorate General I – Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 88 41 20 24, Fax +33 3 90 21 50 73, E-mail: lioubov.samokhina@coe.int

Ms Laura SANZ-LEVIA, Administrative Officer, Directorate General I – Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 90 21 56 20, Fax +33 3 90 21 50 73, E-mail: laura.sanz-levia@coe.int

Ms Elspeth REILLY, Assistant, Directorate General I – Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 88 41 30 43, Fax +33 3 90 21 50 73, E-mail: elspeth.reilly@coe.int

Ms Penelope PREBENSEN, Administrative Assistant (Evaluation rounds), Directorate General I – Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 88 41 30 28, Fax +33 3 88 41 39 55, E-mail: penelope.prebensen@coe.int

Mme Laure HEIM, Assistante, (Evaluation rounds), Directorate General I – Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 90 21 44 39, Fax +33 3 88 41 39 55, E-mail: laure.heim@coe.int

Mme Marie-Rose PREVOST, Assistante, (Evaluation rounds), Directorate General I – Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 88 41 31 71, Fax +33 3 88 41 39 55, E-mail: marie-rose.prevost@coe.int

Ms Simona GHITA, Webmaster, Direction Générale I - Affaires Juridiques, Conseil de l'Europe, 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 88 41 23 09, Fax +33 3 88 41 39 55, E-mail: simona.ghita@coe.int

INTERPRETERS / INTERPRETES

Mme Sally BAILEY
Mme Isabelle MARCHINI
Mme Julia TANNER
APPENDIX II

AGENDA / ORDRE DU JOUR

1. Opening of the meeting at 09h30 / Ouverture de la réunion à 09h30

2. Adoption of the draft agenda / Adoption de l’ordre du jour

3. Information by the President / Information par le Président

4. Information by the Executive Secretary / Information par le Secrétaire Exécutif

5. Communication by Bureau 29 / Communication du Bureau 29

6. First reading of the draft Second Round Evaluation Reports on: / Première lecture des projets de Rapport d’Evaluation du Deuxième Cycle sur :

   - Lithuania / Lituanie : Tuesday / mardi
   - Spain / Espagne : Wednesday / mercredi

The evaluators and the national delegations concerned are, nevertheless, requested to be available during the following periods: / Les évaluateurs et les délégations nationales concernés sont, toutefois, invités à être disponibles pendant les périodes suivantes :

   - Lithuania / Lituanie : Tuesday all day and Wednesday morning / mardi toute la journée et mercredi matin
   - Spain / Espagne : Wednesday all day and Thursday morning / mercredi toute la journée et jeudi matin

7. Examination and adoption of the draft First Round Compliance Reports on : Bosnia and Herzegovina and Malta (Thursday) / Examen et adoption des projets de Rapport de Conformité du Premier Cycle sur la Bosnie-Herzégovine et Malte (jeudi)


12. Miscellaneous / Divers

13. Adoption of decisions / Adoption des décisions

14. Dates of next meetings / Dates des prochaines réunions