

Strasbourg, 22 March 2024

Greco(2024)5

**96<sup>th</sup> GRECO Plenary Meeting**  
Strasbourg, 18-22 March 2024

**DECISIONS**

At its 96<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting (Strasbourg, 18-22 March 2024) which was chaired by Marin Mrčela (President of GRECO, Croatia), and by Monika OLSSON (Vice-President of GRECO, Sweden) for the examination of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fifth Round Compliance Report on Croatia, the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO):

1. noted the President's welcome message to newly nominated Heads of delegation and Representatives, thanking them for their contribution to GRECO's work where their input and coordination at national level facilitate the results achieved by GRECO's monitoring, and for their expertise which is important in the mutual evaluation process during the examination of reports addressed to other member States;
2. adopted the agenda of the meeting;

#### Information

3. took note of the items discussed and decisions taken by the Bureau at its 104<sup>th</sup> meeting (Greco(2024)3);
4. took note of information provided as follows:

#### **Marin Mrčela, President of GRECO**

- his [Statement](#) on *corruption and environmental crime*, issued on the occasion of International Anti-corruption Day (9 December 2023);
- his participation, with the Deputy Executive Secretary in the *10<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption – COSP-10* (Atlanta, 11-15 December 2023) and, on the same occasion, in a *high-level event gathering anti-corruption review mechanisms and organisations* aimed at improving, broadening and deepening synergies (11 December), and in an *event on judicial specialisation in the fight against corruption* organised by the Council of Europe's Economic Crime and Cooperation Division (15 December);
- his article as guest editor for EUCRIM's third issue focused on corruption (2023) published in March 2024;
- he thanked the Delegations of Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Monaco and the United States of America for the in-kind contributions made by covering part or all of the costs related to their participation in the present meeting;
- Delegations were invited to take steps to help ensure that reports adopted by GRECO are published within a reasonable timeframe (cf. item 41 below);

#### **Livia Stoica Becht, Executive Secretary of GRECO**

- on 26 January 2024 Belarus had formally denounced the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption (ETS No. 173) and its additional protocol (ETS No. 191), and the Civil Law Convention on Corruption (ETS No. 174); having joined GRECO by acceding to the conventions, the withdrawal of Belarus from GRECO would automatically take effect as of 1 May 2024;
- her participation in the exchange of views on the fight against corruption in the European Union with the Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights Monitoring Group (DRFMG) of the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) (online, 22 February 2024);

- the contribution of the Secretariat to the Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF) *Francophone Conversation: The fight against corruption: working for honest and transparent governance at the service of the people* (Paris, 25 January 2024); to the event *European Perspectives on Combatting Corruption and Money Laundering: How is Nordic and European Best-Practice Applicable in Bulgaria*, organised by the Nordic embassies in Bulgaria (Finland, Sweden and Denmark) and the embassy of Norway in Romania (accredited Bulgaria) in partnership with the Anti-Corruption Fund Foundation (ACF) (Sofia, 22-23 February 2024); and its forthcoming participation in the *2024 OECD Global Anti-Corruption & Integrity Forum* (Paris, 26-27 March 2024);

#### Evaluation procedures

##### *Fifth Round – Preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies*

5. adopted the Fifth Round Evaluation Reports on:

- **Armenia** (GrecoEval5Rep(2023)2)
- **Georgia** (GrecoEval5Rep(2023)3)
- **Italy** (GrecoEval5Rep(2023)5)

and set the deadline of 30 September 2025 for the submission of situation reports on measures taken to implement GRECO's recommendations;

6. invited the authorities of Armenia, Georgia and Italy to authorise, as soon as possible, the publication of the reports mentioned in decision 5 above;
7. noted that the Fifth Round evaluation visits to Liechtenstein and San Marino had been scheduled to take place respectively in April and June 2024;

##### *Third Round – Incriminations; Transparency of party funding*

8. noted that the Third Round evaluation visit to Kazakhstan had been scheduled to take place in September 2024;

#### Compliance procedures

9. noted the President's call on all Heads of delegation to strictly respect the submission deadlines fixed by GRECO in each adopted report, as well as the deadlines for comments on draft reports; this was essential to ensure the proper conduct of the compliance procedures;

##### *Joint First and Second Rounds*

10. adopted the Joint First and Second Round Compliance Report on:

- **Kazakhstan** (Greco RC-I/II (2024) 2E)

and asked the Head of delegation to submit additional information on the implementation of the recommendations by 30 September 2025;

11. invited the authorities of Kazakhstan to authorise, as soon as possible, the publication of the report mentioned in decision 10 above;

*Third Round – Incriminations; Transparency of party funding*

12. adopted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Addendum to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Third Round Compliance Report on:
  - **Switzerland** (GrecoRC3(2024)1)and closed the Third Round compliance procedure in respect of this member;
13. invited the authorities of Switzerland to authorise, as soon as possible, the publication of the report mentioned in decision 12 above;
14. approved the list of rapporteur countries for the Third Round compliance procedure in respect of Kazakhstan (GrecoEval3(2024)1);

*Fourth Round – Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors*

15. adopted the Addendum to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fourth Round Compliance report on:
  - **Belgium** (GrecoRC4(2024)1)and pursuant to Rule 31 revised, paragraph 9, asked the Head of delegation to submit additional information on the implementation of certain recommendations by 31 March 2025;
16. adopted the Addendum to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fourth Round Compliance report on:
  - **Germany** (GrecoRC4(2024)3)and closed the Fourth Round compliance procedure in respect of this member;
17. adopted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Addenda to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fourth Round Compliance Reports on:
  - **Georgia** (GrecoRC4(2024)2)
  - **Italy** (GrecoRC4(2024)4)and closed the Fourth Round compliance procedure in respect of these members;
18. noted with satisfaction that the authorities of Italy authorise the publication of the report mentioned in decision 17 above;
19. invited the authorities of Belgium, Germany and Georgia to authorise, as soon as possible, the publication of the reports mentioned in decisions 15, 16 and 17 above;
20. noted that a high-level mission to Türkiye would be carried out in 2024 according to the decision taken at the 94<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting in the framework of the Fourth Round compliance procedures;

*Fifth Round – Preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies*

21. adopted, in the framework of Rule 31 revised bis, the Fifth Round Compliance Reports on:
  - **Greece** (GrecoRC5(2024)1)
  - **Lithuania** (GrecoRC5(2024)5)

and noted that further progress was necessary to demonstrate an acceptable level of compliance within the next 18 months, and set the deadline of 30 September 2025 for the submission by the respective Heads of delegation of a situation report on additional measures taken to implement the Fifth Round recommendations;

22. adopted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fifth Round Compliance Reports on:

- **Belgium** (GrecoRC5(2024)3)
- **Croatia** (GrecoRC5(2024)4)
- **France** (GrecoRC5(2024)2)

and within the meaning of Rule 31 revised bis, paragraph 10, concluded that these members were **not in sufficient compliance** with the Fifth Round recommendations;

23. pursuant to Rule 32 revised, paragraph 2 (i) asked the respective Heads of delegation to provide a report on progress in implementing the outstanding recommendations by 31 March 2025 at the latest;

24. in accordance with Rule 32 revised, paragraph 2 (ii) b), invited the President of the Statutory Committee to send a letter to the Permanent Representatives of Belgium, Croatia and France to the Council of Europe – with a copy to the Heads of delegation concerned – on the need for determined action to be taken with a view to achieving tangible progress as soon as possible;

25. noted with satisfaction that the authorities of France authorise the publication of the report mentioned in decision 21 above;

26. invited the authorities of Greece, Lithuania, Belgium and Croatia to authorise, as soon as possible, the publication of the reports mentioned in decisions 20 and 21 above;

27. approved the list of rapporteur countries for the Fifth Round compliance procedures in respect of the following member States: Andorra, Georgia, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Romania, San Marino, Switzerland, United States of America (GrecoEval5(2024)1);

28. noted that a high-level mission to the Slovak Republic would be carried out in 2024 according to the decision taken at the 95<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting in the framework of the Fifth Round compliance procedures;

### General Activity Report 2023

29. adopted its General Activity Report 2023 (Greco(2024)1-fin);

30. noted that the report would be presented by GRECO's President to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe at the 1499<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (Strasbourg, 29 May 2024) and made public shortly after;

31. noted with interest the presentation made by Christoph Demmke, Professor of Public Management, University of Vaasa (Finland), author of the article on the Development of Integrity Policies in Europe that figures in the General Activity Report;

### Sixth Evaluation Round - Preventing corruption and promoting integrity at the sub-national level

32. welcomed the concrete proposals and draft Questionnaire for this new evaluation round contained in the report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Working Party (GrecoWP6(2024)3);
33. examined the draft Questionnaire prepared by the Working Party (GrecoWP6(2024)1-rev) and adopted the Questionnaire for the Sixth Evaluation Round with the amendments agreed in the Plenary;
34. examined the Working Party's proposals (GrecoWP(2024)2) concerning the composition of national delegations, the designation and selection of evaluators, the organisation of on-site visits and the key interlocutors to be met; approved the proposals with an amendment agreed in the plenary;
35. invited national delegations to send to the Secretariat, by 1 September 2024, the names, contact details, working language(s) and CVs of up to five experts to be included in the List of Evaluators for the Sixth Round (GrecoWP6(2024)2, page 3);
36. invited delegations wishing to volunteer to be among the first members to be evaluated in the Sixth Round to inform the Secretariat by 13 May 2024;
37. warmly thanked GRECO's Vice-President, Monika OLSSON for her very able steering of the preparatory work for the Sixth Evaluation Round, the 15 delegations who had composed the working party and participated at the cost of their authorities, and the two scientific experts designated by the working party, Fernando JIMENEZ SANCHEZ (University of Murcia, Spain) and Staffan ANDERSSON (Linnaeus University, Sweden) for their expert contribution;

### Topical anti-corruption developments/events in member States (Item 4)

38. took note of information provided at the request of the Bureau by the Delegations of Poland<sup>1</sup>, of the Slovak Republic<sup>2</sup>, and of Slovenia<sup>3</sup> and the information provided by Lithuania on the 21<sup>st</sup> International anti-Corruption Conference which will take place in Vilnius from 18-21 June 2024;
39. decided to keep under review the situation in the Slovak Republic and requested the Head of delegation to promptly inform GRECO of any developments in this respect, and to submit a further report by 10 May 2024 to GRECO's Bureau; agreed to re-examine the matter at its 97<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting (17-21 June 2024);

### Information from observer organisations and Council of Europe bodies

40. welcomed the information provided by the representatives of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) notably on the publication [ODIHR Public Ethics and Integrity Toolkit: Guidelines for Parliaments | OSCE](#); and the information provided by the representative of the OECD on their forthcoming events and reports;

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<sup>1</sup> On the possible dismantling of the Central Anti-Corruption Bureau (CBA) and planned legislative and institutional measures.

<sup>2</sup> On the recently adopted legislation introducing amendments to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, on the Constitutional Court's interim decision (PL. ÚS 3/2024) suspending the effectiveness of some of the adopted amendments and on the suppression of the Office of the Special Prosecution which became effective on 20 March 2024.

<sup>3</sup> On the state of implementation of the 2023 Constitutional Court decision which rules the unconstitutionality of the provisions regarding the salaries of judges and prosecutors.

## Publication of Reports<sup>4</sup>

41. called on the authorities of the member States concerned to authorise without further delay the publication of reports previously adopted by GRECO;<sup>5</sup>

## Any other business

### *Declassification of GRECO reports*

42. instructed the Secretariat to seek a legal opinion on the application of Resolution Res(2001)6 on access to Council of Europe documents to GRECO, and implementation modalities in respect of GRECO's reports; Bureau 105 would report to the 97<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting for possible decisions on any implications of the Jurisconsult's opinion for the revision of GRECO's Rules of Procedure and/or GRECO's Statute;

## Future meetings

43. took note of the following dates:

- **105th Bureau Meeting:** Online, 21 May 2024
- **97th Plenary Meeting and celebration of GRECO's 25th Anniversary** (Thursday afternoon): Strasbourg, 17-21 June 2024 – **in person only**
- **98th Plenary Meeting:** Strasbourg, 18-22 November 2024 – **in person only.**

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<sup>4</sup> *Action to be taken when publishing adopted reports* (decision 26, GRECO 58):

- agree a same-day publication date with the Secretariat
- clearly mark both the date of adoption and date of publication on the cover page
- make the national language version available and easily accessible on a domestic website
- notify the Secretariat of the location of the report by communicating the internet link to it
- include a link on the domestic website to the official language versions on GRECO's website.

<sup>5</sup> **Adopted in March 2023:** Fifth Round Evaluation Report on Azerbaijan; **adopted in December 2023:** Fifth Round Evaluation Report on Türkiye, Fifth Round 2<sup>nd</sup> Compliance Reports on Denmark, the Slovak Republic and Spain.