



**CROATIAN PARLIAMENT
National Council for Monitoring
Anti-Corruption Strategy Implementation**

**REPORT
on the work of the National Council for Monitoring Anti-Corruption Strategy
Implementation in the period from 1 June 2009 to 30 June 2010**

1. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the Decision of the Croatian Parliament Establishing the National Council for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Programme of 13 July 2006 and the Decision Amending the Decision Establishing the National Council for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Programme of 13 March 2009, the National Council for Monitoring Anti-Corruption Strategy Implementation conducts the following activities:

- supervises and monitors the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy;
- systematically follows up on any information on corrupt practices as may be delivered, at its request, by agencies responsible for implementing the National Anti-Corruption Strategy;
- reviews the reports of relevant agencies on the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plans, and evaluates implementation methods and results;
- proposes measures to increase efficiency in the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy;
- promotes and directs cooperation between the Croatian Parliament, governmental and other agencies, and other actors responsible for implementing the National Anti-Corruption Strategy;
- through its actions and organizational structure, strengthens supervision over agencies responsible for implementing the National Anti-Corruption Strategy;
- considers, as required, any suggestion, complaint, view or opinion of citizens and undertakings; and
- submits reports on its work to the Croatian Parliament twice annually.

The present Report covers the period **from 1 June 2009 to 30 June 2010**. During the period under review, the National Council was composed of the following members:

- Željko Jovanović, Ph.D., SDP (Social Democratic Party) – Chairman;
- Ana Lovrin, HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union) – Deputy Chairwoman;
- Ingrid Antičević Marinović, SDP – Member;
- Stanko Grčić, HSS (Croatian Peasant Party) – Member;
- Dragutin Lesar, Croatian Labourists-Labour Party – Member;
- Prof. Emer. Željko Horvatić, Ph.D. – Member;
- Stjepan Kolarić, union representative – Member;
- Nikola Kristić, civil society representative – Member;
- Branko Roglič, employers' representative – Member;
- Smiljanka Škugor-Hrnčević, media representative – Member; and
- Prof. Stjepan Turek, Ph.D., professions representative – Member.

During the aforementioned period, the National Council held 11 regular sessions and 3 sessions dedicated to specific topics. All sessions were attended by the majority of its members. Since its constitution on 21 May 2008, the National Council has held a total of 26 regular sessions and 7 dedicated sessions. The Report on Work for the period from 21 May 2008 to 30 May 2009 was discussed and adopted at the 16th session of the Croatian Parliament in February 2010.

According to the conclusions contained in that Report, the Council held that, as a part of their future efforts, all agencies implementing the Anti-Corruption Strategy should:

- commence immediately with the preparation of a new Anti-Corruption Action Plan for 2010, with clearly defined time-frames, implementing agencies and implementation criteria;
- step up the implementation of judicial reforms;

- increase public confidence in governmental agencies through concrete, everyday examples of detecting, prosecuting and sanctioning corrupt practices in order to demonstrate the functioning of the so-called USKOK vertical, i.e. a system of anti-corruption law enforcement agencies and judges;
- intensify inter-agency cooperation, especially between the Public Procurement Office, the State Public Procurement Review Commission, the State Audit Bureau, the RoC Public Prosecution Service, the National Tax Administration, the Customs Administration, and the Anti-Money Laundering Office;
- further enhance inter-agency cooperation between the Ministry of the Interior (the National Police Anti-corruption and Organized Crime Office – hereinafter “PNUSKOK”) and the RoC Public Prosecution Service;
- include all ministries in the Action Plan as agencies with immediate responsibility for implementing anti-corruption measures;
- develop special Action Plans with clear time-frames, implementing agencies and indicators for the Customs Administration, the National Tax Administration and all state-owned enterprises (e.g. Croatian Rail Company, Croatian Motorways Company, etc.);
- review implementation of the Media Act;
- review implementation of and amend the Access to Information Act in order to increase the accessibility of information to all citizens;
- consider international experiences in whistleblower protection and propose specific measures to raise the quality of whistleblower protection in Croatia, including both journalists writing about corruption and all citizens reporting corrupt practices,
- analyze the need and possibility of establishing an Anti-Corruption Agency in line with Article 6 of the UN Convention Against Corruption; and
- build the administrative and professional capacity of the National Council.

The Council fostered the implementation of the aforementioned conclusions through discussions, analyses, conclusions, proposals and initiatives at its regular and dedicated sessions, which was also commended by a peer-based mission in their report on the visit made to Croatia from 29 June to 2 July 2009 in order to assess the situation with regard to combating corruption and organized crime, and, in particular, by the European Union in the introduction to its common positions on the fulfilment of opening benchmarks for chapter 23 – Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, where it stated the following: ***“The EU also notes a growing proactive (enabling) role played by the National Council for monitoring Anti-Corruption Strategy implementation. The EU encourages the continuation of such a proactive approach in monitoring the implementation of the Strategy, inter alia, by proposing corrective measures in the Strategy and Action Plan and introducing regular public debates related to corruption.”***

The Anti-Corruption Strategy, as adopted by the Croatian Parliament on 19 June 2008, defines corruption as a detrimental social phenomenon which undermines the fundamental values of any society, as well as a historical, psychological, sociological, economic, political and legal phenomenon. In the broadest sense, corruption may be defined as any abuse of public authority in order to achieve private gain. More specifically, it can be defined as an act of illicit exchange between a public official and another person, committed with a view to achieving private gain. It is any act which, contrary to public interest, clearly violates morality and legal norms, and undermines the foundations of the rule of law. One of the major consequences of corruption is the loss of public trust in government authorities and public institutions, which, in turn, has negative effects on the society’s economic development. Therefore, not only corruption, but the suspicion and perception of corruption, threaten the credibility of any government.

The strategic approach to combating corruption is reflected through five action areas: legal and institutional framework; prevention of corruption; criminal prosecution and sanctioning of corruption; international cooperation; and raising public awareness of the harmfulness of corruption.

By analysing the aforementioned areas at its regular and dedicated sessions, the National Council highlighted gaps in the Action Plan and was pleased to note that those remarks were, for the most part, incorporated in the Revised Action Plan adopted by the Croatian Government on 18 March 2010 to accompany the Anti-Corruption Strategy.

Having reviewed the implementation of the Action Plan, the Council concluded that approximately 80% of the planned measures had been successfully implemented, with key actions being fully completed (the adoption of the Criminal Procedure Act, the PIN Act and amendments to the Criminal Code and the Public Procurement Act, the establishment of PNUSKOK and the so-called USKOK vertical, etc.)

The Revised Action Plan focuses on clearly defined procedures governing decision-making flows and, accordingly, responsibilities. This is an effort to reinforce the ethical conduct, professionalism and integrity of governmental authorities, which has always been underscored by the National Council as one of the cornerstones of combating corruption. The Action Plan also acknowledges the establishment of a sound legal framework which is, together with the institutional framework, supposed to yield clear and visible results in terms of an increased number of convictions for all levels of corruption, from small-scale and street-level, to high-level and political corruption.

Recognizing, *inter alia*, suggestions from the National Council, the Revised Action Plan – in particular, its chapter on the prevention of corruption – places special emphasis on high-risk corruption areas such as the prevention of conflicts of interest, the political parties financing, the right of access to information, codes of conduct for civil servants, public finance, public procurement, the judiciary, health care, science, education and sports. As compared to the previous Action Plan, the Revised Action Plan contains a somewhat limited number of measures (i.e., 145), but provides for better-defined implementing agencies, action points, objectives and time-frames, although it still lacks clear performance indicators for the implementation of measures, which has always been stressed by the National Council. It should be noted that, as a follow up to the initiative taken precisely by the National Council, the implementing agencies identified in the Revised Action Plan also include the Ministry of the Sea, Transportation and Infrastructure, which was not the case in the previous Action Plan. Another suggestion made by the National Council and recognized in the Revised Action Plan is that all state-owned enterprises should prepare their own action plans for the prevention, suppression and early detection of corrupt practices. The Revised Action Plan still fails to provide for any measures to protect persons reporting corrupt practices and conduct, although the Strategy – along with the priorities of preventing conflicts of interest in the performance of public duties, implementing regulations on the financing of political parties, achieving the right of access to information, strengthening the integrity of public administration and regulating public procurement – accords particular attention to the protection of injured parties and persons reporting corruption in good faith. In addition to discussions at its regular sessions, the National Council made an additional contribution to this particular issue by organizing two special sessions: one dedicated to the relationship between media freedom and corruption and the other to whistleblower protection.

2. WORK OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL AT ITS SESSIONS

From 1 June 2009 to 30 June 2010, the National Council held 11 regular and 3 dedicated sessions at which, within the limits of its authority, through its discussions on reports from agencies implementing the Anti-Corruption Strategy, and by adopting conclusions, making proposals and taking initiatives, it strived to:

- strengthen integrity, accountability and transparency in the work of governmental authorities;
- increase public trust in governmental institutions;
- enhance the legal and institutional framework to combat corruption efficiently and systematically;

- improve prerequisites for preventing corruption at all government levels;
- foster cooperation among governmental agencies responsible for implementing the Strategy;
- raise public awareness of the harm caused by corruption and the need to combat it efficiently;
- highlight the importance of ongoing education for all officials and civil servants;
- foster a continued anti-corruption and ethical education for participants in public procurement procedures;
- promote efforts to raise the level of efficiency in detecting and prosecuting criminal acts of corruption;
- foster international cooperation in the process of preventing and combating corruption;
- raise public awareness of the harmfulness of corruption and the need to combat it efficiently;
- improve the protection of all those who, acting in good faith, report criminal acts of corruption; and
- make continued efforts to improve the existing anti-corruption action plans.

- **Regular working sessions of the National Council**

At its regular sessions, the National Council analysed reports from agencies implementing the Anti-Corruption Strategy, which were presented by ministers and state secretaries. All the reports demonstrated qualitative and quantitative improvements as compared to the previous period under review, and the members of the National Council, through their discussions, suggestions and initiatives, made an additional impact on the enhancement of future activities, the results of which are yet to be seen in the forthcoming period.

The discussions of reports presented for review have, for the most part, led to the unanimous conclusion that, at this point, Croatia has a very sound legal and institutional framework as an essential prerequisite to success in combating corruption, but the actual effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts will only be demonstrated by the expeditious completion of investigations launched and final judgements made in proceedings instigated against the perpetrators of criminal corrupt practices. This especially applies to corrupt practices involving accusations against high political officials and entailing investigations and judicial proceedings wherein the police, public prosecution service and judiciary have to demonstrate a high level of ability, autonomy and expertise.

At its 11 regular sessions held during the period under review, the National Council adopted the *Amendments to its Standing Orders* and discussed the *reports on the implementation of anti-corruption measures submitted by the following agencies implementing the Anti-Corruption Strategy*:

- the Ministry of Justice;
- the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship;
- the RoC Public Prosecution Service and the Anti-corruption and Organized Crime Office (hereinafter "USKOK") - reports dealing with specific topics;
- the Ministry of the Interior and the Police Directorate;
- the RoC Public Prosecution Service – Information on the efforts to address corruption in public companies (HC-Croatian Road Company, HAC-Croatian Motorway Company, HŽ-Croatian Rail Company, and HEP-Croatian Electricity Company)
- PNUSKOK; and
- the RoC Public Prosecution Service and USKOK – for 2009.

- the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship – Public Procurement Directorate;
- the State Public Procurement Review Commission;
- the Supreme Court – for 2009;
- the Ministry of Finance, with special focus on the Customs Administration, the National Tax Administration and the Anti-Money Laundering Office;
- the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; and
- the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports.

At one of its sessions, the National Council – at the proposal of its member, Mr. Dragutin Lesar – considered an anonymous complaint about the operations of the Croatian Postal Service since 2006.

Through its discussions and conclusions, the National Council insisted on the provision of resources required for the implementation of measures set forth in the Strategy with regard to creating conditions for the efficient operations of PNUŠKOK and strengthening inter-agency cooperation between PNUŠKOK, the National Tax Administration, the Customs Administration and the Anti-Money Laundering Office.

On several occasions, the National Council discussed public procurement procedures because of their potential corruption risks. At this point, there are several governmental agencies responsible for public procurement issues: the Ministry of Economy's Public Procurement Directorate, the Central Public Procurement Office, the State Public Procurement Review Commission, and the PPP Agency.

In 2009, the Public Procurement Directorate received 83 requests and carried out 61 inspections, identifying irregularities in 46 cases. In addition, over the first six months of 2010, it received 56 requests, out of which 21 cases have been closed, with irregularities being identified in 6 cases. The Central Public Procurement Office has been operational since the end of 2009 and needs to be strengthened in terms of staffing so as to fully meet its principal mission: achieve efficiency savings and prevent corruption. The same goes for the State Public Procurement Review Commission, which received 1,280 appeals in 2008 and 1,422 in 2009, as a result of which 28% of public procurement procedures were cancelled in 2008 and 25% in 2009. Public procurement remains an area of high corruption risk, which is testified by numerous instances of malfeasance detected in the operations of state-owned companies (Croatian Motorway, Road, Rail and Electricity Companies, the FIMI MEDIA case, etc.)

The National Council insists on enhancing efficiency in detecting, prosecuting and sanctioning criminal corrupt practices, especially when they involve highly-ranked officials and politicians, because this is the only way to improve the corruption perception index and demonstrate that no one is untouchable in the fight against corruption in Croatia.

A commendable example of increasing transparency in public procurement procedures is provided by the Ministry of Health, which has included a TIC representative in its Public Procurement Commission.

There is no remedy for corruption other than final, legally-binding judgements. In 2009, a total of 1,118 persons were reported to USKOK, of whom 846 for corrupt practices. 466 requests for investigation were filed, of which 270 for corrupt practices. 408 persons were indicted, of whom 178 for corruption. Courts passed 491 judgements, of which 190 pertained to corruption, including 164 convictions, 20 acquittals and 6 dismissals. In 2008, there were 206 judgements in cases of corruption, which means that the number of convictions increased.

While corruption cannot be accurately gauged, all surveys conducted by TIC, Gallup, GfK and other agencies show that its perception in Croatia remains high. Although the TI Index for 2008 was the best ever since the beginning of its measurement in Croatia, its drop to 4.1 in 2009 is rather indicative and alarming. Specifically, no one can any longer deny that Croatia currently has a sound legislative framework and that it has established a solid institutional anti-corruption 'USKOK vertical', with an ever-improving coordination among its participants, from the anti-corruption police department, through the anti-corruption office of the Public Prosecution Service, to anti-corruption courts. At the same time, there is still a lack of sufficient results, more final convictions and confiscated proceeds of corruption, for this will be the only motivation for citizens to place a higher value on the efforts of the 'USKOK vertical' and to become more active themselves in preventing and combating corruption.

- **Dedicated sessions of the National Council**

During the period under review, the National Council held three dedicated sessions:

- **Media Freedom and the Fight against Corruption**

The session highlighted the importance of media freedom as well as the potential for corruption within the media themselves, and established that only two media companies had Editorial Charters that comply with the Media Act. The right of access to information was underscored as an important factor in the fight against corruption and the detection of those who had assaulted journalists was emphasized as a priority for all relevant governmental authorities.

- **Analysis of Whistleblower Protection in the European Union and Croatian Experiences**

The session highlighted the importance of whistleblower protection, considered the experiences of European countries and concluded that Croatia's legislative framework for whistleblower protection, laid down in a number of laws, showed no major variation from those of other European countries. However, the negative experiences of individual cases showed that persons who had pointed at corruption frequently remained unprotected, lost their jobs or were exposed to threats and risks to their personal security. The participants of this dedicated session held that whistleblower protection should be given priority in raising the awareness of the importance of combating corruption precisely because of the importance of cooperation from those reporting corruption in good faith.

- **Measures Taken to Combat Corruption in Higher Education and Their Effects**

The session highlighted the importance and role of education and science in preventing corruption in Croatian society. Preventing corruption in the educational system, from the fraudulent enrolment of children in day-care centres to buying university degrees and engaging in corrupt practices within the academic community, is particularly important in the efforts to build universal moral principles in the society. In addition, the participants pointed at the danger of a sensationalistic approach to scandals that undermined the dignity of the academic community because less than 1% of researchers were susceptible to corruption. They also stressed that academic corruption bit deeply into the foundations of society, making knowledge appear insignificant, and that corrupt practices would start to flourish if people believed that grades and degrees could be bought. Likewise, it was emphasized that attention should also be accorded to public procurement at universities, corruption risks in their management bodies, the financing of scientific projects, recruitment, and scientific career advancement. The efforts to define the autonomy of universities and the methods of university oversight in the amendments to the Higher Education Act were underscored as yet another key issue.

The work of these dedicated sessions involved participation by a number of experts whose inputs provided a significant contribution in terms of suggestions on how to enhance media freedom and the protection of journalists and all persons reporting corruption in good faith, as well as measures taken to combat corruption in higher education.

The role and importance of both the media and the educational system are best demonstrated by the results of the “Anti-Corruption Class”, an initiative taken by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports that covered secondary school students in Osijek, Split, Rijeka and Zagreb and which, among other things, showed that 94.9% students derived most of their knowledge of corruption from information in the media, and 56.3% students had a very limited knowledge of corruption, none of which derived from schools. This clearly leads to the conclusion that schools need to pay more attention to that issue, especially in the light of a positive attitude expressed by students regarding the usefulness of preventive education and their great interest in additional education on this topic.

Dedicated sessions have proved to be an important form of promoting new measures to combat corruption.

3. OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

The chairman, deputy chairwoman and members of the National Council took an active part in the work several local meetings organized by civil society representatives (TIC, GONG (an NGO promoting civic participation in political processes, Partnership for Social Development, etc.) to address the issues of combating corruption, as well as a number of international conferences (CransMontana Postgraduate Institute for International Studies: International Conference on *Business and Corruption*, Paris, November 2008; Transparency International-Latvia: International Conference on *Specialized Anti-Corruption Agencies: Independent to be Effective, Effective to Lose Independence*, Jurmala (Latvia), March 2010), where they presented positive experiences with regard to the role of the National Council in enhancing the fight against corruption in Croatia.

Members of the National Council attended meetings with the representatives of foreign delegations, embassies to Croatia, the European Commission and the World Bank who visited the Croatian Parliament, and informed them about the efforts of the National Council.

By their appearances in the media, members of the National Council made an important contribution to promoting a positive climate for involving all segments of the society in the fight against corruption.

The chairman, deputy chairwoman and members of the National Council received citizens who asked for personal contact because of their suspicion of corrupt practices they had encountered, and all citizen complaints addressed to the National Council were forwarded to the RoC Public Prosecution Service and other relevant bodies for consideration and response.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Council holds that 2010 saw progress in the implementation of the Strategy, especially when compared to the results presented in the preceding Report. This is demonstrated by the opening of Chapter 23 – Judiciary and Fundamental Rights.

The European Union acknowledged the achievements made by the Republic of Croatia in the establishment of institutional mechanisms for cooperation in the implementation and monitoring of its anti-corruption efforts, including the enhancement of the Anti-Corruption Commission headed by Croatia's prime minister and the increasingly stimulative role of the National Council for Monitoring Anti-Corruption Strategy Implementation, and noted that Croatia had aligned its legislation with all international legal instruments in this field.

At the same time, when it comes to its anti-corruption efforts, Croatia has been given clear benchmarks to be met before this Chapter can be closed. In particular, these include:

- ensuring an efficient institutional mechanism for cooperation in the implementation of anti-corruption measures and its monitoring, strengthening the coordination structure of the Ministry of Justice, and building the capacity and performance of the Ministry of Public Administration in view of its broad responsibilities stemming from the Strategy and Action Plan;
- maintaining a proactive approach adopted by National Council and proposing corrective measures;
- implementing awareness-raising activities regarding the existence of corruption, its causes and dangers;
- updating the Action Plan by placing greater emphasis on preventive measures – e.g. addressing conflicts of interest, raising the awareness of honesty and integrity, organizing ongoing staff training to increase transparency, efficiency and integrity in public administration, maintaining reliable statistics of Action Plan implementation, as well as the efficiency of investigations, judicial proceedings and judgments in cases of organized crime and corruption, regardless of the level of their occurrence, with special focus on monitoring its implementation in state-owned enterprises, and improving independent supervision and control;
- upgrading the Political Party Financing Act and expanding its implementation to election campaigns, and improving transparency and independent oversight by accepting new GRECO recommendations;
- broadening the jurisdiction of USKOK to cover tax fraud, improving the legislative framework in the field of economic and financial crimes, and establishing institutional mechanisms for managing assets seized in criminal proceedings;
- further capacity building of USKOK in view of its new responsibilities stemming from the Criminal Procedure Act, and introducing mechanisms to monitor the supervision of the rejection of reports of criminal corrupt practices by the Public Prosecution Service.

It can be said that improvements in the legislative framework – including constitutional change, the adoption of new and amendments to the existing laws governing public procurement, concessions, conflict of interest, the funding of political parties and the right of access to information, as well as the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Act, and judicial reform – have created a conducive environment for a more efficient fight against corruption.

With a view to further enhancing legislative and institutional frameworks, as well as measures for their implementation, ongoing efforts are required to revise the Action Plan by monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the adopted legislation. Any suspicion of political pressures on the police, the Public Prosecution Service and the judiciary in cases where highly ranked political officials are suspected of involvement in corrupt practices erode public trust in the judiciary and impede any stronger engagement of citizens in combating corruption. Therefore, the effective implementation of all laws enacted to ensure an independent and professional judiciary and police is essential.

In line with the recommendations of the European Commission, Croatia has to establish a track record of efficient and effective investigation, prosecution and court rulings in all cases of organized crime and corruption, especially for high-level corruption. Consistent application of legal provisions on the confiscation of proceeds from criminally corrupt practices and organized crime should constitute one of the incentives for greater acceptance and appreciation of the results of anti-corruption efforts. Further improvements are also required in financial investigations, which have to demonstrate that the approach taken is even more active than before, including the need for sound cooperation between the Anti-Money Laundering Office, the National Tax Administration, the Customs Administration and PNUSKOK. To ensure success in the fight against corruption, it is crucial to make further efforts to build the capacity of PNUSKOK, USKOK and courts for the appropriate handling of cases, both in terms of their staff and logistics, and to establish a sound mechanism for managing funds and assets seized in criminal proceedings.

The National Council is not an operational body and cannot sanction the already committed corrupt practices. However, by monitoring the implementation of the Strategy, it can suggest improvements in preventive measures for combating corruption, in particular, by:

- increasing transparency and integrity in public administration and state-owned companies;
- further enhancing the legislative framework with regard to the right of access to information and whistleblower protection;
- continuously reviewing and upgrading action plans in state owned-companies;
- providing continued education at all levels and strengthening integrity in public administration;
- increasing transparency in the funding of political parties and election campaigns;
- enhancing the system for preventing and sanctioning conflicts of interest at all levels of government and public administration;
- promoting all regular activities aimed at raising public awareness of the harmfulness of corruption;
- ensuring immediate depolitisation in all public services;
- curbing corrupt practices at the local level by putting in place appropriate measures and control mechanisms.

Within the limits of its authority and relying on its past experience, the National Council will continue to propose, on an ongoing basis, corrective measures in the Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan, and to encourage regular public debates on all relevant issues pertaining to corruption.

The public perception of corruption in Croatian society, especially in the judiciary and governmental agencies, highlights the severity of this phenomenon and the need for even more intense efforts to combat corruption, which are first reflected in the demonstration of a strong political will by all authorities from the local to the national level and, then, in the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plans. Only visible results – i.e. binding convictions and seizure of criminal proceeds – will lead to a decrease in negative public perception.

In recent months, there has been an evident increase in investigations of numerous corruption scandals, which have revealed a lack of integrity, accountability and transparency on the part of many civil servants, institutions, political parties and companies. Along with the so-called ‘USKOK vertical’, it is also necessary to develop universal moral principles in the society. In the fight against corruption, transparency is the most effective tool for its prevention. Openness in doing business and enabling the public to have full access to particular public institutions, public procurement procedures and staff recruitment constitute a barrier to any form of corruption. However, in addition to and closely correlated with transparency, accountability and knowledge stand for yet another two imperatives. In an environment wracked by recession, illiquidity and surging unemployment, the risk of corruption tends to grow as well, necessitating a demonstration of even stronger political will and the intensification of all activities undertaken by all agencies implementing the Strategy and Action Plan with a view to the prevention, early detection and expeditious prosecution of any corrupt practice.

The opening of Chapter 23 suggests that a proper course has been set when it comes to anti-corruption efforts. Nevertheless, to close that Chapter, all governmental agencies, officials and politicians will still have to demonstrate commitment to eradicating corrupt practices, regardless of their partisan or any such other affiliation. The fight against corruption is a major prerequisite in the process of accession to the EU, but it is even more important for creating conditions for the prosperity of Croatian society.

5. EXHIBITS

5.1 REGULAR SESSIONS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FROM 1 JUNE 2009 TO 30 JUNE 2010

NO.	DATE	AGENDA	RAPPORTEURS
1.	8 July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Report on the Work of the National Council for Monitoring Anti-Corruption Strategy Implementation National Council's Rules of Procedure 	- Željko Jovanović, Ph.D.
2.	15 July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship 	- Ivan Šimonović, Ph.D. - Tamara Obradović Mazal
3.	18 July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the RoC Public Prosecution Service and USKOK Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the RoC Ministry of the Interior 	- Mladen Bajić - Dinko Cvitan - Oliver Grbić
4.	6 October 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about the activities undertaken by the RoC Public Prosecution Service to address corruption in public companies (Croatian Road, Motorway, Rail and Electric Companies) 	- Mladen Bajić - Dinko Cvitan - Vitomir Bijelić - Zdravko Livaković - Željko Tufekčić

5.	11 February 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the National Police Anti-corruption and Organized Crime Office for 2009 	- Božo Barbarić
6.	17 February 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the RoC Public Prosecution Service and the RoC Anti-corruption and Organized Crime Office for 2009 	- Mladen Bajić - Dinko Cvitan
7.	24 February 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship (the Public Procurement System Directorate) Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the State Public Procurement Review Commission 	- Tamara Obradović Mazal - Vlasta Pavličević - Dinko Cvitan
8.	2 March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia for 2009 	- Branko Hrvatin
9.	13 April 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance, which special focus on the Customs Administration, the National Tax Administration and the Anti-Money Laundering Office 	- Ivan Šuker
10.	19 May 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare Consideration of an anonymous complaint about the operations of the Croatian Post Service since 2006 at the proposal of Dragutin Lesar, National Council Member 	- Ante Zvonimir Golem - Dragutin Lesar
11.	10 June 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Report on the Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports 	- Želimir Janjić

5.2 DEDICATED SESSIONS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FROM 1 JUNE 2009 TO 30 JUNE 2010

	DATE	SESSION TOPIC	PARTICIPANTS
1.	15 June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Media Freedom and the Fight Against Corruption	- media professionals, civil society representatives
2.	5 November 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of Whistleblower Protection in the European Union and Croatian Experiences	- media professionals, representatives of the civil society and government agencies
3.	24 November 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Measures Taken to Combat Corruption in Higher Education and Their Effects	- representatives of the academic community and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports