



GLOBAL ORGANIZATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS AGAINST CORRUPTION
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES PARLEMENTAIRES CONTRE LA CORRUPTION
ORGANIZACION MUNDIAL DE PARLAMENTARIOS CONTRA LA CORRUPCIÓN
المنظمة العالمية للبرلمانيين ضد الفساد

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News Release

Legislators from Eastern Europe and Central Asia Create a Regional Network to Fight Corruption and Strengthen Democracy

Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption

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GOPAC is a worldwide alliance of parliamentarians working together to combat corruption, strengthen good government, and uphold the rule of law.

Ottawa, Canada – Legislators from Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, and Serbia have signed a formal Memorandum of Co-operation, to work together across borders to combat corruption and strengthen democratic institutions in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. This is a critical first step in a broader effort for inter-parliamentary co-operation in the region.

Delegations from the seven parliaments met at a two-day summit, organized by the Serbian national chapter of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the Swiss Agency for Co-operation and Development, entitled *Transparency and Accountability for Effective Oversight: Role of parliament*. The summit was held in Belgrade, Serbia, 21-22 May 2015.

“Corruption takes many forms, including money laundering, bribery, and influence peddling, and the World Bank estimates that the cross-border flow of the global proceeds from criminal activities, corruption, and tax evasion is between \$1 trillion and \$1.6 trillion per year,” said Dr Naser Al Sane, GOPAC Board Member. “By working together, these parliamentarians—proud GOPAC Members—can ensure that their countries have the mechanisms and institutions to reduce corruption and to fight perpetrators of such crimes.”

Countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia scored an average of 33 on the 2014 Transparency International *Corruption Perception Index*, indicating a severe problem with corruption. Moreover, analyses by the World Bank and OECD show that businesses in the region cite corruption as an obstacle to economic growth, more frequently than any other issue after tax rates. Globally the UNDP estimates that developing and transition nations lose \$10 to corruption for every \$1 they receive in official development aid.

“Twenty years ago, few people would have dared to dream that parliamentarians from these countries would be meeting in Belgrade, leaving past conflicts behind to join hands in an effort to build a new future together,” said Akaash Maharaj, GOPAC’s Chief Executive Officer. “It is a remarkable achievement, proving that while we are all products of history, we need not be prisoners of history.”

GOPAC is a worldwide alliance of parliamentarians working together to combat corruption, strengthen good government, and uphold the rule of law. Based in Ottawa, Canada, GOPAC has 52 national chapters on 5 continents. GOPAC supports its members’ efforts through original research, global anti-corruption capacity building, and international peer support. Visit GOPAC on the web at gopacnetwork.org, on Twitter at twitter.com/GOPAC_Eng, and on Facebook at facebook.com/gopacnetwork

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