

Press Release

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The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) publishes report on Turkey

Strasbourg, 30.11.2006 – The Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) has published today its Joint First and Second Round Evaluation Report on Turkey, which joined GRECO in 2004.

The report focuses on general anti-corruption policies, specialisation of law enforcement bodies in fighting corruption, independence of the judiciary, immunity from prosecution for corruption offences, the deprivation of benefits drawn from corrupt acts, measures to counter corruption in public administration and the prevention of legal persons - such as commercial companies - from being used as shields for corruption. The report was drawn up by a team of GRECO evaluators following a one week on-site visit to Turkey, during which the team held thorough discussions with officials and civil society representatives.

On the one hand, information collected during the on-site visit indicates that Turkey has, for a long time, been extensively affected by corruption and that the problem appears to be widespread throughout the country and its public institutions, including the judiciary. On the other hand, the Government of Turkey has shown determination in its efforts to combat corruption which is considered a priority in Turkey. Much has been done to improve the situation in recent years, in particular, in view of the EU accession process. A large number of fundamental laws have been enacted and their implementation is underway. New institutions to promote access to public information and the implementation of ethical principles in public administration have been established.

GRECO addresses 21 recommendations to Turkey. They aim at improving the implementation of the overall anti-corruption policies, strengthening the specialisation of, and the co-operation between, law enforcement agencies and further enhancing the independence of the judiciary. Moreover, it is recommended to consider reforming the system of administrative investigation, which may be subject to political influence, and to reduce the number of categories of public officials who benefit from immunities. The report recommends that ethical guidelines for public officials be implemented through thorough training programmes, *inter alia*, concerning the reporting of corruption and the protection of those who report suspicions of corruption (whistleblowers). It is also recommended that an Ombudsman institution be established and that the independence of recent bodies, such as the Ethics Council and the Board of Review of Access to Information be strengthened.

GRECO will monitor the implementation of the recommendations to Turkey towards the end of 2007, through its specific compliance procedure.

GRECO's report is available at: <http://www.coe.int/greco>

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GRECO is an enlarged partial agreement which currently comprises 42 members (Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Republic of Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Republic of Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States of America). It monitors its members' compliance with Council of Europe anti-corruption standards.

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