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Ref. DC 143(2015)

## **Greece urged to secure integrity in parliament and in the judiciary, a new anti-corruption report says**

Strasbourg, 22.10.2015 – A [report](#) focusing on parliament, judges and prosecutors, by the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption ([GRECO](#)), calls on Greece to enact rules for MPs on their acceptance of gifts – and on contacts with third parties including lobbyists, among other recommendations.

Greece is at an "early stage of integrity policies for parliamentarians" as such rules do not yet exist, according to the report.

GRECO stresses that corruption has been one of the problems that contributed to Greece's financial crisis. The report pointed out allegations of legislative and institutional manipulation exempting authors of illegal acts from liability, facilitated by an opaque legislative process.

GRECO is hopeful that an anti-corruption strategy and action plan – adopted in 2013-2014 – will bring about desirable changes. For example, the report praises supervision undertaken (as of this year) for the declaration of assets and interests, by the independent Committee for the Investigation of Declarations of Assets, or CIDA. CIDA supervision is a "promising development" according to the report, since supervision carried out previously by the Greek Parliament itself proved "ineffective".

Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland stressed that the report "illustrates cooperation between Greece and the Council of Europe, to reduce corruption as one of the root causes of the ongoing economic crisis."

The report also calls on Greece to review its system of immunities and to make parliamentarians aware of their obligations.

Although judges and prosecutors are subject to career-related mechanisms and procedural rules which protect their integrity, Greece still needs to codify rules of conduct and to streamline general supervision over judges and prosecutors. Such supervision is currently performed by too many bodies composed of peers designated for a short period.

Severe backlogs in the judiciary create additional vulnerabilities. Adequate guarantees are needed against both undue delays and interventions of third parties seeking to speed up decisions. Moreover, the justice system needs to be assessed in its overall functioning and made more accountable through periodic reporting.

An inter-connected IT system to support workload management and communication is still missing.

Greece also needs to review the selection process and the term of tenure of most senior positions of judges and prosecutors to improve their independence from the executive.

The implementation of 19 recommendations for Greece in this report will be assessed by GRECO in the first half of 2017 through its compliance procedure.

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GRECO is a Council of Europe body that aims to improve the capacity of its members to fight corruption by monitoring their compliance with anti-corruption standards. It helps states to identify deficiencies in national anti-corruption policies, prompting the necessary legislative, institutional and practical reforms. Currently it comprises 48 European states and the United States of America.

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