

Symposium in Austria on the fight against corruption, fraud and crime in BiH

The Office of the High Representative together with the G. Marshall European Center for Security Studies organized last week a five-day symposium, "The Investigation, Coordination and Prosecution of Crimes of Fraud, Corruption and Transnational Crime: Refining the Process, Enhancing the Results" in Austria for officials from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Judicial and law enforcement personnel, members of parliaments, representatives of Ministries and faculty professors from both entities, 33 in total, participated in the event. The purpose of the symposium was to refine the process and methodologies used to investigate and prosecute crimes of fraud, corruption and transnational crime.

Experts from the United States, Germany, Italy and Sweden shared their knowledge and experience with the BiH participant with respect to their own models and measures against fraud and corruption.

The results of the symposium are the following recommendations:

Legal aspect

- Full implementation of existing laws;
- Speed up the process of criminal legal reform with respect to special investigative methods to combat crimes of corruption, fraud, money laundering and other organized crime cases.

Education

- Develop domestic dialogue to develop codes of conduct

and guidelines for various professions, such as prosecutors, judges, police, and finance police, as well as media-judiciary relations.

- Develop workshops between entity ministries to discuss cooperation and identify areas for legislative harmonization.

Transparency

- Public Prosecutor should regularly give statements to inform the public on major corruption cases;
- Encourage transparency through media access to government and the judiciary in line with the Freedom of Information Act.

Cooperation and Coordination

- Designate an Inter-Ministerial Commission to develop cooperative units to coordinate corruption and fraud offenses. Establish an Office of Cooperation at the state level which could act on behalf of the state with respect to international relations and international law enforcement cooperation.

Political commitment

- The government needs to clearly demonstrate and cultivate political will and support to seriously fighting crimes of corruption, fraud, and money laundering.
- Review all applicable international agreements to sign and implement those that directly effect investigating and prosecuting corruption and money laundering, such as the Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure of Proceeds of Crime.