

THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

The participants of the event «The Role Of Media In The Fight Against Corruption» that has taken place at the ICEJ, Opatija 17th-18th of november 2001 have agreed after discussion on the following points:

1. The public has to be warned on a regular basis about the harm of corruption. Corruption undermines the moral standards of society, endangers democracy, deprives citizens of their rights and blocks development. The media's role is not only to inform the public about facts and statements. An active role in public education and supporting the fight against corruption is necessary.
2. Distinct political support is vital for the freedom of media and a successful fight against corruption. There seems to be no will for such support. It is the duty of political and public representatives to clearly state their attitude about the fight against corruption before entering political elections. They should set an example by publicly declaring: their assets and income, that any potential conflict of interest is regulated and that they understand that the public has a right to be informed about their work and private life. They should furthermore invest personal effort into creating a transparent environment for political and other public institutions.
3. The government has to act responsible and open. Openness towards the media and public as well as a transparent decision making process are imperative for a responsible democratic government. Appropriate timing is essential for complete and just access to information about public matters.
4. We believe that the cooperation of NGO's, as shown by the example of cooperation between TI Croatia and the Croatian Journalist Association is of major importance in the fight against corruption. Special emphasis has to be laid on establishing a network of information, knowledge, understanding and cooperation between various professional associations and public institutions.
5. Transparency International Croatia will develop a network for the distribution of information to the media. Information made available will include: international activities in the fight against corruption, research, case studies, articles and other activities dedicated to curbing corruption.
6. Full support, both institutional and legal has to be provided to the media in their role of public critics. This includes the right to access to information that is: given with full responsibility, correct, complete, checkable and official. Which is the task of any body or person acting on behalf of the public.
7. We strongly support the implementation of legal acts that will guarantee and provide means of protection for citizens and the media by allowing the media to access information about public institutions (Access to information act).