

Beyond Anticorruption Rhetoric: Coalition Building and Monitoring

The CSD has been the Secretariat of *Coalition 2000* since its launch in 1998. In 2001 *Coalition 2000* continued its efforts to be an initiator of comprehensive anti-corruption activities in Bulgaria. It extends the scope of the public-private partnership, acts as a coordinator of various local projects and organizes high-profile meetings and conferences.

1. A Public-Private Partnership

For a fourth consecutive year *Coalition 2000* has worked towards public-private partnership in counteracting corruption.

The most effective area for building such partnerships are the policy aspects of anti-corruption. From this perspective, in 2001 a landmark of the cooperation with government and other non-governmental institutions - both at expert and policy level - was the development of the annual **Corruption Assessment Report 2001 (CAR)**.

At the end of 2001 the general political environment for fighting corruption can be assessed as promising: obviously, each change at the pinnacle of power creates opportunities for public-private partnership in this respect, especially at the initial stage of consolidation of public support for the new incumbents in office.

Corruption Assessment Report
2001, p.7

The CAR is intended to assess the progress achieved along the recommendation lines of the Action Plan and to

recommend short term actions. It presents a general evaluation of the state and dynamic of corruption in Bulgarian society and the efforts to counteract corruption. The CAR analyzes the changes which have occurred in various public spheres and which have brought – or might bring about - changes in corruption dynamics. The evaluation criteria take into account reputable international analyses and domestic indexes about the spread and the frequency of different forms of corrupt behavior.

The 2001 CAR focused on the following issues:

- Identify factors that contribute to the growth of corrupt practices and assess economic costs of corruption;
- Account for public perception of corrupt practices and acceptance of corruption by the public;
- Identify factors that currently constrain the combat of corruption in Bulgaria;
- Evaluate measures aimed at developing the legal and institutional anti-corruption infrastructure.

The Report was produced through a several step process which ensures both consensus building and comprehensiveness: drafting a preliminary analysis paper; ensuring the input of the experts of the stakeholder institutions; developing the text of the annual CAR to be presented at the annual *Coalition 2000* Policy Forum.

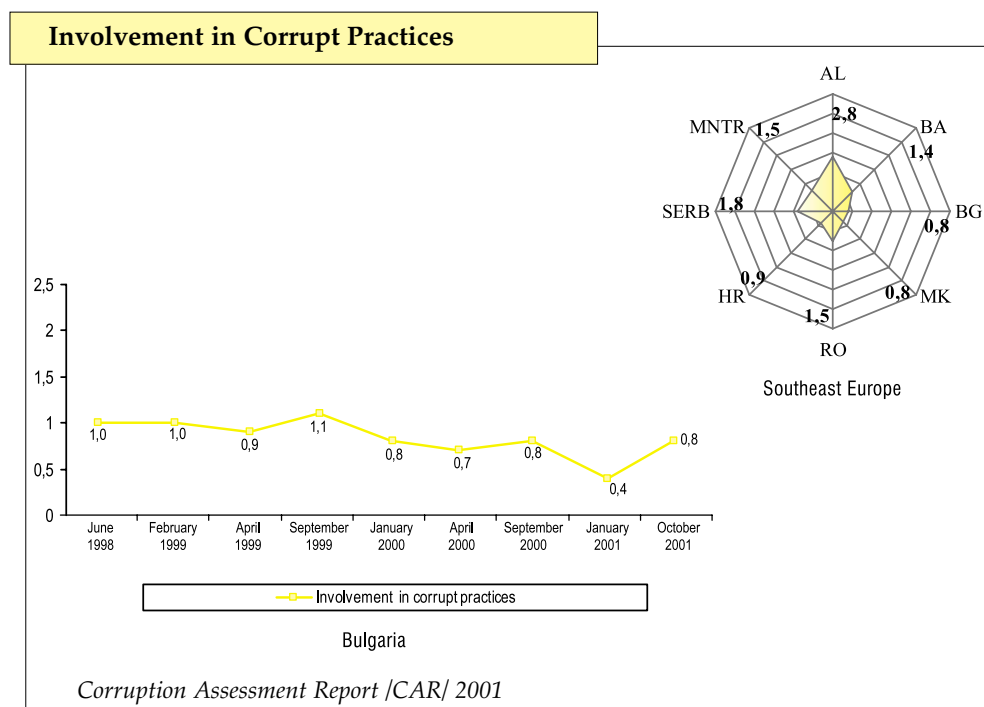
The initial task of experts, as an already established mechanism within the framework of the *Coalition2000* process, was to draft a preliminary paper covering the institutional and legal environ-

ment for curbing corruption, reform of the judicial system, corruption in the economy, media and civil society, dynamics of corrupt behavior and public attitudes and international anti-corruption cooperation.

The preliminary analysis paper was circulated among all concerned institutions - governmental, non-governmental and international - in order to solicit their comments and additions. These included suggestions as to possible additional action lines, and clarification of certain recommendations and definitions.

Another significant step for the development of the public-private partnership was the invitation of *Coalition 2000*'s experts to participate in the elaboration of a **National Strategy for Counteracting Corruption** adopted by

the new government that came to power in June 2001. The National Strategy, adopted in October, contains a chapter, dealing especially with anti-corruption partnership between state institutions, NGOs and the media. It reflects many of the measures proposed by the *Coalition 2000* Action Plan of 1998 and of the Program for Judicial Reform, which was developed within the framework of the Judicial Reform Initiative. The cooperation between *Coalition 2000* and the government in the development of the Strategy exemplifies the importance of public-private partnerships from the point of sustainability of anti-corruption reforms - the anti-corruption capacity established within the *Coalition* as a result of a number of civic initiatives was instrumental for the development of public policy measures at a crucial time of Bulgaria's reforms.



The *Coalition 2000* input into the policy making process was not limited to the development of the CAR and the National Strategy, and included efforts in the fields of public procurement and corporate governance. On October 31, a discussion was organized by the Public Procurement Directorate of the Council of Ministers on the **amendments of the Law on Public Procurement**, which were to be submitted in the Bulgarian Parliament by the Council of Ministers. Representatives of *Coalition 2000* and the Secretariat at CSD made a contribution to the discussions.

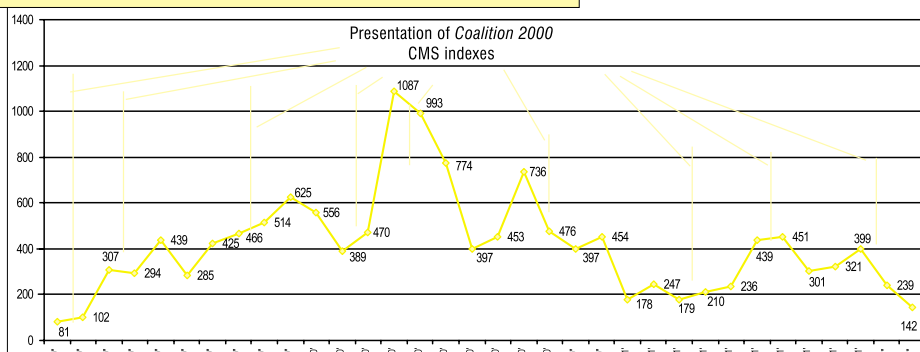
At the same time, civil society organizations within the Coalition continued to be very active in their watchdog capacity. A **Civic Council to monitor transparency in financing the 2001 presidential election campaign** was established by representatives of three independent civil organizations - *Coalition 2000*, the Transparency International Bulgarian Chapter and Civil Society Against Corruption. The major objective of the Civic Council was the implementation of an independent ongoing and subsequent civil control on fund-raising

and fund expending during the presidential election campaign. The Civil Council was invited by the Committee nominating Mr. Petar Stoyanov and Judge Nelly Koutzkova for President and Vice-President of the Republic to carry out the monitoring. The members of the civic council had access to the banking documents as well as to the financial and accounting reports on the funding. The results of the monitoring were presented at a press conference.

2. A Watchdog and Public Awareness Tool

The local anticorruption initiatives of *Coalition 2000*, such as seminars, round tables, public discussions and lectures, intended to popularize the concept of civic control and monitoring of local government. In this respect, the *Coalition* jointly with the Association of Municipalities „Hebar“ organized seminars on „**Corruption and Local Authorities**“ in Plovdiv and Pazardjic with the mayors and other municipal representatives. Lectures on the issues of corruption and anticorruption organized at the University of Shoumen and

Monthly Number of Articles



Source: CMS – media monitoring

* Media monitored: "24-chasa", "Trud", "Sega", "Standard", "Pari", "Novinar", "Monitor", "Demokratzia", "Duma", "Kapital", "168-chasa" and "Banker".

CAR 2001

the presentation of the Civic Association „Ombudsman“ in Stara Zagora were some of the other activities, carried out by *Coalition 2000*. Anticorruption publications of *Coalition 2000* were presented during the „Week of the Municipality“ in the town of Rakovski, Plovdiv district. The New Bulgarian University hosted a Round Table „Corruption and Success of the Transition“, jointly organized by the Political Science Department and *Coalition 2000*.

The greatest awareness-raising effect was unquestionably produced by the regularly published **Corruption Monitoring Indexes** of *Coalition 2000*. As the main product of the **Corruption Monitoring System** (CMS) developed and implemented by *Vitosha Research*, they have become an effective instrument for the analysis of corrupt practices in this country and the assessment of the progress made by the anti-corruption initiatives.

3. International Cooperation

In February *Coalition 2000* hosted one week anti-corruption study tour for officials of the Government of **Armenia**, members of the National Assembly and key NGOs working in the field of civil society and the rule of law. The working group has just completed drafting a

National Anti-Corruption Strategy. They started the process of developing a Strategy during a study tour to Bulgaria hosted by the Secretariat of *Coalition 2000*, the Center for the Study of Democracy (Sofia). The study tour was aimed at launching a **national anti-corruption program for Armenia** by sharing *Coalition 2000's* accomplishments in coalition building, public-private partnership and regional anticorruption cooperation.

The major international event of the Coalition for 2001, the **International Conference „Beyond Anti-Corruption Rhetoric: Coalition Building and Monitoring Impact,“** was held on March 23-24, 2001 in Sofia. Approximately 100 representatives of non-governmental organizations and public officials from the countries of Southeast Europe as well as representatives of bilateral aid agencies and international organizations, such as USAID, OECD, the World Bank, the European Union, UNDP, the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe took part in the conference. Among the participants were also representatives of state institutions and non-governmental organizations from the Russian Federation, leaders of Bulgarian political parties and Members of Parliament, the Ambassadors of the USA, UK, Germany, Sweden, and members of foreign embassies and missions in Sofia.



Ambassador Donald Kursh, Principal Deputy Special Coordinator, Stability Pact for Southeast Europe spoke at the Conference

The purpose of this third international conference was to review the experiences gained by the Coalition in establishing public-private partnerships, to assess the results and impact from implementing this anti-corruption instrument, and to encourage further cooperation among governmental and non-governmental organizations, especially in Southeastern Europe, within the existing bilateral and multilateral instruments against corruption and organized crime, as a security building measure for the region in the framework of the Stability Pact.

Corruption and trans-border crime, fighting organized crime and the link between corruption and trafficking were other issues brought to the discussion. Among the themes explored were trafficking in goods, people, drugs and arms, money laundering, and organized crime's impact on the individual, society, economic development, and security and the democratization process in the region. The tools developed in the countries of Southeast Europe and the international instruments to which the countries present have signed up to were also discussed.

In 2001, the Coalition laid the groundwork for a long term cooperation with the **George Marshall European Center for Security Studies**. In May a conference entitled „**Corruption within the Security Forces: A Threat to National Security**“ was organized by George Marshall Center, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and the German Bundeskriminalamt in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. Its purpose was to provide a forum for senior governmental officials, parliamentarians, academics, and heads of non-governmental organizations to exchange information and views on aspects of organized crime that pose a potential threat to the national security and regional stability. The conference focused on corruption of governmental officials and

processes within security forces: law enforcement, customs and border control, and military services. This conference was the second in a series of conferences hosted by the Marshall Center, the FBI, and the BKA to examine the threat that organized crime poses to national security and regional stability.

The second **Partners in Transition Conference** sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was held in Sofia September 10-11. Mr. Petar Stoyanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, served as the host of the conference. The Second Partners in Transition Conference allowed the participants to discuss both formally and informally, difficulties they have encountered along the road to building a democratic society and establishing a market-oriented economy. The theme, „Challenges of Transition,“ refers to some of the primary obstacles to realizing a successful transition to a democratic society and market-oriented economy.

The Bulgarian report was developed by a working group of representatives of government agencies, the judiciary and legislature, businesses association, media and NGOs with the active participation of Coalition 2000. It was presented at the conference by the representative of *Coalition 2000*, Mr. Boyko Todorov, Program Director of CSD and widely reported in the Bulgarian media.

The British Embassy to Bulgaria and Coalition 2000 jointly organized on September 19, 2001 a discussion on **the role of the UK Parliamentary Commissioner on Public Standards**. Ms. Elizabeth Filkin, the UK Parliamentary Commissioner, delivered a lecture on „How the United Kingdom's Parliament Tries to Win Public Respect: The Work of the Parliamentary Commissioner on Public Standards“. The lecture was followed by a lunchtime discussion on the

experience gained by the United Kingdom authorities in this important and challenging area of work with invitees from the politicians, public officials, the Judiciary, NGOs, the diplomats, representatives of international organizations, and journalists.

A round table on „**Corruption and Anti-Corruption within Security Forces**“ took place at the CSD on November 14. The US Embassy Legal Advisor Ms. Karen Kramer, Ms. Linda M. Topping-Gonzalez, Assistant Inspector-General for Congressional and Media Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, Mr. Michael Berkow, Chief of Police in Irvine and Mr. Stanley A. Boone, Office of the US Attorney, Department of Justice as well as *Coalition 2000* experts participated in the discussion.

On November 14 the Center for the Study of Democracy hosted „**Transparency and Anti-Corruption in Public Administration Activities**“ Round Table, jointly organized by the Institute of Public Administration and European Integration (IPA EI) and *Coalition 2000*. Following its target of rendering support to public administration and civil organizations in their strive to develop transparent governance procedures, the Institute contributes to the increase of citizens' trust in

public administration. The Round Table was one of the steps in this respect.

A **Policy Briefing *Coalition Building and Monitoring for Anti-corruption*** featuring the impact of *Coalition 2000* and the Southeast European Legal Development Initiative (SELDI) was organized by the Heritage Foundation, the Center for International Private Enterprise, and the Center for the Study of Democracy on July 12, 2001. Representatives of the Department of State, Department of Defense, Department of Justice, USAID, Council on Foreign Relations, World Bank, and others attended the briefing, held at the United States Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C.

The purpose of the policy briefing was to introduce the US policy and think tank community to the work of the Southeast European Legal Development Initiative (SELDI) to diagnose and advocate for policy reforms. The briefing focused on the impact of the shadow economy and illegal trafficking in goods on governance structures in the region and public-private models for cooperation. Comparative corruption diagnostics for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Yugoslavia were presented.



Ms. Gabriela Bakalova, Secretary General of IPA EI and Mr. Boyko Todorov at the round table

Bulgaria has led an anti-corruption initiative and this should provide a positive model for neighboring countries which face even stiffer challenges in combating corruption and stimulating economic growth.

Dr. Kim Holmes, Vice President,
The Heritage Foundation,
at the policy briefing

Stability and economic growth are dependent on forging strong coalitions to create standards of integrity, expose corruption, and advocate reforms. The mission of SELDI is to encourage such coalitions in the private and public sectors throughout the Balkan region. It is based on the *Coalition 2000* experience which demonstrates that a determined citizenry can demand better government and turn the tables on the corrupt.



From right to left: Dr. John Sullivan Executive Director, Center for International Private Enterprise; Dr. Kim Holmes, Vice President, The Heritage Foundation; Dr. Ognian Shentov, President, CSD; Mr. Boyko Todorov, CSD Program Director; Mr. Alexander Stoyanov, CSD Director of Research