

REPORT ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE STABILITY PACT FROM THE SPECIAL COORDINATOR OF THE STABILITY PACT TO THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATING IN THE ISTANBUL OSCE SUMMIT (19 NOVEMBER 1999)

The Stability Pact has launched a number of concrete initiatives since the Sarajevo Summit. Among the most significant are:

- An Investment Compact that includes firm commitments by countries in the region to improve their investment environment;
- An Anti-Corruption Initiative that is part of an overall effort to fight organized crime;
- Creation of a Business Advisory Council, composed of senior business executives from Stability Pact countries, including from those in South Eastern Europe, which will be closely involved in, among other issues, the Investment Compact process and providing advice on private sector development;
- A process to identify the main priorities infrastructure reconstruction and improvement, and private sector initiatives that will enable the Stability Pact to advance concrete proposals at a regional funding conference. A particular emphasis will be put on projects of regional importance;
- Development of concrete and integrated action plans by operationally oriented task forces, with the participation of key actors, on good governance, education, freedom of the media, gender, ethnic minorities and refugees. With respect to refugee returns the Stability Pact was requested by the UNHCR to help create the overall conditions conducive to refugee return and resettlement through integrated efforts by all three Tables. Furthermore, Working Table I is looking into a mechanism to coordinate the important work being done by NGOs in relevant sectors of Stability Pact activity; and

An initiative by countries of the region to intensify efforts to seize illicit transfers of small arms and light weapons, destroy weapons seized by interdiction of illegal traffic or that exceed legitimate defense needs, and take all necessary measures to secure small arms and light weapons stockpiles necessary to their defense.

A number of other processes and initiatives are also being finalized within the Stability Pact framework. All the initiatives which have been identified and decided upon will have direct and indirect costs. In order to secure the implementation of the Stability Pact program, there will be a Regional Funding Conference in the first quarter of 2000.

The Stability Pact document made clear the European Union's intention to play the leading role in the Pact. The EU is providing strong political support and making the major financial contribution to the work of the Special Coordinator. The European Commission has made valuable contributions to the Working Tables - in particular proposals for a regional network of civil society organizations; an environmental action plan for the region; an initiative in support of roma minorities. The Commission is also taking the important step of examining further ways of promoting trade between the region and the EU, as well as the development of intra-regional trade. The contribution of the European Investment Bank to regional infrastructure assessment and financing is also of considerable importance.

These and other initiatives have been developed through the Stability Pact's mechanisms. The South Eastern Europe Regional Table held its inaugural meeting in Brussels on 16 September. It approved the Special Co-coordinator's proposals for the Workplan, and the Chairs and Venues of the three Working Tables. Table I on Democratization and Human Rights is chaired by Max van der Stoel, Table II on Economic Reconstruction, Development and Cooperation by Fabrizio Saccomanni and Table III on Security Issues by Jan Eliasson. The inaugural meetings of the Working Tables were held in Bari on 9 October (Table II:), in Oslo on 13/14 October (Table III) and in Geneva on 18/19 October (Table I).

The inaugural meetings of the Working Tables produced a strong and solid framework for co-operation, and laid the foundation for substantive progress that will advance democratization, economic development and security, as well as enhance regional co-operation. The Stability Pact is a catalyst for enhanced coordination among international organizations and structures. Moreover, the Pact has been accepted as a highly visible and comprehensive forum in which countries of the region can work cooperatively with each other and with the international community. Finally, there is a fair balance between significant short-term projects and more ambitious medium and long-term processes.

The Stability Pact has raised high expectations. These expectations must be met. For all initiatives, sponsoring agencies, organizations or countries have been appointed. They are expected to take these initiatives forward and provide clear action plans tied to specific benchmarks demonstrating progress in the weeks ahead.

Details on the progress of each Table follow:

WORKING TABLE ON DEMOCRATIZATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Working Table I has developed a coherent work plan for a very broad range of activities, ranging from the protection of ethnic minorities, to ensuring gender equality, to assistance in development of a free and independent media. The concepts of Task Forces and lead sponsors, which were approved by the Geneva Working Table, have provided a mechanism for moving the very broad based agenda forward quickly, producing measurable results and providing an opportunity for substantial input from the countries of the region.

As its first priority, the Task Force on Human Rights and Ethnic Minorities under Slovenian sponsorship will send a Special Delegation, comprised of representatives from the Council of Europe and the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, to carry out a series of consultations in the region. These fact-finding missions will form the basis for a systematic assessment of the views of governments and national minorities in south eastern Europe regarding projects related to resolving minority issues and inter-ethnic tensions.

Consultations will begin in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Albania in late November. A second round of consultations will take place early next year in Romania, Hungary, Greece and Bulgaria.

The assessments will conclude in a Conference, hosted by Slovenia in the spring of 2000, to define the content and scope of activities that can contribute to solving obstacles to inter-ethnic understanding.

The Good Governance Task Force meeting under the lead sponsorship of the Council of Europe will be seeking to promote a number of specific initiatives, including the creation of Ombudsman institutions throughout the region, local democracy and trans-frontier cooperation and public administration. Specific, medium-term results that this Task Force is considering include the establishment of a Model Code of Conduct for Civil Servants and the establishment or strengthening of human rights protection institutions in each country of the region by the mid-2001.

The follow-up work for the successful October 1999 Szeged conference to support democratically elected Serbian opposition mayors should also be carried out within the framework of the local government initiative. A follow-up meeting with the opposition mayors will be sponsored by Hungary in the first half of 2000, and we are actively looking for ways to promote "twinning" relationships with Serbian cities, including direct appeals to Stability Pact Foreign Ministers.

The UK, sponsor of the Media Task Force, reports much progress in the effort to reach agreement on a Media Charter to protect the region's independent media. It has been in intense contact with key journalists' organizations, as well as interested governments. The Task Force will meet with media associations in early December and hoped to agree on a Media Charter at that time.

The Education Task Force sponsored by Austria considered Stability Pact related initiatives at a November 12-14 session of the Enhanced Graz Process in Sofia. The Sofia meeting endorsed the creation of a Co-coordinating Committee for History and History Teaching, as well as specific proposals on education for democratic citizenship, vocational education and civic society, the management of diversity and youth.

The Gender Task Force under OSCE sponsorship held its organizing meeting in Sarajevo on November 9. The Task Force has outlined an action plan that focuses on concrete reforms in three areas of activity: political empowerment of women, electoral legislation, and national gender machinery.

On returns of refugees and displaced persons the Chairman van der Stoep will attend the next meeting of the Geneva based Humanitarian Issues Working Group (HIWG) in December. He will use his relationship with the HIWG to develop specific measures, within the Stability Pact framework, to facilitate the return process.

Parliamentary Cooperation is sponsored by the Royaumont process, which has committed itself to consult with interested parties and develop an action plan by mid-January. The Special Coordinator expects to meet soon with European Parliament President Fontaine to consider ways in which the European Parliament could play a leading role in this process.

WORKING TABLE ON ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION, DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

On integration into European structures, following the European Commission contribution in Bari, the Chairman has requested follow up meetings with the relevant Commission services to discuss the concrete way forward. Sectors covered include trade, environment, transport and technical assistance to promote European Union legislation, as well as vocational education and training.

On enhancing intra-regional trade, the Chairman of the Working Table is currently examining, with the relevant actors, measures aimed at scaling down, and eventually eliminating, intra-regional trade barriers. He intends to present an action plan at the next meeting of the Working Table.

The World Bank is working on a comprehensive approach to regional development. A first draft will be issued at the beginning of December; the final version is expected by the beginning of 2000.

On regional infrastructure, the EIB will convene a meeting of experts, scheduled for 25 November, for a first review of potential projects. A final report thereon will be conveyed to the Chairman who will submit it to the HLSG. The latter body will discuss the priority initiatives that should be retained, with a view to organizing a funding meeting early next year.

On private sector development, the EBRD is collecting requests and proposals, in particular from the countries of South Eastern Europe in the area of private sector development. A final report thereon will be conveyed to the Chairman who will submit it to the HLSG.

On the Investment Compact the UK has finalized the draft proposal presented in Bari, including a general roadmap on implementation. In parallel the OECD has been working on country assessments for country-specific action plans. Discussions with the countries of the region should commence in early 2000; action plans should commence by April /May 2000.

On co-operation with the private sector, the Working Table in Bari agreed to establish a Stability Pact Business Advisory Council (BAC). Its task would be, inter alia, to advise on ways and means to promote an attractive and secure business/investment environment. The SECI Co-coordinator has been asked to draw up a list of business representatives that would participate in the BAC. This is being done in close co-operation with interested institutions and countries, including the EBRD and TABD.

WORKING TABLE ON SECURITY ISSUES

Sub-Table on Home and Justice Affairs

The US has presented an initiative on anti-corruption. On 4 November a revised version of the initiative was circulated by the Special Coordinator to Stability Pact participants for comments before November 15. The Special Coordinator intends to take this initiative forward within the context of a more general institution-building and anti-crime project, of which this will be the first concrete step. The broader project includes Council of Europe initiatives and the implementation of the SECI Center for combating trans-border organized crime.

On organized crime, the OSCE is currently working on the establishment of the Task Force on the prevention of trafficking of human beings, which will be led by one of the OSCE missions in the region, probably the mission in Croatia. This issue is also being dealt with by the Task Force on gender issues established under the Working Table on Democratization. Progress of the two Task Forces will have to be monitored to avoid duplication of work.

The EU Presidency proposed an initiative to provide training and other support for the improvement of border controls. The Finnish Ministry of Interior is currently starting to assess the needs, and intends to pursue discussions within the EU on this subject later this month with a view to having a proposal ready by the Helsinki Summit in December.

On migration, at a meeting on November 3, Sweden proposed extending the mandate of the High Level Working Group. Decisions will be taken after the HLWG's report on Albania has been adopted by the European Union's General Affairs Council, probably in December. Follow-up contacts are being taken with Italy on how the Adriatic and Ionian Sea initiative could interact with the activities of the Working Table.

On police and judicial reform, working meetings are planned for later this month between the Special Coordinator's office, the Council of Europe and the European Commission. In those meetings, follow-up will be made with the Commission on its intentions to make institution building (police and judicial systems) and anti-corruption priority areas. Follow-up will also be made with the Council of Europe on its plans to provide training facilities for judges, and a conference on adopting guiding principles of justice.

The OSCE proposal to establish a regional legislative clearinghouse is being considered.

Sub-Table on Defense and Security Affairs

On confidence building measures (CBMs), the OSCE was requested to establish an informal working group to seek means of improving military to military contacts. Austria has taken a lead role in this project and chaired an informal meeting on the issue on November 12 in Istanbul. In addition, France has suggested the possibility of creating a regional air observation center. This initiative is being considered.

The UK has taken a leading role in the establishment of a Task Force to initiate a comparative study of military budgeting of the countries in the region, and will propose further steps.

Countries in the region were invited to ratify or accede to, and ensure full implementation, of existing treaties against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. An overview on the status of ratification and accession of each country is being pursued as a first follow-up step.

Bulgaria will host a conference on controlling arms sales. The conference is scheduled for 13-14 December. The agenda is being worked out.

Slovenia has offered to host a workshop on small arms. Follow-up contacts are being taken to assess modalities, themes and dates for such a workshop. Meetings have also

been scheduled in November between the Special Coordinator's office and NATO, which may provide an opportunity to take stock of NATO's activities in this field.

The Stability Pact has endorsed the Slovenian Demining Trust Fund and donors have committed to redeem \$14 million in pledges to the fund by December 9. The Table welcomed the US Government's offer to match donations dollar for dollar. Canada and Slovenia are to conduct an inventory of demining projects and programs in the region and Canada has started the process of approaching organizations on their activities in the field. Croatia proposed the establishment of a regional center for assistance in mine-clearing, which could build on the experience of the Slovenian initiative. The European Commission has announced the launch of a research program on humanitarian demining throughout the region.

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