

Minutes

2nd Steering Committee Meeting

11 November 2008, Athens, Greece

Preface

Wednesday 12 November 2008 saw the successful conclusion of the inaugural meeting of the Advisory Board (AB) of the Regional Centre for Public Administration Reform (RCPAR). It followed a brief meeting of the Steering Committee on Tuesday 11 November, which was held in the presence of Professor Prokopis Pavlopoulos, Minister of Interior, and Secretary-General Vassilios Andronopoulos, representing the Government of the Hellenic Republic, and the counterpart Agency, and of UNDP Deputy Regional Director for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Jens Wandel and Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC) Director.

Steering Committee meeting

Participants:

1. Professor Prokopis Pavlopoulos, Minister of Interior;
2. Vassilios Andronopoulos, Secretary-General, General Secretariat of Public Administration and Electronic Governance;
3. Ourania Psomiadou, Director-General, Administrative Modernization Directorate, Ministry of Interior;
4. Jens Wandel, Deputy Regional Director and BRC Director;
5. Dan Dionisie, Policy Specialist / Acting Head of the Democratic Governance Practice at UNDP/BRC;
6. Panos Liverakos, Team Leader, RCPAR Project
7. Professor Demetrios Argyriades, Member of the Advisory Board

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Panos Liverakos presented a historical account of the Project. Specifically, he touched on the 1st Steering Committee in Alexandroupolis on 21 November 2006; the Project Document approval by BRC in December 2007; and the ratification of the Agreement and Project Document by the Hellenic Parliament, in early March 2008. Dan Dionisie then presented an update on activities implemented and results achieved to date.

In his welcome remarks to the members of the Steering Committee (SC), Professor Pavlopoulos emphasized the strong commitment of the Government and people of Greece, both to the central concept of the Greek-funded programme as well as its demand-driven character, which is its signal feature and adds to its originality. With this programme, as the Minister characteristically said, Greece hopes to help establish a new “*amphiktyoniae*”, a community of learning for practitioners and governments from many countries, predicated on the use of cutting-edge technologies for information-sharing and promoting public administration reform. The Minister concluded by stressing the necessity of safeguarding both the autonomy of the RCPAR and the effectiveness, transparency and accountability of all its programme activities. He said that the Greek Government looked confidently forward to a long-term relationship of close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, Bratislava Regional Centre (UNDP/BRC) and to the establishment of a UNDP House in Athens, “in order to facilitate the initiation of projects and their management from Athens”, for the region as a whole.

Jens Wandel responded to the Minister’s remarks by thanking the Greek Government for the understanding reached, and shared vision for the region, since the Project is anchored in the region and it provides a flexible mechanism reaching out to all the countries of the region through its network orientation. Given budgetary and integrity considerations, UNDP generally intervenes through its decentralized operations in order to reinforce, but not to interfere with operations and implementation activities. He went on to say that he considers the Project as an anchor for ongoing governance efforts in the region and, in this sense; the Project meaningfully contributes to the UNDP governance portfolio. In his view, the Project encourages a much needed dialogue among the countries of the region, since the more one works with the countries, the more one understands them. He concluded by saying that he looks forward to a long-term collaboration. He corroborated the point that it is also BRC’s goal to establish a UNDP Centre in Athens. Jens Wandel also spent some time demonstrating the changes which are taking place within UNDP, with an emphasis on internal reforms and a shift to an online reporting system. This gives donors the ability and opportunity to be informed on a real-time basis on the progress of the Projects, which they fund.

The Steering Committee meeting was concluded by the introduction of the Advisory Board members to the Minister of Interior, the BRC Director and the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Interior.