



European Treaty Series - No. 174

CIVIL LAW CONVENTION ON CORRUPTION

Strasbourg, 4.XI.1999

Preamble

The member States of the Council of Europe, the other States and the European Community, signatories hereto,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members;

Conscious of the importance of strengthening international co-operation in the fight against corruption;

Emphasising that corruption represents a major threat to the rule of law, democracy and human rights, fairness and social justice, hinders economic development and endangers the proper and fair functioning of market economies;

Recognising the adverse financial consequences of corruption to individuals, companies and States, as well as international institutions;

Convinced of the importance for civil law to contribute to the fight against corruption, in particular by enabling persons who have suffered damage to receive fair compensation;

Recalling the conclusions and resolutions of the 19th (Malta, 1994), 21st (Czech Republic, 1997) and 22nd (Moldova, 1999) Conferences of the European Ministers of Justice;

Taking into account the Programme of Action against Corruption adopted by the Committee of Ministers in November 1996;

Taking also into account the feasibility study on the drawing up of a convention on civil remedies for compensation for damage resulting from acts of corruption, approved by the Committee of Ministers in February 1997;

Having regard to Resolution (97) 24 on the 20 Guiding Principles for the Fight against Corruption, adopted by the Committee of Ministers in November 1997, at its 101st Session, to Resolution (98) 7 authorising the adoption of the Partial and Enlarged Agreement establishing the "Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)", adopted by the Committee of Ministers in May 1998, at its 102nd Session, and to Resolution (99) 5 establishing the GRECO, adopted on 1st May 1999;

Recalling the Final Declaration and the Action Plan adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the member States of the Council of Europe at their 2nd summit in Strasbourg, in October 1997,

Have agreed as follows:

Chapter I – Measures to be taken at national level**Article 1 – Purpose**

Each Party shall provide in its internal law for effective remedies for persons who have suffered damage as a result of acts of corruption, to enable them to defend their rights and interests, including the possibility of obtaining compensation for damage.

Article 2 – Definition of corruption

For the purpose of this Convention, "corruption" means requesting, offering, giving or accepting, directly or indirectly, a bribe or any other undue advantage or prospect thereof, which distorts the proper performance of any duty or behaviour required of the recipient of the bribe, the undue advantage or the prospect thereof.

Article 3 – Compensation for damage

- 1 Each Party shall provide in its internal law for persons who have suffered damage as a result of corruption to have the right to initiate an action in order to obtain full compensation for such damage.
- 2 Such compensation may cover material damage, loss of profits and non-pecuniary loss.

Article 4 – Liability

- 1 Each Party shall provide in its internal law for the following conditions to be fulfilled in order for the damage to be compensated:
 - i the defendant has committed or authorised the act of corruption, or failed to take reasonable steps to prevent the act of corruption;
 - ii the plaintiff has suffered damage; and
 - iii there is a causal link between the act of corruption and the damage.
- 2 Each Party shall provide in its internal law that, if several defendants are liable for damage for the same corrupt activity, they shall be jointly and severally liable.

Article 5 – State responsibility

Each Party shall provide in its internal law for appropriate procedures for persons who have suffered damage as a result of an act of corruption by its public officials in the exercise of their functions to claim for compensation from the State or, in the case of a non-state Party, from that Party's appropriate authorities.

Article 6 – Contributory negligence

Each Party shall provide in its internal law for the compensation to be reduced or disallowed having regard to all the circumstances, if the plaintiff has by his or her own fault contributed to the damage or to its aggravation.

Article 7 – Limitation periods

- 1 Each Party shall provide in its internal law for proceedings for the recovery of damages to be subject to a limitation period of not less than three years from the day the person who has suffered damage became aware or should reasonably have been aware, that damage has occurred or that an act of corruption has taken place, and of the identity of the responsible person. However, such proceedings shall not be commenced after the end of a limitation period of not less than ten years from the date of the act of corruption.
- 2 The laws of the Parties regulating suspension or interruption of limitation periods shall, if appropriate, apply to the periods prescribed in paragraph 1.

Article 8 – Validity of contracts

- 1 Each Party shall provide in its internal law for any contract or clause of a contract providing for corruption to be null and void.
- 2 Each Party shall provide in its internal law for the possibility for all parties to a contract whose consent has been undermined by an act of corruption to be able to apply to the court for the contract to be declared void, notwithstanding their right to claim for damages.

Article 9 – Protection of employees

Each Party shall provide in its internal law for appropriate protection against any unjustified sanction for employees who have reasonable grounds to suspect corruption and who report in good faith their suspicion to responsible persons or authorities.

Article 10 – Accounts and audits

- 1 Each Party shall, in its internal law, take any necessary measures for the annual accounts of companies to be drawn up clearly and give a true and fair view of the company's financial position.
- 2 With a view to preventing acts of corruption, each Party shall provide in its internal law for auditors to confirm that the annual accounts present a true and fair view of the company's financial position.

Article 11 – Acquisition of evidence

Each Party shall provide in its internal law for effective procedures for the acquisition of evidence in civil proceedings arising from an act of corruption.

Article 12 – Interim measures

Each Party shall provide in its internal law for such court orders as are necessary to preserve the rights and interests of the parties during civil proceedings arising from an act of corruption.

Chapter II – International co-operation and monitoring of implementation**Article 13 – International co-operation**

The Parties shall co-operate effectively in matters relating to civil proceedings in cases of corruption, especially concerning the service of documents, obtaining evidence abroad, jurisdiction, recognition and enforcement of foreign judgements and litigation costs, in accordance with the provisions of relevant international instruments on international co-operation in civil and commercial matters to which they are Party, as well as with their internal law.

Article 14 – Monitoring

The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) shall monitor the implementation of this Convention by the Parties.

Chapter III – Final clauses

Article 15 – Signature and entry into force

- 1 This Convention shall be open for signature by the member States of the Council of Europe, by non-member States that have participated in its elaboration and by the European Community.
- 2 This Convention is subject to ratification, acceptance or approval. Instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.
- 3 This Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date on which fourteen signatories have expressed their consent to be bound by the Convention in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2. Any such signatory, which is not a member of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) at the time of ratification, acceptance or approval, shall automatically become a member on the date the Convention enters into force.
- 4 In respect of any signatory which subsequently expresses its consent to be bound by it, the Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of the expression of their consent to be bound by the Convention in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2. Any signatory, which is not a member of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) at the time of ratification, acceptance or approval, shall automatically become a member on the date the Convention enters into force in its respect.
- 5 Any particular modalities for the participation of the European Community in the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) shall be determined as far as necessary by a common agreement with the European Community.

Article 16 – Accession to the Convention

- 1 After the entry into force of this Convention, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, after consulting the Parties to the Convention, may invite any State not a member of the Council and not having participated in its elaboration to accede to this Convention, by a decision taken by the majority provided for in Article 20.d. of the Statute of the Council of Europe and by the unanimous vote of the representatives of the Parties entitled to sit on the Committee.
- 2 In respect of any State acceding to it, the Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of deposit of the instrument of accession with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. Any State acceding to this Convention shall automatically become a member of the GRECO, if it is not already a member at the time of accession, on the date the Convention enters into force in its respect.

Article 17 – Reservations

No reservation may be made in respect of any provision of this Convention.

Article 18 – Territorial application

- 1 Any State or the European Community may, at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, specify the territory or territories to which this Convention shall apply.
- 2 Any Party may, at any later date, by a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, extend the application of this Convention to any other territory specified in the declaration. In respect of such territory the Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of such declaration by the Secretary General.
- 3 Any declaration made under the two preceding paragraphs may, in respect of any territory specified in such declaration, be withdrawn by a notification addressed to the Secretary General. The withdrawal shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of such notification by the Secretary General.

Article 19 – Relationship to other instruments and agreements

- 1 This Convention does not affect the rights and undertakings derived from international multilateral instruments concerning special matters.
- 2 The Parties to the Convention may conclude bilateral or multilateral agreements with one another on the matters dealt with in this Convention, for purposes of supplementing or strengthening its provisions or facilitating the application of the principles embodied in it or, without prejudice to the objectives and principles of this Convention, submit themselves to rules on this matter within the framework of a special system which is binding at the moment of the opening for signature of this Convention.
- 3 If two or more Parties have already concluded an agreement or treaty in respect of a subject which is dealt with in this Convention or otherwise have established their relations in respect of that subject, they shall be entitled to apply that agreement or treaty or to regulate these relations accordingly, in lieu of the present Convention.

Article 20 – Amendments

- 1 Amendments to this Convention may be proposed by any Party, and shall be communicated by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to the member States of the Council of Europe, to the non member States which have participated in the elaboration of this Convention, to the European Community, as well as to any State which has acceded to or has been invited to accede to this Convention in accordance with the provisions of Article 16.
- 2 Any amendment proposed by a Party shall be communicated to the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) which shall submit to the Committee of Ministers its opinion on that proposed amendment.
- 3 The Committee of Ministers shall consider the proposed amendment and the opinion submitted by the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) and, following consultation of the Parties to the Convention which are not members of the Council of Europe, may adopt the amendment.
- 4 The text of any amendment adopted by the Committee of Ministers in accordance with paragraph 3 of this article shall be forwarded to the Parties for acceptance.

- 5 Any amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 3 of this article shall come into force on the thirtieth day after all Parties have informed the Secretary General of their acceptance thereof.

Article 21 – Settlement of disputes

- 1 The European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) of the Council of Europe shall be kept informed regarding the interpretation and application of this Convention.
- 2 In case of a dispute between Parties as to the interpretation or application of this Convention, they shall seek a settlement of the dispute through negotiation or any other peaceful means of their choice, including submission of the dispute to the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ), to an arbitral tribunal whose decisions shall be binding upon the Parties, or to the International Court of Justice, as agreed upon by the Parties concerned.

Article 22 – Denunciation

- 1 Any Party may, at any time, denounce this Convention by means of a notification addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.
- 2 Such denunciation shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary General.

Article 23 – Notification

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe shall notify the member States of the Council and any other signatories and Parties to this Convention of:

- a any signature;
- b the deposit of any instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession;
- c any date of entry into force of this Convention, in accordance with Articles 15 and 16;
- d any other act, notification or communication relating to this Convention.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto, have signed this Convention.

Done at Strasbourg, the 4th day of November 1999, in English and in French, both texts being equally authentic, in a single copy which shall be deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe shall transmit certified copies to each member State of the Council of Europe, to the non-member States which have participated in the elaboration of this Convention, to the European Community, as well as to any State invited to accede to it.

Agreement Establishing The Group of States Against Corruption - GRECO -

Document prepared by the
Directorate of Legal Affairs

Strasbourg, 12 May 1999

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

RESOLUTION (98) 7

**AUTHORISING THE PARTIAL AND ENLARGED AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING
THE "GROUP OF STATES AGAINST CORRUPTION - GRECO"**

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 5 May 1998, at its 102nd Session)

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to the recommendations of the XIXth and XXIst Conferences of European Ministers of Justice (Valletta, 1994 and Prague, 1997 respectively);

Having regard to the Programme of Action against corruption adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 1996;

Pursuant to the Final Declaration and the Action Plan adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe at their Second Summit, held in Strasbourg on 10-11 October 1997;

Taking into account Resolution (97) 24 on the 20 Guiding Principles for the Fight against Corruption adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 November 1997;

Bearing in mind the opinions expressed by the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) and by the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC);

In the light of Statutory Resolution (93) 28, on partial and enlarged agreements as well as of Resolution (96) 36, establishing the criteria for partial and enlarged agreements of the Council of Europe,

TAKES NOTE of the draft Resolution on the Partial and Enlarged Agreement establishing the "Group of States Against Corruption - GRECO" (hereafter "The Agreement establishing the GRECO"), approved by the Multidisciplinary Group on Corruption (GMC) as it appears in document CM (98) 54 revised dated 29 April 1998;

AUTHORISES the adoption of the Agreement Establishing the GRECO, in the form of a partial and enlarged agreement,

INVITES Member States to notify to the Secretary General their intention to participate in the adoption of the Agreement Establishing the GRECO, it being understood that this Agreement will be considered as having been adopted on the first day of the month following the date on which the Secretary General receives the 14th notification from a Member States of its wish to participate in it,

INVITES non-Member States having participated in the elaboration of the Agreement establishing the GRECO, to notify to the Secretary General their intention to participate in it,

EXPRESSES the wish that soon all Member States of the Council of Europe and the non-Member States referred to above will participate in the Agreement establishing the GRECO.

RESOLUTION (99) 5
ESTABLISHING THE GROUP OF STATES AGAINST CORRUPTION (GRECO)
adopted on 1st May 1999

The representatives on the Committee of Ministers of Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden,

Convinced that corruption represents a major threat to the rule of law, democracy, human rights, fairness and social justice, hinders economic development, and endangers the stability of democratic institutions and the moral foundations of society;

Conscious of the need to promote co-operation between States in the fight against corruption, including its links with organised crime and money laundering;

Emphasising that a successful strategy to combat corruption requires a firm commitment by States to join their efforts, share experience and take common actions;

Recognising that raising public awareness and promoting ethical values are effective means of preventing corruption;

Having regard to the recommendations of the 19th Conference of the European Ministers of Justice (Malta, 1994);

Taking into account the Programme of Action against Corruption, adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 1996 and the work undertaken by the Multidisciplinary Group on Corruption (GMC) in pursuance thereof;

Taking into account the results of the Joint project between the European Commission (Phare Programme) and the Council of Europe on the fight against corruption and organised crime in States in transition ("Octopus Project");

Having regard to Resolution No. 1 on the links between corruption and organised crime, adopted at the 21st Conference of the European Ministers of Justice (Prague, 1997);

Having regard to the Final Declaration adopted at the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 10-11 October 1997) by which the Heads of State and Government decided to seek common responses to the challenges posed by the growth of corruption and organised crime;

In accordance with the Action Plan adopted at the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 10-11 October 1997) in which the Heads of State and Government, with a view to promoting co-operation in the fight against corruption, including its links with organised crime and money laundering, instructed the Committee of Ministers, *inter alia*, to adopt guiding principles to be applied in the development of domestic legislation and practice and to establish without delay an appropriate and efficient mechanism for monitoring observance of the guiding principles and the implementation of the other international instruments which will be adopted in pursuance of the Programme of Action against Corruption;

Having regard to the 20 Guiding Principles for the Fight against Corruption, adopted by the Committee of Ministers at its 101st meeting on 6 November 1997 (hereinafter referred to as the "Guiding Principles");

Convinced that the establishment of the GRECO, where Member States and non-Member States of the Council of Europe participate on an equal footing, would make a significant contribution to the promotion of a dynamic process towards effectively preventing and combating corruption;

Persuaded that by means of mutual evaluation and peer pressure, the GRECO shall be able to monitor in a flexible and efficient manner the observance of the Guiding Principles and the implementation of the international instruments adopted by the Council of Europe to fight against corruption;

Convinced that full membership of the GRECO should therefore be reserved to those which participate without restrictions in mutual evaluation procedures and accept to be evaluated through them;

Having regard to Resolution (98) 7 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 5 May 1998, on the occasion of its 102nd session at ministerial level, authorising the adoption of the present agreement;

HEREBY,

RESOLVE to establish the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) by means of this Enlarged Partial Agreement, governed by the Statute appended thereto;

AGREE that the GRECO is established for an initial period of three years;

AGREE to review the functioning of the GRECO by the end of the initial period of three years;

EXPRESS the wish that all Member States of the Council of Europe become members of the GRECO in the near future.

Appendix to Resolution (99) 5STATUTE OF THE GROUP OF STATES AGAINST CORRUPTION (GRECO)Article 1 - Aim of the GRECO

The aim of the Group of States against Corruption (hereinafter referred to as the "GRECO") is to improve the capacity of its members to fight corruption by following up, through a dynamic process of mutual evaluation and peer pressure, compliance with their undertakings in this field.

Article 2 - Functions of the GRECO

In order to achieve the aim laid down in Article 1, the GRECO shall:

- i. monitor the observance of the Guiding Principles for the Fight against Corruption as adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 6 November 1997;
- ii. monitor the implementation of international legal instruments to be adopted in pursuance of the Programme of Action against Corruption, in conformity with the provisions contained in such instruments;

Article 3 - Seat

The GRECO's seat shall be in Strasbourg.

Article 4 - Procedure for membership of the GRECO

1. Any Member States of the Council of Europe, other than those mentioned in the Resolution establishing the GRECO, may join the GRECO at any time by so notifying the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.
2. Any non-Member States having participated in the elaboration of this Enlarged Partial Agreement¹ may join the GRECO at any time by so notifying the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. The notification shall be accompanied by a declaration to the effect that the non-Member States undertakes to apply the Guiding Principles for the Fight against Corruption, adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 6 November 1997.
3. States which become Parties to international legal instruments adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in pursuance of the Programme of Action against Corruption providing for compulsory membership of the GRECO shall become members of the GRECO *ipso facto* in conformity with the provisions contained in these instruments.
4. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in its composition restricted to the States members of the Enlarged Partial Agreement, following consultation of the non-Member States already participating, may invite non-Member States, other than those covered by paragraph 2 above, to join the GRECO. The non-Member States

¹ These States are the following: Belarus (10), Canada (11), Holy See (10), Japan (10), Mexico (10) and United States of America (11). Bosnia and Herzegovina has participated twice in GMC meetings.

having received such an invitation, shall notify to the Secretary General its intention to join the GRECO, accompanied by a declaration to the effect that it undertakes to apply the Guiding Principles for the Fight against Corruption.

Article 5 - Participation of the European Community

The European Community may be invited by the Committee of Ministers to participate in the work of the GRECO. The modalities of its participation shall be determined in the resolution inviting it to participate.

Article 6 - Composition of the GRECO

1. Each member shall appoint a delegation to the GRECO consisting of not more than two representatives. One representative shall be appointed as head of the delegation.
2. The budget of the Enlarged Partial Agreement shall bear the travel and subsistence expenses of one of the representatives of the delegation.
3. The representatives appointed to the GRECO shall enjoy the privileges and immunities applicable under Article 2 of the Protocol to the General Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Council of Europe.

Article 7 - Other Representatives

1. The European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) and the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) shall each appoint a representative to the GRECO.
2. The Committee of Ministers may invite other Council of Europe bodies to appoint a representative to the GRECO after consulting the latter.
3. The Statutory Committee, set up under Article 18 below, shall appoint a representative to the GRECO.
4. Representatives appointed under paragraphs 1 to 3 above shall participate in plenary meetings of the GRECO without the right to vote. Their travel and subsistence expenses shall not be borne by the budget of the Enlarged Partial Agreement.

Article 8 - Operation of the GRECO

1. The GRECO shall take the necessary decisions for its operation. In particular, it shall:
 - i. adopt evaluation reports in accordance with Article 15;
 - ii. approve its draft annual programme of activities and submit, in conformity with the Financial Regulations, proposals to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe relating to the elaboration of the draft annual budget, prior to its transmission to the Statutory Committee set up under Article 18 below;
 - iii. approve its annual activity report, including its annual accounts, prior to its submission to the Statutory Committee and to the Committee of Ministers;

2. The GRECO shall hold at least two plenary meetings a year and may decide to set up working parties whenever necessary and in accordance with its Rules of Procedure.
3. The GRECO will publish every year its annual report of activities including its annual accounts, once approved by the relevant bodies pursuant to Article 18 below.
4. The GRECO shall draw up its own Rules of Procedure. Any State or the European Community, when becoming a member of the GRECO, shall be deemed to have accepted the Statute and the Rules of Procedures of the GRECO.
5. The GRECO shall hold its meetings in camera.
6. Members of the GRECO participating in the mutual evaluation shall have the right to vote. Each of them shall be entitled to cast one vote. However, unless otherwise decided by the Statutory Committee, a member which has failed to pay all or a substantial part of its compulsory contribution to the budget of the enlarged partial agreement for a period of two years, shall no longer take part in the decision-making process.
7. Decisions of the GRECO shall be taken by two-thirds of the votes cast² and the majority of those entitled to vote. However, procedural decisions shall be taken by a majority of the votes cast.
8. The GRECO shall elect its President and Vice-President among the representatives of the members entitled to vote.

Article 9 - Bureau

1. There shall be a Bureau composed of the President and the Vice-President referred to in Article 8 paragraph 8 above and five other persons elected by the GRECO, among the representatives of the members entitled to vote which are, as far as possible, Parties to at least one of the international legal instruments adopted in pursuance of the Programme of action against corruption.
2. The Bureau shall carry out the following functions:
 - prepare the preliminary draft annual programme of activities and the draft annual activity report;
 - make proposals to the GRECO concerning the preliminary draft budget;
 - organise country visits on the basis of the decisions taken by the GRECO;
 - make proposals to the GRECO on the composition of the ad hoc evaluation teams;
 - prepare the agenda for the meetings of the GRECO including those at which evaluation reports will be discussed;

² Only votes "in favour" or "against" are taken into account when counting the number of votes cast (Article 10 paragraph 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Ministers' Deputies).

- make proposals to the GRECO as regards the provisions to be selected for evaluation procedures in pursuance of Article 10 paragraph 3 below;
 - make proposals to the GRECO concerning the appointment of scientific experts and consultants.
3. The Bureau shall carry out any other function assigned to it by the GRECO.
4. The Bureau shall exercise its functions under the general supervision of the GRECO.

Article 10 - Evaluation procedure

1. The GRECO shall conduct evaluation procedures in respect of each of its members in pursuance of Article 2.
2. The evaluation shall be divided in rounds. An evaluation round is a period of time determined by the GRECO, during which an evaluation procedure shall be conducted to assess the compliance of members with selected provisions contained in the Guiding Principles and in other international legal instruments adopted in pursuance of the Programme of Action against Corruption.
3. At the beginning of each round the GRECO shall select the specific provisions on which the evaluation procedure shall be based.
4. Each member shall identify a maximum of 5 experts who would be able to undertake the tasks set out in Articles 12-14.
5. Each member shall ensure that its authorities co-operate, to the fullest possible extent, in the evaluation procedure, within the limits of its national legislation.

Article 11 - Questionnaire

1. The GRECO shall adopt a questionnaire for each evaluation round, which shall be addressed to all members concerned by the evaluation.
2. The questionnaire shall provide the framework of the evaluation procedure.
3. Members shall address their replies to the Secretariat within the time limits fixed by the GRECO.

Article 12 - Evaluation teams

1. The GRECO shall appoint, from the experts referred to in paragraph 4 of Article 10, a team for the evaluation of each member (hereinafter referred to as "the team"). When the evaluation concerns the implementation of one of the international legal instruments adopted in pursuance of the Programme of Action against Corruption, the GRECO shall appoint teams composed exclusively of experts proposed by members who are Parties to the instrument concerned.
2. The team shall examine the replies given to the questionnaire and may request, where appropriate, additional information from the member undergoing the evaluation, to be submitted either orally or in writing.

3. The budget of the Enlarged and Partial Agreement shall bear the travel and subsistence expenses of the experts participating in the teams.

Article 13 - Country visits

1. The GRECO may instruct the team to visit a member, for the purpose of seeking additional information concerning its law or practice, which is useful for the evaluation.

2. The GRECO shall give a minimum of two months notice to the member concerned of its intention to carry out the visit.

3. The visit shall be carried out in accordance with a programme arranged by the member concerned, taking into account the wishes expressed by the team.

4. The members of the team shall enjoy the privileges and immunities applicable under Article 2 of the Protocol to the General Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Council of Europe.

5. The budget of the Enlarged Partial Agreement shall bear the travel and subsistence expenses necessary for the carrying out country visits.

Article 14 - Evaluation reports

1. On the basis of the information gathered, the team shall prepare a preliminary draft evaluation report on the state of the law and the practice in relation to the provisions selected for the evaluation round.

2. The preliminary draft report shall be transmitted to the member undergoing the evaluation for comments. These comments shall be taken into account by the team when finalising the draft report.

3. The draft report shall be submitted to the GRECO.

Article 15 - Discussion and adoption of reports

1. The GRECO shall debate in Plenary the draft report submitted by the team.

2. The member undergoing the evaluation shall be entitled to submit observations orally and/or in writing to the Plenary.

3. At the close of the debate, the GRECO shall adopt, with or without amendments, the report in respect of the member undergoing the evaluation.

4. All members shall be entitled to participate in the vote leading to the adoption of evaluation reports relating to the application of the Guiding Principles. Only members which are Parties to an international legal instrument adopted in pursuance of the Programme of Action against Corruption shall be entitled to participate in the vote leading to the adoption of evaluation reports on the implementation of the instrument concerned.

5. Evaluation reports shall be confidential. Unless otherwise decided, access to these reports shall be restricted to members of the team which has carried out the evaluation, in addition to members of the GRECO, of the Statutory Committee and of the Secretariat of these bodies.

6. The GRECO's report may contain recommendations addressed to the member undergoing the evaluation in order to improve its domestic laws and practices to combat corruption. The GRECO shall invite the member to report on the measures taken to follow these recommendations.

Article 16 - Public Statements

1. The Statutory Committee may issue a public statement when it believes that a member remains passive or takes insufficient action in respect of the recommendations addressed to it as regards the application of the Guiding Principles.

2. The Statutory Committee, in its composition restricted to the members who are parties to the instruments concerned, may issue a public statement when it believes that a member remains passive or takes insufficient action in respect of the recommendations addressed to it as regards the implementation of an instrument adopted in pursuance of the Programme of Action against Corruption.

3. The Statutory Committee shall inform the member concerned and provide an opportunity for the member to submit further comments before confirming its decision to issue a public statement referred to in paragraphs 1 and/or 2 above.

Article 17 - The GRECO's financial resources

1. The budget of the GRECO shall be financed through the annual compulsory contributions of its members;

2. The GRECO may receive additional voluntary contributions from its members;

3. The GRECO may also receive voluntary contributions from interested international institutions;

4. Financial resources covered by paragraph 3 above shall be subject to the authorisation of the Statutory Committee prior to their acceptance.

3. The GRECO's assets shall be acquired and held on behalf of the Council of Europe and shall benefit as such from the privileges and immunities applicable to the Council's assets under existing agreements.

Article 18 - Statutory Committee

1. The Statutory Committee shall be composed of the representatives on the Committee of Ministers of the Member States of the Council of Europe which are also members of the GRECO and of representatives specifically designated to that effect by the other members of the GRECO.

2. The Statutory Committee shall determine every year the members' compulsory contributions to the GRECO. The scale according to which the contributions of non-members of the Council of Europe are calculated shall be decided in agreement with the latter; as a general rule, that scale shall conform to the criteria for the determination of the scale of contributions to the general budget of the Council of Europe.

3. The Statutory Committee shall adopt every year the GRECO's budget on expenditure relating to the implementation of the programme of activities and common secretariat expenditure.

4. The Statutory Committee shall approve every year the GRECO's annual accounts which shall be drawn up by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe and submitted to the Statutory Committee accompanied by the report of the Board of Auditors. In order to discharge the Secretary General from responsibility for the management of the financial year in question, the Statutory Committee shall transmit to the Committee of Ministers the annual accounts, together with its approval or any comments, and the report drawn up by the Board of Auditors.

5. The Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the adoption and management of the budget.

Article 19 - Secretariat

1. The GRECO shall be assisted by a Secretariat provided by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

2. The GRECO's Secretariat shall be headed by an Executive Secretary appointed by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Article 20 - Amendments

1. The GRECO or any of its members may propose amendments to this Statute to the Statutory Committee.

2. This Statute may be amended by Statutory Committee by unanimous decision. If the amendment has not been proposed by the GRECO, the latter shall be consulted by the Statutory Committee.

Article 21 - Withdrawal

1. Subject to the applicable provisions of international legal instruments mentioned in Article 2, paragraph 2 above, any member may withdraw from the GRECO by means of a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe by the Minister for Foreign Affairs or a diplomatic representative who shall be given specific powers to this effect.

2. The Secretary General shall acknowledge receipt of the declaration and inform the member concerned that it will be submitted to the Statutory Committee.

3. By analogy with Article 7 of the Statute of the Council of Europe, the withdrawal shall take effect:

- at the end of the financial year in which it is notified, if the notification is given during the first nine months of that financial year;
- at the end of the next financial year, if the notification is given in the last three months of the financial year.

4. In accordance with Article 18 of the Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe, the Statutory Committee shall examine the financial consequences of the withdrawal and make the appropriate arrangements.

5. The Secretary General shall immediately inform the member concerned of the consequences for it of its withdrawal and keep the Statutory Committee informed of the outcome.