



FINAL RESPA LIST OF DECISIONS
13TH SESSION OF THE RESPA STEERING COMMITTEE
PODGORICA
2 February 2010

13th ReSPA Steering Committee, 2 February 2010, Podgorica

According to art 14 of the Rules of Procedures, the Secretary submits to the members of the Steering Committee the list of decisions within 7 days after the session. If no objection is made during the following 2 weeks, the list of decisions is considered informally approved.

Art 14 of the Rules of Procedures stipulates that formal approval should take place at the beginning of the following session.

Committee action

The Steering Committee is invited to:

Approve the list of decisions of the 13th Session of the Steering Committee.

Before starting work on the agenda for the 13th Steering Committee (SC) meeting, the Chairman

- drew attention to the fact that all signatories and parties of the ReSPA protocol of cooperation were invited and had confirmed participation at the 13th Steering Committee meeting. Eventually, Mr. Niko GRUBEŠIĆ from Bosnia and Herzegovina was prevented from being present and was substituted by Mr. Dragan PODINIĆ;
- thanked Montenegro's SC member, Deputy Director Ms. Jadranka DJURKOVIC, for hosting the meeting, providing the excellent meeting room and organising the SC's visit later in the day to the premises of ReSPA in Danilovgrad; and
- welcomed Ms. Biljana Nikolovska ZAGAR, State Advisor for Legal Affairs from the Civil Servants Agency, who had been delegated to represent the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the meeting.
- welcomed Ms. Ivana DJURIC, Head of Section from the Serbian European Integration Office, who as last time had been delegated to represent Serbia in the meeting due to the unavailability of the Steering Committee member and deputy member.

The Chairman hereafter initiated work on the agenda of the SC meeting:

In its 13th session, the Steering Committee chaired by the European Commission took the following decisions:

1. Adoption of the agenda	RESPA/SC(2010)A1
As no one had comments to the agenda of the meeting, the agenda was adopted .	

2. Approval of the list of decisions, 12th session of the Steering Committee, Sarajevo, October 2009	RESPA/SC(2010)M3-FINAL
The list of decisions of the October 2010 Steering Committee was adopted and it was decided to post it on the ReSPA website.	

3. Progress Report for August-December 2009	RESPA/SC(2010)1-001
<p>The ReSPA Secretariat presented its report describing the more than 10 training and networking activities, which had taken place during the reporting period. By the end of December 2009, and in spite of three training activities having been transferred to January–March 2010 in order to ensure continuation of ReSPA activities while waiting for the new contractual framework to be finalised, some 2.400 participant days of training had been delivered. As agreed, some training activities were postponed to the period of extension. When adding the number of participants attending these latter courses, more than 2.500 participants days of training would have delivered. The report further showed that participants expressed positive evaluations of the activities as well as appreciation of the practical oriented training.</p> <p>The Secretariat expressed concern that it regularly experiences that officials, who register for a training activity and for whom tickets and hotel are booked and confirmations sent, a day or two before the training cancel because they have not received final authorisation to leave for the training. Of even more concern is that not infrequently, the Secretariat is advised of cancellations only on the day of the activity – and sometimes not even then. All of this causes appreciable additional administrative hassle as well as unnecessary costs, because reimbursement of late cancellations of flights and accommodation is not always possible.</p> <p>The SC members described the authorisations processes in the different administrations, and a proposal aiming to help reducing the likelihood of this happening was made (see below).</p> <p>On the report, the following comments were made by the SC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the number and quality of activities have helped to ensure increased awareness and interest for ReSPA throughout the administrations of the ReSPA members. EIPA was commended for its work on organising and implementing the ReSPA training activities as well as for the quality of the activities and for having ensured the contracting of Liaison Officers (LO), who made it possible for the ReSPA members to fulfil all their obligations with drafting participants, contributing to publications, etc.; and ○ the EC will simplify the approval procedure of training events and the Secretariat will post on the ReSPA website and notify the SC members and LO of upcoming events as soon as the date is known. In this context, also the programme or a short description hereof will be provided with indication of the relevant target group, level of the training and language(s) of the training. This should help to increase the likeliness of registration/participation of the relevant officials and reduce the likelihood of last moment cancellations. <p>With these comments, the SC took note of the report.</p>	

4. Update on the EC tender procedure for ReSPA equipment	
<p>The EC has concluded the negotiated tender procedure mentioned in the 12th SC meeting, which has resulted in two contracts with separate providers (one for IT equipment, the other for furniture) of an aggregate value of some 850.000 Euro. The contracts include a suspension clause of 180 days as of the signatures of the contract and the delivery of the equipment/furniture will be confirmed as soon as possible after confirmation is received that the International Agreement (IA) has been ratified by five of the 7 ReSPA members.</p> <p>The SC took note of the information provided.</p>	

5. Update on signature/ratification of the International Agreement (IA)	
<p>Croatia and Serbia updated the SC on the above. Mrs Ivana DJURIC informed the SC that the Draft Law on Ratification is in preparation. It is expected to be on the agenda of the National Assembly during the Spring session (i.e. March-June 2010). As regards Croatia, Mr Davor LJUBANOVIC indicated that the ratification of the IA is also on the agenda of the National Assembly for the Spring session.</p> <p>UNMIK has not yet signed, but renewed efforts to find a solution have been launched.</p> <p>The EC reminded that it is required that five out of the seven ReSPA partners have ratified the IA before it enters into force. In view of the fact that the buildings housing ReSPA are ready and the outcome of the recent tender procedure for furniture and IT equipment (see agenda point 5), the partners not yet having ratified the IA were asked to ensure that the ratification process progresses rapidly and to inform the Secretariat as soon as possible on progress.</p>	
6. IPA Multi-beneficiary (MB) Programming 2011-2013	RESPASC(2010)1-002
<p>The EC informed that the current Commission Decision for ReSPA 2010-2011 was being amended, allocating ca. 2 MM Euro for EIPA to continue support in the implementation of the 2010 Programme of Work (POW – see agenda item 7) and institution building for an 18 month period. Another ca. 2.4 MM Euro will be allocated to ReSPA proper for its activities, once it has been established as a legal entity.</p> <p>The EC further summarised the content of the attached description of the IPA MB Programming 2011-2013 (cf. RESPASC(2010)1-002) and emphasised that ca. 5 MM Euro would be allocated to the organisation and implementation of MB activities in the field of public administration reform, and that ReSPA was envisaged as the main implementing instrument, including via a networking / exchange of experience component.</p> <p>Another amount has been allocated to parliamentary co-operation, and that while the RCC will oversee the development and implementation of activities related hereto, ReSPA may have a role to play in the implementation of these activities.</p> <p>Lastly, the EC informed that the networking component of ReSPA would allow for further flexibility in terms of participation, i.e. other countries like Turkey. The management of these additional soft support activities may have to be ensured via a separate service contract, whilst activities may be held at the campus in Danilovgrad.</p> <p>The SC took note of the provided information.</p>	

7. Programme of Work (POW) and Main Goals for ReSPA for 2010	RESPA/SC(2010)1-003
<p>As requested at the 12th SC meeting, the Secretariat presented the submitted draft POW and Main Goals for ReSPA for 2010 (cf. RESPA/SC(2010)1-003) for the SC's review.</p> <p>The document covers the period April-December 2010 and combines elements of a business plan (namely the main goals as well as institution building and thematic priorities) and the POW for ReSPA for 2010. Annex A to the submitted draft provides for training and institution building activities being undertaken during the period January-March 2010. This latter document had been circulated to the SC before Christmas, and in the absence of any comments, implementation of the in the Annex A described activities has started.</p> <p>In the course of its presentation, the Secretariat drew the SC's attention to the fact the POW specifically mentions increased involvement of local trainers and experts: In some cases, presentations or facilitation of sessions by experts from the region are foreseen, while other activities are specifically designed as train-the-trainers activities or allow for trainers to attend in order to learn and contribute at later repetitions of the same activity later in the year.</p> <p>In this context, the Secretariat stressed that such trainers are welcome to use EIPA training materials (in particular slides and supplementary reading materials) subject to reference to the original author of the materials is made!</p> <p>With respect to networking activities, the Secretariat explained that it foresaw organisation of a similar number and type of activities as in 2009 including, e.g., co-operation with NISPACEE and the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (the Learning Europe conference).</p> <p>The submitted 2010 POW and Main Goals for ReSPA does not – and it was agreed should not – consider the above mentioned IPA MB activities (cf. Agenda item 6 above), as a separate implementation strategy and plan will be made to this end under the auspices of the new Director.</p> <p>Comparing the draft 2010 POW and Main Goals with the 2009 POW it can be deduced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the submitted POW covers a reduced period (April – December 2010), i.e. only 9 months instead of 12 months under the 2009 POW, • the budget available for the new contract expected to start on 1 April 2010 is the same as the previous contract, but the former covers an 18 month period where the previous contract covered a 12 month period, and • that the 2010 POW provides for the provision of translation and interpretation services for a (limited) number of training activities as well as for the Governing Board meeting(s). No such services were provided under the previous contract. <p>In the course of the discussion of the proposed POW and Main Goals for ReSPA for 2010, the following comments were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over a 12 month period (i.e. from April 2010 – March 2011), ReSPA should seek to achieve 2.500 participant days of training. • It was discussed that Communities of Practice should also cover non HR related issues, e.g. the organisation of training, legislative procedures or general administrative procedures. • With respect to the Annual Conference 2010, it was decided it should focus on Experiences on Public administration reform. • The proposed initiation of exchanges of civil servants should be limited to exchanges between administrations of the ReSPA members and should be launched on a pilot project basis. • Some of the SC Members would prefer to have less training activities mentioned in the POW under VI (<i>Communicating with the European Commission and negotiating EU membership</i>) and more training activities mentioned in the POW under VII (<i>Impact of EU Policies on Domestic Policy Fields</i>). • With respect to fixing the themes of the foreseen training activities mentioned in the POW under VII. <i>Impact of EU Policies on Domestic Policy Fields</i>, the Secretariat will circulate information about the themes and programmes covered by such activities under the 2009 POW, and within two weeks thereafter, the SC members will provide feedback on their priorities. Based on this feedback, the Secretariat will develop two or three programmes of this nature. <p>With these comments, the SC approved the submitted Programme of Work and main Goals for ReSPA for 2010.</p>	

8. Staffing of ReSPA	RESPA/SC(2010)1-004
<p>The Chair introduced this session by specifying that the final decision on staffing will be that of the Director, which will be endorsed by the Governing Board. Nevertheless, it was found important that the SC discusses and makes recommendations on this point in order to support the Secretariat's work on developing a formal recommendation for approval by the above bodies.</p> <p>When presenting its preliminary proposal, the Secretariat stressed the philosophy behind the proposal, namely that it is found important to start with as small a team as sustainably possible, i.e. large enough to cover all essential tasks, but small enough to be financially sustainable.</p> <p>After the Secretariat's presentation of a preliminary proposal (attached to the agenda as RESPA/SC(2010)1-004), the Chair directed the SC to discuss two questions, namely a) the number and categories of staff related to the operation of ReSPA's training and networking events, and b) the staffing of the ReSPA Campus facility.</p> <p><u>With respect to question a):</u> The SC expressed general agreement to the proposal with the following changes: The position as Personal Assistant for the Director should be further specified (are we looking for a "company secretary" who can also act as in-house legal counsel or more of an administrative assistant?), and in view of the special nature of ReSPA, an actual Head of Personnel with a legal background should be included.</p> <p><u>With respect to question b):</u> There was general agreement that the "ReSPA hotel" is, in fact, not a hotel, but a campus dedicated to house participants attending ReSPA activities or activities otherwise hosted by ReSPA, so henceforth all references to "hotel" should be discontinued. The SC further concurred on ReSPA having as few as possible resident staff dealing with the Campus on the payroll, and that ReSPA to the highest degree possible should outsource tasks to third parties. Based on this, the SC requested that a profile of a Facility Manager be developed, and that any "front desk" personnel to be considered to be on ReSPA's payroll should also act as reception for ReSPA proper.</p> <p>With these comments, the SC mandated the Secretariat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to proceed with elaborating the job profiles and descriptions of services to be outsourced, • to work together with the EC and the Montenegrin authorities to explore the working conditions for the ReSPA staff with respect to health, pension, schools for children, etc., and • to order a feasibility study and draft business plan for the Campus from the Maastricht Hotel Management School. The study and draft business plan should be prepared for the beginning of May. 	

9. Visibility and publicity: Theme of the Annual Publication	RESPA/SC(2010)1-005
<p>After discussion of the Secretariat's proposal for the Annual Publication, the SC agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the annual publication should always be linked the (one of) the themes of the ReSPA Annual Conference, and it should be prepared in parallel with the preparation of the Conference, so that it could be published shortly after the Conference has taken place; • that therefore the first "new" annual publication will follow the 2010 Annual Conference; • that the task force established to agree on the theme and develop the conference should ensure that the conference speakers prepare appropriate contributions to the publication, while EIPA (or later ReSPA) be responsible for the linguistic editorial work; and • Depending on the topic of the Annual Conference, the publication may be a "how to do" publication in the format of a practical guide, handbook or manual (e.g. if dealing with specific issues, such as HR issues) or a reader with case studies (e.g. if the conference deals with comparative issues, such as general administration procedures and practices). 	

10. Financial and Staff Manuals: Update	RESPA/SC(2010)1-006
<p>The SC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • took note of the Secretariat's report on consultations with the external expert Anthony Miller, who was also the author of ReSPA's already approved Financial and Staff Regulations; • endorsed the Secretariat's proposal how to proceed with the preparation of possible manuals in consultation with Mr. Miller; and • instructed the Secretariat to prepare for the first Governing Board meeting a draft mandate for the Director enabling him to open bank accounts, finalise and sign the host country agreement, make payments and delegate certain negotiation and payment powers to relevant ReSPA staff, etc. This should also be done in consultation with Mr. Miller or another relevant expert. The mandate will take into consideration the host country agreement. Ms. Jadranka DJURKOVIC will circulate the draft host country agreement. 	
11. Discussion how to Proceed with Preparing the 1st Governing Board Meeting	RESPA/SC(2010)1-007
<p>The Chair introduced this item by reminding SC members that once a fifth member ratifies the IA, the 1st Governing Board should in principle meet within 6 weeks of the ratification date. In view of this short deadline, as many preparations should be completed as possible.</p> <p>The SC discussed the questions raised in the Secretariat's discussion paper attached to the agenda as document RESPA/SC(2010)1-007.</p> <p>It was understood that the agenda for the Governing Board as a minimum should include the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rules of Procedure • The Financial and Staff Regulations • Appointment of the Director and approval of the Director's mandate • The Budget for 2010 • The Programme of Work and Main Goals for ReSPA for 2010 • The members' contributions to ReSPA for 2011 and 2012 • The 2010 Staffing Plan <p>Also other issues may be relevant to consider, namely co-operation with ReSPA partners, who have not yet ratified the IA, co-operation with other candidate and associate countries, the system of rotating chairs of the Governing Board and fixing a date for the next Governing Board meeting.</p> <p>The SC agreed that an expert group meeting should take place on 23 March 2010 in Brussels to prepare the agenda for the Governing Board. The Secretariat will within the coming month prepare a draft check-list for the preparation of the Governing Board meeting, including also issues which the participants of the expert group should resolve prior to that group's meeting. The draft check-list will be circulated to the SC members for comments prior to the expert group meeting.</p>	
12. Any other business	
<p>As no other points were raised under this agenda item, the Chair concluded the meeting by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • noting that although this SC meeting in principle should be the last, depending on the time of the fifth ReSPA member's ratification of the IA, there may be a need for an additional SC meeting. The need for this will be discussed at the expert group meeting in Brussels; and • again thanking the Montenegrin SC member for the good organisation of the SC meeting, the visit to the ReSPA facilities and the lunch meeting with the Mayor of Danilovgrad, Mr Branislav ĐURANOVIĆ. <p>With this, the Chairman thanked everybody and closed the meeting.</p>	



13th Session of the Steering Committee Meeting

Podgorica, 2 February 2010

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