

GOPAC-Europe (Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption - Europe) is a non-partisan group of parliamentarians from across Europe, from national parliaments as well as the European Parliament, who all share a common commitment to fighting corruption and promoting transparency. Founded by three Members of the European Parliament, Edith Mastenbroek (The Netherlands), Bill Newton-Dunn (Great Britain), and Carl Schlyter (Sweden), the organization acts as the regional chapter of GOPAC, which already has regional chapters in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, North America, and Asia.

GOPAC-Europe's launch on Wednesday, May 25, 2pm, Brussels will gather parliamentarians at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, to introduce the organization to the public. Beyond GOPAC-Europe's commitment to the main goals of GOPAC - education of parliamentarians in their oversight role, peer support, and the establishment of clear objectives - this new organization will embark on several initiatives which are particularly relevant to fighting corruption in the European context. GOPAC-Europe will:

- Lend moral and technical support to those individuals or groups in Europe and abroad who are taking great personal risk to fight corruption and promote transparency in their countries;
- Advocate whistle-blowing as a method of fighting corruption, which will be facilitated by a new whistle-blowing web portal - www.whistleblower.nu;
- Participate in GOPAC training programs to improve parliamentary oversight capabilities;
- Engage in peer-support programs that will partner European parliamentarians with parliamentarians abroad to gather and share best practices in fighting corruption and promoting transparency;

GOPAC-Europe will also take on a number of further issues:

- Promoting transparency in budgets and finances;
- Supporting improvements in party financing laws;
- Raising awareness of the dangers of lesser-known types of corruption such as "trading in influence";
- Promoting the implementation of corruption conventions from international organizations, such as the Council of Europe Conventions on Corruption and the UN Convention against Corruption.

GOPAC-Europe plans to organize a conference of all its members in the fall of 2005 on the topic of fighting corruption and promoting transparency in Europe, and on how the organization can actively contribute to this goal.

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