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**Russia's Report on Development of Lobbyism
Within Private-Public Partnership in Combating
Corruption and Ensuring Transparency**

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Russia's Report on development of lobbyism within private-public partnership in combating corruption and ensuring transparency

Cooperation between private public sectors that are represented by business community and government bodies should be an essential factor to achieve tangible results to eradicate corruption.

Forging effective cooperation between state bodies and business community in combating corruption and ensuring transparency considerably depends on the domestic legal system related to private-public partnership (PPP) and different socio-economic and cultural background. Currently there is an essential necessity within state bodies and business community for new mechanisms of cooperation that will foster renovation of economy structures, increasing investment cooperation, developing the good governance and judicial system. Therefore it is highly significant to involve business community in the policy-making decision process for strengthening feedback and promoting effective national administration as well. Regarding this, one of the effective and approved forms of PPP in combating corruption and ensuring transparency is regulation of lobbying activity.

For the last years, Russia consistently develops private-public partnership in combating corruption and ensuring transparency via different mechanisms and institutions. The State Constitution of the Russian Federation contains the Articles 30, where «Everyone shall have the right to association, including the right to create trade unions for the protection of his or her interests. The freedom of activity of public association shall be guaranteed». For last two decades, there were many efforts to establish the juridical grounds for lobbying regulation. For the last years, there were notable events within development of lobbying institute. Firstly, in the academic dimension, the International Workshop on Organization and Legal Regulation of the Lobbying Activity was held in the Ministry of Economic Development of Russian Federation in June 2012. Participants from UNODC, OECD, Canada and USA met together to analyze and to discuss different approaches in the world related to juridical regulatory practices of lobbying. Delegates discussed different ways of lobbying activity, which are historically developing in different countries.

In 2012 special Joint Government-Business Working Group on Combating Corruption with the participation of leading business associations was established that combined all interested stakeholders – government bodies and independent experts under the chairmanship of the Minister of Economic Development of Russian Federation. During its existence, the initiatives related to lobbying institute in Russia are scrutinized and get trial runs within this Group.

For the last two years, a number of judicial procedures related to public influence was established in Russia. Among them:

- Regulatory impact assessment;
- Public consultations;
- Juridical examinations of legislative acts that unduly restrict investment and enterprising activities;
- Public debating of draft laws;
- Law-enforcement monitoring;
- Anticorruption examination of legislative acts.

All these initiatives appeared as independent directions in addition to the mainstream work on determining the forms and regulatory practices of lobbyism.

Russia raises public participation in its state governance through establishment a new form of private-public partnership – system “Opened Government” and by activity of special public councils inside executive bodies as well.

Signing and adoption the Anticorruption Charter of the Russian Business Society in autumn of 2012 within International Investment Forum in city of Sochi, Russia, became very important milestone on the domestic front to strengthen the private-public partnership in combating corruption. In fact, Russia obtained the first unique document that was developed together with leading business associations of Russia and that considers the international standards of anticorruption conduct for business. This regards it means that Charter is universal document, because it covers not only business and government relations, it regulates the intra- and inter- business relations.

Taking into account the provisions of the OECD Convention, to which Russia joined last year, the Charter imposes the prohibition of bribery of all government officials at any circumstances including

the bribery by the Russian entrepreneurs of foreign governments' officials during the process of international business transactions.

According to the results of all mention-above activities related to the lobbying, two main directions of further development of the lobbying in Russia have been identified. The first one – enactment of special juridical act that will regulate lobbying as professional activity. In according with the international and domestic practice, it'd help resolve some specific issues:

- determining the terms “lobbyism” and “lobbyist”;
- determining legislative models for regulating lobbying;
- establishing clear standard and procedures for collecting and disclosing information on lobbying activity.
- determining the qualifying requirements to lobbyists;
- ensuring the responsibility and accountability of lobbying.

The second way is to improve and strengthen current national legislation grounds, which regulate interaction between officials and lobbyists on different government levels. That means, first of all, ensuring lobbying transparency by promoting the information access and observing the lobbyist groups activity among citizens, public officials and entrepreneurs.

At the moment, Russia follows the second way of further development of lobbying. Government authorities together with interested stakeholders determine the definite and concrete steps on improvement and supplement of the juridical and legislative norms related to the regulation of interaction between officials and business communities, individual entrepreneurs and their representatives, profit-making companies, including foreign ones. These objectives are expected to be achieved by the end of 2013.