*May 11,2012*

*Skopje*

**To: Ms. ElkeDall**

 **Project Coordinator**

 **WBC-INCO.NET Team**

**Subject:Association Zenith concept note - contribution to a future action plan to increase innovation capacities in the whole region of the Western Balkan Countries**

Dear Ms. Elke,

It is my great pleasure and privilege on behalf of the *Association for Development Initiatives– Zenith* to share our concept note and contribute to a future action plan that should increase the innovation capacities in the whole region of the Western Balkans. The concept note is based on an idea developed by the Association Zenith with strategic support of the Ministry of Information Society and Administration from Macedonia.

The following 2 pages are brief conceptualization of our idea:

***Innovation in Governance (GOVInn):***

***Advancing the Modes of Democratic Governance***

The **purpose of the project** is to determine optimal modalities and approaches for improving access and enhancing quality of legislation, while promoting further development of effective and sustainable rule of law mechanisms. The reform (innovation) that would be examined (implemented) is related to institutionalizing EU standards and requirements for advancing the legislative process in Macedonia, promoting greater transparency and citizen involvement while contributing to more effective and efficient public administration.

The GovINN project includes **2 priority axes** dividing the areas of intervention into logical units. The first one focuses on Enhancing inter-institutional coordination and communicationand it is supplemented by the second one aiming at Increasing access, transparency and systematic citizen involvement in the policy making process.

***Priority axis I – Enhancing inter-institutional coordination and communication***

*Output 1: Assessed needs and evaluated alternatives for introduction of EU standards and platforms for establishing a unified EU-modeled channel of intra/inter-institutional communication METALex in the legislative process and automated preparation of consolidated texts of laws.*

*Output 2: Built consensus among key actors in the legislative process on the modalities for introduction of EU standards and platforms in the legislative process and agreed approaches for intra/inter-institutional mechanisms for coordination and communication, including a platform for monitoring of the decision making process between institutions.*

Output 3: Developed clear and universally enforceable draft nomo-technical rules

*Output 4: Devised concept for new eTools for law drafters and identified key requirements for such schemes, including estimated expenditures and resources for introduction*

***Priority axis II – Increasing access, transparency and systematic citizen involvement in the policy-making process***

*Output 1: Assessed existing civil society participation tools in the policy making process and developed recommendations for upgrading*

*Output 2:Examined modes of establishing and providing access to an official database of consolidated versions of laws*

*Output 3:Recognized impact on the Official Gazette*

*Output 4: Appraised and communicated benefits of the new system* for citizens, businesses and institutions, including the potential reductions in administrative expenditures, and the environmental impact of the reduction in use of printed materials.

The project initiative was developed in coherence with the main national strategic documents in Macedonia such as Work Programme of the Government, Strategy for Public Administration Reform, and National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis regarding the area of public administration reform and full integration in the European Union and is in compliance with international references, specifically the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. It puts in place a series of specific implementation measures and takes in consideration the fundamental principles for making aid more effective: joint implementation, ownership,institutional support and inclusive partnership and synergies. Similar projects, in the Western Balkans neighborhood, are implemented in Austria and Slovakia.

**Actors involved in the implementation of the specific project are**:

* *Association Zenith* – owning the intellectual rights over the project – an independent, non-governmental, non-profit and non-partisan organization in Macedonia whose mission is to examine, create and promote practices that foster development and democratic governance through developing and promoting democratic practices, advancing civil society, fostering sustainable development, and promoting corporate social responsibility
* *Ministry of Information Society and Administration* – our strategic partner in developing the project and responsible for modernization of the public administration, enhancing transparency and public participation in the process of policy-making, as well as good governance in Macedonia.

In other countries of the Western Balkans, it would be possible to run the initiative in a similar cooperation between civil society and government institution in charge of public administration.

As Macedonia, and all other countries in the region are progressing towards the EU, these reforms in the near future, depending on the advancement in the process will become a necessity. Furthermore, at the end of the project, *citizens and businesses* will have easy access to legislation through an official database of consolidated texts of laws; the legislative process would produce clear, more comprehensible and consistently styled and structured acts; and civil society participation in policy making would be facilitated. On the other hand, *institutions* will streamline the legislative process, will communicate and coordinate on the basis of EU required standards, formats and platforms, and will improve quality of legislation and law enforcement.

For further information, please contact me on my e-mail address nechev@zenith.org.mk or +389 76 496 776 at Association for Development Initiatives – Zenith; <http://zenith.org.mk>; VeljkoVlakovikj 22a/2-11, 1000 Skopje Macedonia.

Best regards,

Zoran Nechev

Programme Manager responsible for EU affairs

Association for Development Initiatives – Zenith