

Closing speech for the 5th EUROSAI-OLACEFS Conference

Lisbon, 9-12 May 2007

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It was a great honour for me to participate in the 5th Conference of the European and Latin American Supreme Audit Institutions. The cooperation between the two regional working groups of INTOSAI goes back to the turn of the Millennium, and I am deeply convinced that it is very fruitful and useful for all participating SAIs.

In the course of the previous joint conferences we covered very interesting and significant topics such as the audit of taxation or the training of auditors. The main theme of this conference is also of great importance and topical in the beginning of the 21st Century.

I think that in our age, one of the most relevant problems is, how to ensure adequate economic growth, decrease fiscal imbalance and increase the competitiveness, while preserving the level of social prosperity in a market economy. This is a very complex theoretical, economical-strategic, economic political and practical issue.

In my opinion, it is essential that the countries have a consistent vision, an economic policy, which serves fiscal stability and sustainability. The sustainable development of countries might be based on sound growth, structural modernisation, simultaneous monetary and fiscal stability, and good environmental management. However, fiscal stability might not rely on restrictions, it can be realized only on the basis of continuous development.

The task of supreme audit institutions is to follow continuously the planning criteria determining the development of budget policy, and the trend of the implementation of this policy, as well as to warn of uncertainty arising from the lack of defined state duties. By analyzing the processes and detecting the correlations, an SAI should also point out, when the budget related decisions and processes endanger the programme of long-term fiscal balance and sustainable development.

I believe that an SAI has significant responsibility in encouraging the external and internal transparency and accountability of public finances.

The expectations of the society to enhance the results and accountability of the public sector, looking into future perspectives constitute more and more new challenges for Supreme Audit Institutions. Doubly so, as the seasoned economic policy, as well as the balanced and authentic budget policy are correlated, and it is indispensable to understand their correspondence.

Therefore, an SAI should examine and audit the most relevant components and factors of the operation of public finances. For this purpose, it should handle flexibly the utilization of new financing-accounting methods and of resources encouraging inland investments. It is necessary to follow the efficacy of reforms and long-term investments by detecting the influence factors and connections, as well as evaluating their effect mechanism.

I believe, you all agree with me that we have had a very successful Conference. We defined the meaning, the reasons and the aims of fiscal sustainability, determined its areas, and agreed on the role of our audit institutions in promoting this process. I am convinced that the prepared Conclusions and Recommendations is a well-structured, transparent and useful document, and I hope that due to the final conclusions of our meeting we will manage to contribute to fiscal sustainability and to promote the reform processes of our countries.

I am convinced that the success of this meeting will strengthen the cooperation between the two INTOSAI regional working groups, confirm the necessity of cooperation, and also enhance the reputation of the world organisation of supreme audit institutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally, I avail myself of the opportunity to express my thanks to the President of the Portugal Court of Auditors for the excellent preparation of the meeting, for the outstanding organizing and the friendly hospitality extended to us.

Thank you for your attention.