



Groupe d'Etats contre la corruption  
*Group of States against corruption*



COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS**  
**DIRECTORATE OF MONITORING**

Please quote: DG-HL/WR/er

Mr Vincenzo Grimaldi  
High Commissioner against corruption  
Piazza San Lorenzo in Lucina, 4  
00186 ROMA

Strasbourg, 7 July 2008

Dear Mr Grimaldi

Thank you for your letter of 1 July 2008 by which you informed me of the Italian government's decision, by law decree of 25 June 2008, to eliminate your Office with effect from 25 August next.

I can only express great concern at this unexpected move, both in my capacity as President of the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption – GRECO and as Chairman of the Slovenian Commission for the Prevention of Corruption. I am also assured that many of my colleagues from the international anti-corruption community feel the same.

I really fear that Italy is about to move back to a situation in which there is no real political will to fight corruption; this is all the more disturbing as Italy has only recently joined GRECO and is now expected to give convincing proof that it is taking determined action against corruption.

The elimination of your Office is not only a loss for your country but also for GRECO. It would appear that your government does not understand that Italy, as a founding member of the Council of Europe, is watched closely by those member States which have more recently joined the organisation. This bad example may well impact on the position of anti-corruption bodies in other GRECO member States, some of which have come under pressure lately, including in my own country.

I expect that at GRECO's October Plenary the Italian delegation to GRECO will provide more information on the reasons for this decision and its likely consequences for the fight against corruption in Italy. As you know, according to our work programme for 2008, GRECO will carry out its first on-site evaluation visit to Italy in October.

Yours sincerely

Drago Kos  
President of GRECO