

The International Program – Croatia



At the invitation of the U.S. State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), through its host, the Graduate School USA, International Institute, a meeting between a representative of Judicial Watch and several Croatian officials was arranged in June of 2012.

The U.S. Department of State's [background note](#) for Croatia states that U.S.-Croatian relations "are very strong." The U.S. opened its Embassy in 1992 in Zagreb, in support of "Croatia's development of a democratic, secure, and market-oriented society that will be a strong partner in Euro-Atlantic institutions." Croatia is seen as a stabilizing force in the region and was an earlier recipient of economic assistance through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and has, since 1998, received "\$27 million . . . in humanitarian demining assistance . . . to remove an estimated 90,000 remaining mines by 2019."

Significantly, the U.S. State Department reports that "on December 9, 2011 Croatia signed its EU accession treaty, which Croatian citizens approved by a two-thirds majority in the January 22, 2012 referendum. Upon ratification by the other EU member countries, Croatia is expected to become a full EU member in July 2013."

Further, through U.S. State Department-sponsored leadership programs, Croatian officials and dignitaries are invited to the United States and introduced to government, judicial, and political officials, as well as prominent members of non-governmental organizations—who play an important role in maintaining a healthy and vibrant democracy in America—by upholding the rule of law, exercising and strengthening transparency and accountability mechanisms, and combating corruption in government, politics, and the law.

Mr. Chris Farrell, Judicial Watch's director of investigations and research met with the Croatian visitors in June of 2012. As set forth in its Mission Statement, "through its

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educational endeavors, Judicial Watch advocates high standards of ethics and morality in the nation's public life and seeks to ensure that political and judicial officials do not abuse the powers entrusted to them by the American people. Judicial Watch fulfills its educational mission through litigation, investigations, and public outreach." [The International Program](#) is an integral part of its educational program. At the request of the International Institute, and for the stated purpose of ensuring the "free flow of ideas in an atmosphere of trust, the entire discussion . . . (was) private, closed to the press and Off the Record"