



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

International and Regional Cooperation with focus on Euro-Atlantic Integration Pillar

**“Challenges in the EU’s Neighbouring South-Eastern Countries -  
International Energy Security Seminar RACVIAC 2019”  
04-07 June 2019**

*RACVIAC, Rakitje, Republic of Croatia*



### Introduction

On 04-07 June 2019 the “Challenges in the EU’s Neighbouring South-Eastern Countries - International Energy Security Seminar RACVIAC 2019” was held in Rakitje, Croatia. The event was jointly organized by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation, and the Romanian Ministry of Energy, with significant assistance of the Croatian Ministry of Environment and Energy.

RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation initiated an Energy Security project that is being carried out since 2015, with an aim to bring together experts and senior level officials and experts from governmental institutions and agencies, and relevant International and regional organizations active in the field of energy security. This time around, Romania assumed the role of the leading nation regarding Energy Security.

This activity was intended as an open platform for an expert discussion on different topics of interest in the field of energy security.

The purpose of Energy Security seminars overall is to enable open expert debates on common energy security challenges in the context of the Energy Security Strategy and the Energy Union Strategy Framework in South East Europe.

The participants took an active part in presenting the latest developments and shared their knowledge and experience in the field of energy security, energy market development and renewable energy and new technologies.



*Opening session (from left to right): MG (ret.) Jeronim Bazo, RACVIAC Director, Mrs Ana Ezhova Krzhaloska, IRC Programme Manager, H.E. Constantin Mihail Grigorie, Ambassador of Romania to the Republic of Croatia, BG Gordana Garašić, RACVIAC Deputy Director, and Mr Bujar Maxhuni, IRC Activity Manager*

In total, there were 26 participants, including participants from the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Croatia, Hellenic Republic, Republic of Turkey, Romania and Kosovo\*, as well as RACVIAC staff and Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Romanian Ministry of Energy officials who were involved in the preparation and execution of this Seminar.

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\* This Designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence (In accordance with Arrangements regarding representation and cooperation).

## Execution

The aim of the Seminar was to identify the developing energy security challenges for SEE and opportunities for regional co-operation and provide participants with the opportunity to share the best practices in terms of specific national regulation, energy market development process or measures to deal with high levels of import.

The EU's neighbouring South-Eastern countries have a common problem regarding energy security in the region: they are relying heavily on a single supplier. Import dependency represents a disadvantage as it causes vulnerabilities linked to supply disruptions created by political or commercial disputes. The European Commission took these concerns, together with other relevant considerations, into account when it developed its Energy Security Strategy and the Energy Union Strategy Framework in 2014 and 2015, respectively. Both documents aim at ensuring a stable and safe supply of energy for the European citizens and the European economy.

During the Seminar the participants had an opportunity to learn more about the main issues that the South-Eastern countries are facing in the energy security field, with a main focus on the oil and gas sector, as well as the main actions to be taken to increase energy security in the region. In addition, the renewable energy sources as an alternative for oil and gas, were also discussed during the Seminar.

The participants were invited to present the current situation in their countries with emphasis on best practices that could consolidate energy security in the region. Moreover, they were also invited to debate the relation between these two sources of energy.

In his Opening remarks MG (ret.) Jeronim Bazo, RACVIAC Director, stressed: *“As RACVIAC mission is to foster dialogue and cooperation on security matters in the SEE region, we see this Seminar as an excellent opportunity for further development of regional cooperation on Energy Security and to promote this issue through exchange of experience and sharing of information. The close regional and wider cooperation among the SEE countries, through dialogue and various forms of coordination, is a strong response to today's challenges to security policy, leading to building of confidence and security among the countries and development of synergy among the activity participants”*.



MG (ret.) Jeronim Bazo, RACVIAC Director

Ambassador of Romania to the Republic of Croatia, Mihail Constantin Grigorie, emphasized that during its Presidency of the Council of the EU Romania supports the work and

achievements of the main regional cooperation energy formats: CESEC and the Energy Community.



*Ambassador of Romania to the Republic of Croatia,  
H. E. Mihail Constantin Grigorie*

Ambassador Grigorie also stressed the role of Romania as a leading nation in RACVIAC when it comes to energy security, sharing with the participants the information that Romania is an energy security provider and has the potential to strengthen its role and contribute to the overall EU energy policy concerning security and the diversification of sources and routes.

In this regard, Romania supports the constant efforts to diversify the energy supply by identifying new suppliers and new routes of energy transport meant to increase energy security, as well as develop gas infrastructure projects of great relevance to the Central and South-Eastern region in Europe, he added.

### Visit to the HPP Čakovec

The second day of the Seminar was reserved for a study visit to the Čakovec Hydroelectric Power Plant. This Plant is based close to the town of Varaždin. It is a large hydroelectric power plant that has four turbines with a nominal capacity of 21 MW each having a total capacity of 84 MW. It is a multipurpose facility harnessing the Drava River water power, providing flood and erosion control, improving drainage, water supply, traffic and conditions for the development of the leisure industry and sports. The Čakovec Hydroelectric Power Plant installed power at generator terminals is 75.9 MW, and possible average annual output is 400 GWh.



*On the second day of the Seminar a study visit to HPP Čakovec was organized (pictured: a visit to the main Operating room)*

The Power Plant uses Lake Varaždin as its reservoir and was completed in 1982. Although named after the town of Čakovec, it is located in the proximity of the city of Varaždin.

## **Conclusion**

The Seminar participants were satisfied with the outcome of the event, highly praising the efforts of RACVIAC and the Romanian MFA, Romanian Ministry of Energy and Croatian Ministry of Environment and Energy in organizing this event. Promoting a transparent dialogue on energy security, based on a common strategic vision adapted to the needs and potential of the region, as well as the strategic assessment in order to develop resilient capacities to protect critical energy infrastructure, will remain high on RACVIAC agenda in the coming period. Therefore, this activity on energy security will continue to be held with Romania as its coordinator, based on the requirement for regional cooperation and focusing on the protection of critical infrastructure with regard to emerging asymmetrical threats in the context of South-Eastern Europe.

*Prepared by RACVIAC IRC Pillar*