



## CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

Dialogue and Cooperation Division

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### “OSCE Contribution to Regional Security in Southeast Europe”

(17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008)

*RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation organized in Rakitje, Vitez, Damir Martić barracks, a two-day seminar aimed at highlighting the role of OSCE in promoting stability and security in Southeast Europe and its contribution to strengthening institutional capacities through its regional offices. During a two-day seminar Heads of OSCE missions in the region, OSCE experts and other international experts shared their experience, knowledge and expertise, evoking lively interest among participants.*

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#### **The origins of the OSCE**

*The OSCE plays a key role in Southeast Europe (SEE), especially in the fields of security, democratization, human rights, institution building and media development.*

In the post-Cold War era, Southeastern Europe has emerged as the most conflict-prone area in Europe and one of the world’s hot-spots. In their efforts to achieve regional security and stability, states in particular regions are recognizing that means to regional stability exist, namely arms control and confidence and security building measures. These means have emerged as essential factors in preventing unintentional escalation in hot-spot regions.

The OSCE dates its origins back to the early 1970s, when the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) was created to serve as a multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between East and West. With the end of the Cold War, in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the CSCE was called upon to play its part in

managing the historic change taking place in Europe and responding to the new challenges of the post Cold War period, which led to its permanent institutions and operational capabilities.

The organization addresses a wide range of security related concerns, including arms control, confidence - and security building measures, human rights, democratization, policing strategies, counter terrorism as well as economic and environmental activities.

The OSCE plays a key role in Southeast Europe (SEE), especially in the fields of security, democratization, human rights, institution building and media development. It provides advice and assistance to the regional authorities as how to develop a stable, peaceful, democratic and self-sustaining SEE region. It also contributes to democratization by monitoring the proper functioning and development of democratic institutions. It advises on development of free media, promotion of respect for human rights and implementation of legislation processes and mechanisms.

## The OSCE's activities in the region

Today the OSCE runs 6 field missions/presences in the Southeast Europe (plus 1 Office in Zagreb) that vary greatly both in terms of mandate and size. As a common denominator, the mandates of all missions include the task to promote compliance with OSCE principles and commitments.

From a regional perspective, the tasks, carried out by the OSCE in South Eastern Europe, can be divided into four categories. Firstly, the OSCE engages in a variety of activities that constitute state substitution (in those countries or regions with a partial institutional or constitutional vacuum, OSCE missions have assumed tasks that are normally carried out by the state i.e. organization of elections, police and civil servants' training). Secondly, OSCE Missions carry out activities that can be defined as NGO substitution. Specifically, the missions are very active in the field of democratization in those contexts where there is not a sufficient presence of NGO's to carry out such activities. Thirdly, the OSCE Missions often play a crucial role in conflict prevention, mediation and solution. Fourthly, OSCE Missions engage in classical diplomatic activity by extensive monitoring and reporting.

The OSCE field missions are highly visible throughout the entire region. There is a sense among politicians and officials that good relations with the OSCE are important for the progress on the road towards a close integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. In general, the OSCE, including the field missions in South Eastern Europe, reveals several unmatched areas of excellence. Specifically, the OSCE standards in the field of democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as for minority rights are not only

Europe-wide, but also in some cases, more elaborate and advanced than those of other European organisations. The practical contribution of the OSCE field missions in the region to monitoring human rights, assistance in the implementation of democratic standards and in developing democratic institutions and establishing the rule of law cannot be neglected. Moreover, the OSCE is also the organization for the worldwide unique system of detailed exchange of military information agreed upon within the framework of confidence-building measures. Not surprisingly, the OSCE was mandated with the negotiations on regional arms



control, confidence building and stabilisation measures in the former Yugoslavia.

## The seminar contents

*... the OSCE can be a key instrument for comprehensive assistance.*

The seminar gathered 23 participants from 8 countries and international organizations.

The aim of this two-day seminar was to discuss the role of the OSCE in promoting stability and security in Southeast Europe and its contribution to strengthening institutional capacities through its regional offices.

The main purpose was to analyse OSCE contribution to promoting democratization

in SEE countries in conformity with OSCE principles, standards and commitments, to highlight the OSCE major role in the creation and development of a stable, peaceful, democratic and self-sustaining region, then to share experiences and lessons learned regarding OSCE missions in SEE and last but not the



Most of the OSCE missions in the region were represented by head of missions or by respective field experts. The representative from the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre opened the seminar and led the final panel discussion.

The following lectures were given during the two-day seminar:

*Security through Cooperation in the South Eastern Europe* by Mr. Calin STOICA (Acting Deputy Director of the CPC); *Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security: Anatomy and Implementation* by Prof. Alexandre LAMBERT (Academic Director, SIT, Geneva), *OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina - Experiences and lessons learned* by BG (ret) Ulrich HEIDER, (Director of Department of Security Co-operation); *OSCE Office in Zagreb - Experiences and lessons learned from OSCE Mission to Croatia* by Ambassador

Jorge Fuentes MONZONÍS-VILALLONGA (Head of Office); *OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje - Experiences and lessons learned* by Ambassador Giorgio RADICATI (Head of the Mission); *OSCE Mission to Montenegro - Experiences and lessons learned* by Ambassador Paraschiva BADESCU (Head of the Mission); *OSCE Mission to Serbia - Experiences and lessons learned* from by Mr. Vladimir BILANDZIC (Special Adv. on Confidence Building Measures) and *The Evolution of Security within the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC)* by Ms. Kai-Helin KALDAS (Defence Adviser, Permanent Mission of Estonia to the OSCE).

Mr. Calin STOICA, Acting Deputy Director of the Conflict prevention Centre, opened the seminar with a lecture about the OSCE role in South Eastern Europe. He underlined the fact that OSCE was still called upon to play an important role in overcoming remaining barriers in the region, both from the post-conflict as well as institutional spheres. This relates in particular to co-operation between states in the fields of war crimes prosecution and refugee return.

He emphasised that Conflict Prevention Centre of the OSCE should play a



matters related to early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.

Among lectures related to lessons learned, Ambassador Paraschiva BADESCU, Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, mentioned that an absolutely essential precondition for a successful OSCE field presence was the willingness of the host country to welcome and accept the assistance offered and to embark itself on the implementation of the commitments and standards.

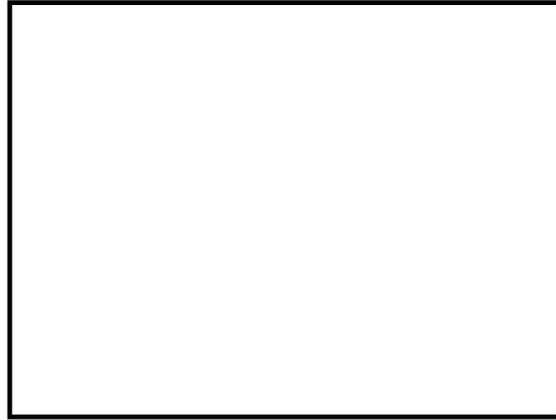
Ambassador Giorgio RADICATI, Head of OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje in his speech underlined that the OSCE certainly did not stand alone in its efforts to improve security. The EU is an important contributor to stability in the country and in the region as a whole promoting common values across borders and mutual respect for rule of law. The International Community as a whole supports our collective efforts in



HE Ambassador Giorgio Radicati

provider. Its engagement in judicial and police reform and generally speaking in security sector reform is far from being completed.

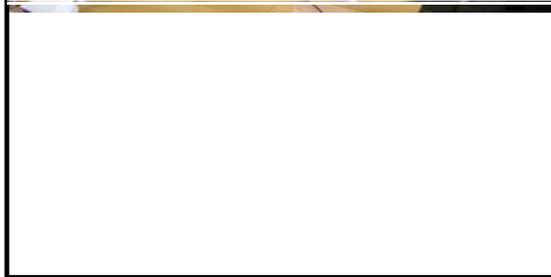
An active civil society is indispensable both for the functioning of government institutions and for the fostering of democratic political culture. The partnership and co-operation between



the Parliament and civil society, which spans over many issues, is particularly relevant for an effective democratic



Participants during the seminar



of security in the Forum for Security Cooperation. She addressed the importance of cyber security while discussing the new threats and risks. In this regard and on the basis of its own experience<sup>1</sup>, Estonia encouraged a stronger OSCE engagement in this new threat.

## Conclusions.

*... levels of crime against people and property - like homicide, robbery, rape,*

<sup>1</sup> Estonia, one of the most internet-savvy states in the European Union, has been under sustained attack from hackers. Websites of the tiny Baltic state's government, political parties, media and business community have had to shut down temporarily after being hit by denial-of-service attacks, which swamp them with external requests. BBC news, "The cyber raiders hitting Estonia", 17 May 2007.

*burglary and assault - are now lower in the Balkans than in Western Europe.*

The SEE region remains one of those regions which had not depleted the OSCE engagement. It might be important to point out that in spite of its reputation associated with conflicts, instability, crime and democratic deficit, this region has marked a positive change in recent years.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime report "*Crime and its Impact on the Balkans*" shows that, in general, levels of crime against people and property (like homicide, robbery, rape, burglary, and assault) in the Balkans are lower than in Western Europe, and the number of murders is decreasing throughout the region.

While it is unrealistic to expect that the OSCE should deal with a wide array of traditional and emerging threats or become a "hard security" provider, nevertheless it shall continue to play a major role in conflict prevention and crisis management. Within its three dimensions: politico-military, economic and humanitarian, the OSCE had gained a comparative advantage in having a potential to address security in all its aspects. With its membership ranging from traditional to emerging democracies and its geographical scope from Atlantic to Pacific, the OSCE is well set for sharing different experiences and elaborating new ideas and initiatives to promote security.