



Cooperative and Security Environment with Focus on Arms Control Pillar

External Report

Vienna Document 2011 Compliance and Verification Course

05 - 10 March 2017, Hungary

Hosted by Hungary

Introduction

In order to facilitate the implementation of the provisions of the Vienna Document RACVIAC has been organizing Vienna Document courses for the countries of the South East European region since 2001. At the 28th MAG Meeting Hungary suggested that RACVIAC should organize a Vienna Document 2011 Formation/Unit Commanders' Course on the territory of Hungary, as its contribution to the regional Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs). RACVIAC and the respective Hungarian authorities recently executed this activity in close cooperation.

The purpose of this Course was to provide participants with a theoretical overview of the Vienna Document 2011 (VD '11), providing a comprehensive analysis of both the theoretical as well as the practical level of the implementation of these activities. It was organized in the spirit and the letters of the VD' 11. The Course objectives were:

- To overview the specified elements of the VD '11 highlighting the most comprehensive and commonly followed rules and procedures of its execution
- To provide the participants with a possibility to conduct a training evaluation visit to one of the units in Hungary
- To focus on the duties and responsibilities of the personnel to be engaged in the implementation of the aforementioned arms control document, thus demonstrating the real spirit of the confidence- and security-building measures

- To train the participants employed as visitors/evaluators or escort team members in the subjects related to the planning and conducting of such activities based on best practices
- To deepen contacts between the representatives of national organizations, agencies engaged in the accomplishment of arms control and/or security- and confidence-building measures
- To provide the participants, especially during the practical part of the Course, with an opportunity to exercise or "observe" the real events, thus showing the fields and ways of working in the future in this form of co-operation on the national, regional and the international level.

The participants (33) came from: Albania (3), Bosnia and Herzegovina (3), Croatia (1), Hungary (12), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* (3), Montenegro (3), Romania (1), Serbia (3), Slovenia (1), Turkey (1) and Kosovo** (2). They were both senior and junior military officials and civilians, dealing with related issues.

The Course was conducted with the assistance of six (6) lecturers: LtCol Csaba Csoknyai (Senior Officer, HDF Training and Doctrine Centre, HU), LtCol Dietmar Köppen (Arms Control Staff Officer, Bundeswehr Verification Centre, DE), LtCol Thomas Krainz, MSc (Head of the Arms Control Section, MoD AT), LtCol Holger Schmuck (Senior Planning Officer, NATO SHAPE J-5), Col László Szatmári (Head of the MilRep/MAG of the Embassy of

* Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

** 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

Hungary to the OSCE, UN and Other International Organizations in Vienna), LtCol Goran Todorović (Verification Centre, RS).

Execution

The Course, organised for the sixth time so far in Hungary, was designed mainly for military personnel of the South East European region. The four-day Course provided the participants with the opportunity to meet their colleagues from the SEE region, as well as to meet the representatives/experts from different countries, organizations and agencies, all dealing with the execution of the VD '11 and/or other arms control regimes.

During the theoretical part, after the Welcome Address of Mr György Rábai, Head of Defence Policy Unit (MoD HU) and BG Gordana Garašić, Deputy Director of RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation, the following lecturers delivered presentations on a range of topics:

First day:

- Mr István Balogh, Head of Security Policy and Non-Proliferation Department (MFAT HU): “Hungarian Foreign and Security Policy”
- Mr Ferenc Kalmár, Deputy Head of Defence Policy Unit MoD HU: “Challenges and Priorities of the Hungarian Defence Policy”
- LtCol Thomas Krainz: “VD'11 Contents, Main Parts of the Document, Basic Definitions”
- Col László Szatmári: “Arms Control (CSBMs) in Europe (background) and their contribution to the international Stability and Peace”
- LtCol Holger Schmuck: “Consideration of Arms Control obligations during planning and executing of military activities”.

Second day:

- LtCol Thomas Krainz: “Evaluation”
- LtCol Csaba Csoknyai: “Inspection”
- Col László Szatmári, OSCE, the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the OSCE

- LtCol Goran Todorović: “Prior Notification & Observation of Certain Military Activities”
- LtCol Goran Todorović: “Information Exchange Provisions and Notification Formats”

Third day:

- LtCol Goran Todorović: “Annual Calendars, Constraining Provisions, Regional Measures”
- LtCol Csaba Csoknyai: “Risk Reduction”
- LtCol Holger Schmuck: “Impact of Arms Control elements on planning activities for highly visible events such as Exercises, Missions and Operations”
- LtCol Holger Schmuck: “Changes to the NATO Command Structure and the NATO Force Structure since the WALES Summit in 2014 and, possibly, impact on Arms Control obligations”
- LtCol Dietmar Köppen: “Contacts”.

During the practical day of the Course the participants carried out an evaluation visit at the 86th Helicopter Base at Szolnok, which included the following:

- Briefing on the Unit (Base Commander's deputy)
- Preparation of Questions
- Questions and Answers
- Tour of the Barracks (Control Tower, medical facilities, MET and SAR service)
- Major Weapon and Equipment Systems (Mi-8 helicopter).

The practical part finished after lunch with the evaluation of the Course, closing remarks and distribution of the certificates. The Course's end was marked by an official Farewell Dinner, hosted by MoD HU at Stefánia Palace (Budapest).

Proposals

According to the Questionnaire which was distributed to the participants during the second working day of the Course and then retrieved from them in the future they would like to hear more about the following (or suggested as follows, without attempting to be comprehensive):

- “The lecture titled ‘Evaluation visit’ could be widened, because it is the basic tool for CSBMs.”
- “The practical part could be longer.” (suggested by more than one participant)
- One participant wanted to hear more about “Inspection,” and “asymmetric threats”, and “other intl. organisations” as well
- A suggestion was made regarding the “topic about previous experiences of the inspectors ”
- “More social activities” (suggested by more than one participant)
- A participant suggested to “complete the future Agenda with topics about the CFE and the Open Skies Treaty”
- “It would be useful to distribute VD ’11 in the hard copy version”
- During the inspection/escort phase: “show some of the usual issues and problems and ways to solve them”
- One participant wanted to see “more visual materials (=photos) and the personal experiences of the lecturers, possibly during a whole (the last theoretical) working day.”

Conclusion

The majority of the participants arrived with an in-depth knowledge of the VD ’11 and/or other arms control regimes and CSBMs, but there were lots of newcomers among them as well. They expressed satisfaction with the topics chosen and said that they were impressed by the lecturers’ high level of knowledge.

The theoretical and the practical part of the Course were well-organized thanks to the professionalism and preparedness of the Hungarian hosts, as well as the close cooperation between RACVIAC and the Hungarian national authorities.

This Course provided participants with the opportunity to gain both theoretical and practical knowledge of the Vienna Document 2011, to exercise an evaluation visit, thus adding special value to the Course.

According to the participants’ assessments, the Course proved to be successful and well organized. They regarded it as valuable for their future work and they all agreed on the necessity of conducting such Courses in the future too, with the aim to contribute to the CSBMs in the region.

By hosting this Course, as one of the most significant activities in RACVIAC Program, Hungary (RACVIAC Associate Member) demonstrated its commitment and continuous support for the Centre and to the security of the SEE region.



Group photo



Lecturers and Course participants on the first working day

Compiled by: Mr Pál Bódogh-Szabó
Activity Coordinator
RACVIAC - Centre for Security
Cooperation