

Border Security and Management Seminar



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

„Border Security and Management Seminar“ 27 February – 3 March



Group photo

Organised by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation and hosted by the Ministry of Defence of MK.

Introduction

This Seminar was a continuation of the border security and management events jointly conducted by RACVIAC, DCAF Office Ljubljana and the OSCE Border Security and Management Unit and it consisted of two parts: lectures and intensive discussions on the first day, and

a field study trip to a refugee camp on the second day.

The purpose of this joint event was to continue addressing the challenges in border security and management, to identify current and future challenges and to support the implementation of the Border Security and Management Concept of the OSCE Participating States in South East Europe, and other international and regional initiatives.

The aim of this activity was to raise the level of efficiency of the border

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management authorities in SEE and foster mutual cooperation in mitigating current and potential security threats.



20 participants attended the Seminar

The participants were police force officers and civilian officials responsible for border security from the ministries of foreign affairs, ministries of defence, ministries of interior, ministries of finance, representatives of the customs, drug control and border guard national services. In total, there were 20 participants AL (3), BA (1), MK (5), ME (1), RO (1), TR (6), and Kosovo* (3). In addition, there were 6 lecturers from AT (1), DCAF (1), MK (2), SL (1) and OSCE (1).

Activity Overview

The Seminar was opened by Ms. Elizabetha Chupovska Ristova, State Secretary of the MoD of MK, and BG Gordana Garašić, Deputy Director of RACVIAC - Centre of Security Cooperation. In their Welcome address they highlighted the current global challenges concerning this topic and underlined that no country alone, no matter how big or how small, can resolve such intensive cross-border challenges alone nowadays, and, furthermore, that interagency and international cooperation is demanded more than ever before. The State Secretary also mentioned that MK as the current „Key Factor in the Balkan Refugee Route“ is very happy to have a group of

experts present and the possibility to exchange information and experiences and build trust.



RACVIAC Deputy Director BG Gordana Garašić

Ambassador Nina Soumalainen, Head of the OSCE Mission in MK, then gave a presentation on the work of the Mission. The Seminar Keynote speech was delivered by Ambassador Rasa Ostrauskaite, Head of the Transnational Threats Department in the OSCE. Amongst others she stressed that the current and future challenges are to build a modern proactive police force that will be able to deal effectively with threats and that OSCE is engaged in police development and reform on the one hand, and building of capacities on the other hand. One very important achievement has been the formation of the National Focal Points' Network (now existing in 52 countries of the OSCE) that enables direct and immediate exchange of information.

* 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 regional representation and cooperation.)

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F.l.t.r. BG Gordana Garašić, State Secretary Elizabetha Chupovska Ristova, Ambassador Rasa Ostrauskaite, Ambassador Nina Soumalainen

After the Seminar Opening, several experts from different countries and different organizations presented international experiences and new initiatives. National experiences and intensive discussions also marked the first day.

The second day was characterized by a Field Visit to the Refugee Camp “Vinojug” in Gevgelija, situated next to the border crossing point with the Hellenic Republic.



Border crossing point Gevgelija with the Borderstone Nr. 59

Here the Seminar participants got an overview of the living conditions in a refugee camp and the procedure of crossing the border to enter the camp. In addition the head of the refugee camp described the experiences, challenges and problems encountered during the unprecedented flow of migrants in 2015,

including the consequences for the law enforcement authorities and the Lessons Learned.



Refugee Camp in Gevgelija

Conclusion

A big thanks goes to the MoD of MK for hosting and organizing this event as well as the Field Visit to the refugee camp “Vinojug” and also to the whole activity team.

Special thanks to all high level speakers for their professionalism and experience too, as well as their presentations that were highly appreciated by all participants.

According to the Questionnaire evaluations this Seminar was successful, very interesting and well organized.

The combination of a theoretical part that contained high level presentations and a practical part, consisting of the field study trip, proved to be a very good example of fruitful cooperation resulting in a successful activity.

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