Dialogue for the Stability of the Balkans
Strengthening Inter-Religious and Inter-Ethnic Dialogue in South East Europe

Dates
24-26 November 2010

Venue
Shkoder, Albania

Background
South-East Europe (SEE) has suffered from the ravages of the last wars of the 20th century in Europe, mainly as a consequence of inter-ethnic and inter-religious tension, hatred and violence. Today, the region is rebounding, leaving the wounds of the past behind and responding to the desire of its peoples for reconciliation, exchange and cooperation. The experience of the region has demonstrated that the matrix of values and the underlying ethical, cultural and spiritual foundations are a major determining factor for the resilience of the social fabric and the vibrancy of each society. Countries in the region have committed themselves to making use of dialogue as the only way to achieve full stability and overall progress in South East Europe, leading to a successful completion of their European integration process. Today, the region believes that mutual respect, rooted in open dialogue and nourished by ethnic, religious and cultural variety is indispensable for the preservation of peace. Therefore, the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Albania and RACVIAC-centre for security cooperation co-organize this conference with the aim to promote the idea of Inter-Discourse as not just one of the most powerful political tools in fostering regional stability and security, but also as a robust element supporting the economic development of the region. In that light, the Conference will provide SEE countries with the opportunity to discuss this highly important topic within the framework of its established purpose and objectives.

Purpose & Objectives
The purpose of this conference is to contribute to setting up better dialogue among cultures and civilizations in the Southeast European region, together with supporting the improvement of networks in the field of security policy and helping create a peaceful community.

The objectives are:
- To promote inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue as a means of enhancement of the stability in the region, and to examine and assess how they can constructively contribute to the progress of the region.
- To highlight the intrinsic value of religious and ethnic dimensions of the dialogue in South East Europe.
- To promote inter-ethnic dialogue among the peoples in South East Europe as a tool to further improve mutual understanding.
- To raise public awareness of the positive impact of ethnic and religious co-existence, understanding and harmony by exchanging views, experiences and best practices, as well as lessons learned.
- To create a space where religious diversity can not only coexist peacefully but also actively work together to promote a sense of social cohesion.

Participants
Approximately 35 participants, audience and speakers, three per each supported country: AL, BA, ME, MK and RS, both civilian and military officials at decision-making level, representing all the relevant ministries dealing with regional cooperation. Other MAG countries are also invited to take a part at the Conference as well as representatives of relevant International Organizations such as UN (UNDP, UNESCO), EU, COUNCIL of EUROPE, OSCE, RCC, NGOs and the representatives of media.

Methodology
The conference will last two full days and it will comprise lectures and discussions. The conference working language will be English. All materials from the Conference will be issued on CD at the end of the Conference.

Point of Contact:
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