Annual WG1 Workshop on Transition of Military Personnel
Hosted by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Moldova and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova

SSR-04-W
07th to 09th June 2010
Chisinau, MD

Abstract  The latest WG1 event was co-organized by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Moldova, as a result of the WG1's in-country approach, which enables direct and onsite introduction with the subject matter best practices in the host country, and includes the important element of the immediate cultural exchange. During two working days, 29 participants from 10 countries, together with NATO and local OSCE representatives, had a chance to elaborate several important aspects of military personnel transition process that had not been analysed in details before - primarily social and business networking as the main workshop topic and the critical success element of the self-employment process. Other topics included a case study of business networking institutional support, specific programme designs coming from outside of the region, and some specific and advanced programme elements already existing in the Republic of Moldova. In addition, Annual 2010 WG1 Workshop confirmed support to the initiated RACVIAC’s programme modernization efforts for the period 2010-2014 in the area of defence conversion and its integration in the future scope of activities and operational modalities within the context of the latest RACVIAC’s organizational changes.

Activity Background

Thanks to the Republic of Moldova and its acceptance to host the Annual 2010 Workshop in Chisinaiu, Working Group 1 was able to continue supporting the regional ownership build-up efforts, introduced and persistently promoted by RACVIAC. The general purpose of the Working Group 1 (WG1) activities is to enable faster, more transparent and more efficient reform of the regional defence systems in the context of its modernization during the last decade. In the case of the Annual 2010 WG1 Workshop, the initial objective was the application of the WG1 in-country approach, which implies the display of the most advanced elements of the host country's separated military personnel career transition system. In this particular case, the goal was to provide regional expert support to the initiation of the Moldova's new uniformed personnel career transition programme, together with OSCE Mission to Moldova as the project proponent.
In addition, all WG1 activities involve "real-time support" approach, which guarantees the inclusion of the conclusions defined during the previous WG1 activity - in this case a workshop that was held in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, one of the major subjects that were discussed was the social and business networking as a completely new topic that was never discussed before as a specific process and important individual skill required for successful personal career transition based on self-employment.

The abovementioned served as the starting points for the creation of the corresponding workshop core agenda, which was prepared by RACVIAC.

**Activity Facilitators**

The Workshop was planned, organized and executed as the joint event by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation, the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Moldova (Moldovan MoD), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova (Moldovan MFAEI), who respectfully shared corresponding organizational and financial responsibilities. Moldovan MoD fully provided organizational support as the host organization, while RACVIAC fully provided the Workshop programme concept, which was developed primarily to support the objectives defined jointly and in advance.

**Activity Venue, Duration and Participation**

The Workshop was held from 07 to 09 June 2010 in the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Moldova. It was organized as a three-day event, two of which were working days.
During the working day sessions, held at the Ministry's Congress Hall, participants had the opportunity to hear presentations and engage in discussions on the corresponding subject matter issues. Besides the opening welcome gathering at the Hotel Codru VIP Hall, the second conference day also included an informal dinner at the Brănești Cellars, hosted by Colonel Željko Cepanec, Deputy Director of RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation.

Workshop included the total of 29 participants coming from the host country, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\(^1\), the Kingdom of Norway, and Serbia, together with representatives from NATO and regional OSCE Mission to Moldova, including RACVIAC staff.

**Activity Description and Contents**

The Workshop was conducted as a combination of individual presentations, subject matter lectures, group work and open discussions.

The first day of the Workshop included individual arrivals, administrative processing, final coordination of activities and initial welcome gathering hosted by Mr Andrei Popov, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, who welcomed all participants at the Hotel Codru VIP Hall.

The event started with the opening session chaired by WG1 2010 Chairperson LtCol Grigore Chirica, former RACVIAC staff member and Head of Treaties Implementation Service in J5 Directorate of the Main Staff, National Army of the Republic of Moldova.

Colonel Iure Dominic, Chief of the Main Staff of the National Army, commander of the National Army of the Republic of Moldova, was the first to address the participants. In his welcome address, he emphasized the significance of WG1 joint work during last five years within RACVIAC’s domain.

The first working day of the Workshop continued with the Individual National Programme Updates by WG1 country members' representatives. This is the standard element of WG1 Workshop and it includes expert exchange of information on the subject matter field of interest.

\(^1\) Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name
The next set of presentations was dedicated to specific subject matter issues and it was opened by Brigadier General (retired) Albert Moinard (FR), senior representative of OSCE Mission to Moldova. The expert expose of the day was given by Ms Nevenka Benić (HR), Director of the Directorate for War Veterans and Members of their Family, the Ministry of Family, War Veterans and Intergenerational Solidarity of the Republic of Croatia, who gave a presentation on institutional support to business networking efforts of former military personnel in Croatia. This was the case study that actually provided the direct illustration for the Workshop's main subject - business networking in the area of collective farming. Ms Benić was followed by LtCol László Oláh (HU), Deputy Head of Human Service Section, the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Hungary. His participation was significant in the context of the fact that this was the first involvement of the Republic of Hungary in the activities of the Working Group 1. His exposition concluded the subject matter expert presentations for the working day one. In addition, RACVIAC activity team: LtCol Davor Kiralj, RACVIAC Acting Programme Manager for Security Sector Reform Pillar and LtCol Sergiu Railean, Subject Matter Expert for Base Conversion, introduced participants with the RACVIAC research project on "Defence Conversion Modalities in SEE", which includes joint participation and expert support by the very same Workshop participants who are responsible for the corresponding systems in their countries.

Due to fact that the Annual WG1 Workshop was held in Chisinau, a unique place of culture and history, Workshop Agenda was intentionally designed to provide enough free time for the participants to enjoy cultural and social dimensions of their joint work. Thus, the Workshop continued in the afternoon with the sightseeing tour, which was provided by Moldovan MoD and finished in the evening with an informal dinner hosted by RACVIAC.
the main topic lecture and corresponding exercise on development of entrepreneurial skills for former military personnel, primarily focusing on business networking as one of the crucial individual capabilities. Leading lectures and training was provided by Ms Emina Pašić (BA), professional trainer for EU TAC Bosnia and Herzegovina, who provided a combination of presentation, interactive group work and plenary discussion concerning some key aspects of entrepreneurial personality to be developed, based upon market needs and previous experience.

Her engagement took the majority of time of the Agenda and included corresponding exercise, which concluded the academic part of the Workshop.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Annual WG1 Workshop reconfirmed the vitality of the defence conversion programme area, regardless of the time that had already been invested in its elaboration. It was primarily successful in identifying the obvious requirements for the continuation of WG1 activities at the higher levels. Notwithstanding the individual level of completion, the common view is that all national programmes require further improvements, either if this process considers only the first steps in system creation or the modernization of already established systems. After five years of WG1 existence, few of the countries are still at the beginning, while other must resolve the final stage of development toward the integrated transition systems. This year is particularly interesting because Bosnia and Herzegovina began with the execution of its own institutionally integrated programme PERSPEKTIVA, while OSCE Mission to Moldova used the Annual WG1 Workshop as an opportunity to announce that the Moldovan programme will be initiated in September 2010. Thus, the main objectives of the event were fully achieved.

More advance WG1 countries continue to develop their systems by fully applying the modern transition doctrine that RACVIAC introduced four years ago, although there is a clear and present issue of the system sustainability, due to lack of understanding from high management levels.
Presented RACVIAC research project was supported as a joint regional product and there was a clear support to its execution, which could not be possible without the WG1 members' expertise. More than ever, WG1 members were aware of their own potentials for further developments in this field. This was especially visible through their recommendations for RACVIAC's future activities in which they actually reflected our previous suggestions regarding the scope and structure of future WG1 engagements.

Exchange of Memorabilia, Congress Hall, Moldovan MoD

Col Iurie DOMINIC, Chief of the Main Staff of the National Army of the Republic of Moldova
Col Željko CEPANEK, Deputy Director of RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation

Produced recommendations were actually part of the main lecture exercise, and they were as follows:

- RACVIAC acts as provider of technical and expert assistance
- RACVIAC should continue to act as platform for exchange of knowledge and experience
- RACVIAC acts as regional training centre for career transition system in which the regional experts should be engaged as lecturers;
- Sustainability of Individual Transition Systems (without international donations) should be discussed at regional high-level conference and thus support countries’ efforts at home
- Annual WG1 Workshop should be held in the Republic of Hungary
- Development of common Public Relations Project on Change of Public Opinion on Former Military Personnel as Employees
- RACVIAC to facilitate regional expert team which can be deployed in other regions with the mission to establish corresponding career transition systems (Africa, Asia, Latin America...)

It can be concluded that WG1 truly matured in respectable expert pool that can continue to be active primarily through common projects facilitated and funded through RACVIAC. This should be major direction for RACVIAC programme strategy in the period 2011-2014.

LtCol Grigore CHIRICA
WG1 Chairperson