Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector:  
“Deployment of Armed Forces Abroad - Lessons Learned and Practical Experiences in SEE”  
SSR-03-CF

14-15 June 2011  
Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Abstract The organisation of this seminar ensued after the Conference on Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: “Positive Experiences and Examples of the Parliamentary Committees for Security in SEE”, held in the period of 27-29 June 2010 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The seminar form of this follow-up activity reflected the fact that the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina has not been in session yet – however, the event proved to be much of a conference considering the efforts made and interest shown by participants regarding the issue of deployment of Armed Forces abroad.

Activity Background

The implementation of parliamentary oversight of the security sector in the Region started no longer than a decade ago.

Various countries have adopted different systems of the Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector and Democratic Control of Armed Forces, as reflected in differences in legislation and institutions involved. Parliamentary Defence or Security Committees have been developed as institutional tools for overseeing the Security Sector activities. Their efficiency is directly fenced by their capabilities to work in accordance with the following preconditions: clearly defined constitutional and legal powers, customary practices, resources, expertise and political will.

Activity Facilitators

The seminar was planned, organised and executed as a joint event by RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation and the Joint Committee for Defence and Security of Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with crucial support from the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and NATO HQ Sarajevo.

Opening Session: Ambassador Gary Robbins, Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

The main purpose of the seminar was to bring together representatives of South East Europe Defence/Security Parliamentary Committees in a forum for
Mr Milorad Živković, Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina

comprehensive discussions on parliamentary oversight and procedures and obstacles in the field of deployment of Armed Forces abroad.

Ambassador Nikola Todorčevski, RACVIAC – CSC Director

Activity Venue, Duration and Participation

The seminar was held from 14 to 15 June 2011 at the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was comprised of three sessions, each followed by questions and answers, which encouraged the participants to exchange views and openly discuss the issues raised.

Seminar in session

The participants and lecturers were representatives from six countries and six organizations or institutions: Bosnia and Herzegovina (18), Croatia (6), Serbia (1), Slovenia (2) Montenegro (1), NATO HQ Sarajevo (1), OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (6), OSCE HQ Vienna (1), Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) Geneve (1), EUFOR-ALTHEA (2), Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSOTC), Sarajevo (1), the University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (1) and the University of Primorska, Slovenia (1).

Mr Marin Jurjević, Member of the Croatian Parliament

Activity Description and Contents

The event started with the Opening session, during which the first to welcome the audience were Mr Milorad Živković, Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia & Herzegovina, H.E. Gary Robbins, Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and
Herzegovina and H.E. Ambassador Nikola Todorčevski, Director of RACVIAC – CSC.

**Keynote Speeches**

Following the welcome addresses, the seminar participants were addressed by two respectable keynote speakers. Ms Teodora Fuior, Project Coordinator DCAF (Geneva), delivered an excellent presentation on „Parliamentary Oversight of International Missions: Challenges and Good Practices“ during which the Policy – Paper – No 28: «Parliamentary Oversight of ESDP Missions» was distributed to participants. In her presentation she outlined the phenomenon of «democratic deficit» at the EU and national level and the related trends in EU countries.

![Ms Theodora Fuior, DCAF, Geneva](image)

Ms Fuior stressed the importance of «democratic legitimacy» and its positive effect on the quality of the decision-making process and the moral aspect of PSO.

The second keynote speaker, professor Lada Sadiković, PhD, University of Sarajevo, presented a very interesting lecture on „National Security under Parliamentary Scrutiny: Conditions and Mechanisms“. Ms Sadiković drew attention to the importance of the protection of human rights as another important aspect of Peace Support Operations. She emphasized the necessity of armed forces personnel being well informed about human rights protection standards in democratic countries, adding that the adequate level of knowledge in this matter was indispensable not only for the experts in parliamentary bodies, but for the respectable parliamentarians as well.

![Ms Lada Sadiković, PhD, University of Sarajevo](image)

Closing her very interesting lecture, she said that it was of crucial importance to ensure a balance between the interests of the states to protect citizens' human rights and adequate measures taken by the states to achieve that goal.

Both keynote speeches, better described as lectures, served as an excellent introduction to more detailed discussions on the specific aspects of the subject matter.

**Session 1 – Parliamentary oversight over the security sector**

The moderator of Session 1 was Ms Sadiković, PhD, and presenters were Mr Dušan Zoller from the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colonel Franz Sitzwohl from the EUFOR-ALTHEA mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mr Rohan Maxwell from the NATO HQ Sarajevo. Their presentations addressed the
following issues: Challenges of the Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector as International Obligation, Civil – Military Relations through the EUFOR ALTHEA Experience and Defence Reforms and their Consequences on the Civil-Military Cooperation.

Mr Rohan Maxwell, NATO HQ Sarajevo

Session 2 – Deployment of Armed Forces abroad

Mr Željko Grubešić, Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was the moderator of this session, while the presenter was Lieutenant Colonel Hazim Hodžić from the PSOTC Butmir, Sarajevo. He delivered an excellent lecture on “Legitimacy as an Essential Condition for Deployment of Armed Forces Abroad”, prepared by Mr. Heinz Vetschera, PhD, Academic Lecturer, PSOTC, Butmir.

This engrossing and comprehensive presentation acquainted participants with the importance of legitimacy and with different levels of decision-making process – both at international (UN Resolutions, EU, NATO initiatives...) and national levels (political: DPD-MoD/MFA-Parliament; military level: AF/GS).

Lt Col Hazim Hodžić, PSOTC Butmir

This presentation was followed by national presentations at the level of ministries of defence, which addressed national military experience related to the deployment of Armed Forces abroad. The Research Section of the Secretariat in the Parliament of Bosnia and Hercegovina, besides other materials prepared for informative purposes, provided an excellent paper-survey of «Procedures Regarding Deployment of Armed Forces Personnel to 'Operating Abroad'».

Session 3 – Decision-making procedures, mechanisms and practices in SEE countries

The moderator of this session was Mr Davorin Kajfeš, Defence Committee of the Croatian Parliament, and the presenter was professor Beno Arnejčić, PhD, University of Primorska. His interesting lecture on “Democratic Control of Armed Forces - The Question of Accountabilities and Responsibilities” introduced participants to Session 3. In his lecture he stressed the importance of a clear division of accountabilities and responsibilities among the main players in the national decision-making process.
The next to take the floor was Ms Laura Furuholm from the OSCE HQ, Vienna, who gave an interesting presentation on “Democratic Oversight and Decision-Making Procedures in the OSCE Countries”.

Subsequently, participating countries’ representatives provided national presentations on their respective parliamentary experience in the field of deployment of Armed Forces abroad. Almost all of them were representatives of the expert staff supporting parliaments on the expert level in PSO. In their presentations they gave short overviews of national legislation as a basis for decision-making procedures on deployment of Armed Forces abroad and highlighted some important aspects of this process: public opinion,

subject matter experts’ level of knowledge, appropriate resources needed etc.

Parliamentary Military Commissioner of Bosnia and Herzegovina,

The last, equally interesting presentation was given by Mr Boško Šiljegović, Parliamentary Military Commissioner of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who provided an overview of his duties and competences as well as procedures and outcomes of his official activities. In addition, Mr Šiljegović presented some interesting cases in the process of assessment and protection of human rights of military personnel in different, sometimes very difficult circumstances.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. This year’s Seminar on “Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector” was focused on a very important and sometimes politically sensitive security issue not only in SEE countries, namely: “Deployment of Armed Forces Abroad-Lessons Learned and Practical Experiences
in SEE”. It was the first time that parliamentary representatives, experts from various ministries, and high representatives of international organizations had an open and productive exchange on such an important and concrete issue.

2. Looking at the history of SEE countries’ involvement in PSO in last decade, it is evident that SEE countries are steadily moving towards assuming the role of genuine security providers. What is more, their legislation, practice and instruments for the Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector and Democratic Control of Armed Forces are constantly being developed and permanently improved.

3. In the future, RACVIAC will try to introduce a more ambitious, research approach in the assessment process of the Parliamentary Oversight. Furthermore, RACVIAC will continue with the efforts to implement a more academic approach in selecting main panel participants for our future events.

4. Due to the importance of the Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector, RACVIAC has an ambition to organize such events at a Conference level in the future.

5. Supporting organizations, namely the OSCE, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the NATO HQ in Sarajevo, DCAF and EUFOR provided to RACVIAC all the necessary support in the organization of this two days’ seminar. RACVIAC staff had an excellent opportunity to work together with the staff representatives of the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina who provided unstinting professional support in the organization of the seminar from the very beginning.

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