Overview

Annual Meeting of the Representatives from Defence and Security Committees from SEE Parliaments:
Flood Relief
SSR-05-CF

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Dates 29th June - 01st July 2015
Venue National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

Background Following the severe floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Slovenia in 2014, the European Commission, together with the French Republic and the Republic of Slovenia, organised on 16th July 2014 the Donors' Conference to support the corresponding recovery efforts. One of the main conclusions of the Conference was the necessity of improving existing flood relief policies and regional coordination mechanisms. Close cooperation on these matters among the SEE countries has become imperative in order to ensure internal and cross-border action in flood mitigation management and disaster reduction and, thus, minimize the potential consequences on human security and well-being.

This 2015 Annual Meeting of the Representatives from Defence and Security Committees from SEE Parliaments, organized in partnership with The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, and in cooperation with and support from DCAF - the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, will be an extension of these conclusions and address the identified topics in order to improve regional cooperation on disaster relief capacities, with a focus on flood prevention.

Purpose & Objectives The main purpose of the Conference is to develop political support and identify the best steps towards effective regional policies and coordination procedures in disaster relief. The Conference aims to produce guidelines for the governments in the region regarding the following three main topics:

- Harmonization of the existing regional legal framework with the corresponding international (EU) legislation on disaster relief
- Joint development of regional projects in building a new infrastructure for effective flood protection purposes
- Creation of mechanisms for the effective management of civil emergency procedures through cross-border cooperation.

Participation The following countries are invited to nominate three participants each (two members of the Parliament and one member of support staff): the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia1, Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia, while Romania and the Republic of Turkey are invited to nominate one participant (each). In addition to the above-mentioned, attendees from all other RACVIAC associate members, observers and participants are invited to attend the conference. The main target group are the representatives of the SEE countries parliaments’ Defence and Security Committees.

Other executive agencies that could be represented in the event are the civil protection agencies, ministries for defence/security/environment/water management. Relevant International and non-governmental organisations are invited as well, primarily the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, the International Sava River Basin Commission, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the Central European Initiative and the representatives from DG ECHO at the European Commission.

Methodology Apart from parliamentarians, the Conference will bring together relevant high level experts and officials from the SEE region to share experiences and lessons learned in disaster relief. Discussions will focus on inter-agency and trans-border cooperation, with the ambition to identify best operational solutions to improve effectiveness and efficiency in disaster relief.

The working language will be English. Simultaneous interpretation will be available to the participants as well.

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1 The Republic of Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.