Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Representatives,

I would like to thank to Romanian Chairmanship and H.E. Ambassador Cristian Istrate for inviting me to be a speaker at the plenary meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC).

Let me begin with shortly introducing our organization. SEE Centre for Security Cooperation based in Zagreb/Croatia is an independent, regionally owned international organization with diplomatic status.

It is a unique platform for security cooperation and dialogue in the region with 9 full members, comprising Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Turkey and, 14 Associate members and 6 observer countries. Kosovo**, under our relevant decisions, participates in our activities on a permanent basis.

RACVIAC accomplishes its mission primarily by promoting mutual trust and building of bridges by providing an independent and impartial platform for dialogue on critical issues related to peace and security, under three basic pillars:

- The Cooperative Security Environment, with the focus on Arms Control and counter terrorism.
- Security Sector Reform focused on promoting different aspects and principles of Security Sector.
- International and Regional Cooperation, with a special focus on Euro-Atlantic integration, as well as on dealing with the current security challenges.

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* Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name
** 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.)
Since its inception 16 years ago, over 11 thousand officers, experts from the regional countries participated in our workshops, courses and training programs, which cover a wide range of issues from arms control, transnational threats, C-WMD, Cyber Security, FTF, border security to Security Sector Reform related issues.

It is worth to mention that we are also becoming a hub in the region for integration of gender perspective in security sector in partnership with the Nordic Center.

Our security assessments are no different than those of the EU and NATO. However, the level of the risks or threats and vulnerabilities differ. Although it varies from country to country, the level of risks and vulnerabilities in our region are higher than the rest of Europe.

As we look at to the security landscape, most of the traditional challenges and risks remain, but asymmetric risks and threats we increasingly face today such as terrorism including Foreign Terrorist Fighters phenomenon, regional conflicts, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, cyber-attacks, hybrid threats are unpredictable and complex in nature and require comprehensive and rapid responses.

Furthermore, they are also accompanied by sources of instability such as irregular and uncontrolled migration, climate change and related food, water and energy scarcities, global competition for energy and natural resources, cultural intolerances, which, if not remedied, may jeopardize our stability and security.

As no single country is capable of tackling all these risks and challenges to security by itself, concerted efforts among relevant actors are of vital importance and relevant for the sake of greater synergy, harmonization and complementarity.

This makes work of RACVIAC aimed at strengthening security dialogue cooperation in Southeast Europe all the more important.

RACVIAC is the only organization in the region which covers all these security issues in a comprehensive, and integrated manner and, in an extensive geographical area. It is the only organization in the region conducting courses on subregional arms control (Dayton Article 4) and on verification and compliance of the Vienna Document.

We consider a regional approach to security as a crucial element in strengthening confidence and security building measures.

The strength of our organization depends on its high adaptability to the needs of the region vis a vis the contemporary challenges. I am referring to a strategic geography extending from Turkey to Slovenia.
In view of the vulnerabilities in our region, we have attached priority to improving awareness, cooperation and training in particular on counter terrorism, counter WMD,

Foreign Terrorist Fighters, Cyber Security (battlefield of the future), Border Security as well as on Security Sector Transformation including gender perspectives in security sector as well as on Arms Control.
Throughout the past 12 months, in 25 workshops of the Centre, we elaborated various aspects of all these challenges, exchanged views on strengthening dialogue and cooperation in the region.
We consider Terrorism as one of the most important challenges of our times. It targets human lives, our values. There could be no justification for terrorism, and that the fight against terrorism cannot be selective. Terrorism has no nationality, religion or ethnicity. We need to work together against any form of terrorism and any terrorist organization, without exception. This is about upholding our values.
We regard Foreign Terrorist Fighters not as new type of threat but another face of terrorism. In order to cope with this threat, in addition to security and legal measures, we should also establish short and long term rehabilitation and reintegration programs and mechanisms to deal with those individuals who have been identified and prosecuted as foreign terrorist fighters and with their families. In that respect, RACVIAC has a role in the Counter Terrorism Initiative of the EU.
We understand effective mechanisms does not exist yet particularly to deal with the social aspect this issue. In addition to government structures, humanitarian organizations may also play a role. In any case, social support mechanisms should be created.
I should also cite Cyber Security and the risk of WMD proliferation as important challenges. On both issues, RACVIAC conducts workshops and training programs.
On C-WMD, we aim that by 2018 all countries in the region have a national strategy and then an action plan.
In terms of vulnerabilities and shortcomings in our region, taking necessary measures and establishing closer cooperation in the areas of security sector transformation, arms control issues including SALW, PSSM are of no less importance.
Finally, in our programs, we also keep in mind that Integration of our region into the transatlantic institutions will bring further security, stability and indeed prosperity to the region. That’s why RACVIAC also exerts efforts to contribute to the integration processes of its member countries to the EU and NATO as one of its priority areas. Overall, the security situation in SEE may have serious repercussions for the rest of Europe. That’s why our region needs more attention and support. Thank you.