Cooperative Security Environment with Focus on Arms Control Pillar

“Vienna Document 2011 Compliance and Verification Course”
CSE-A3-C-18

1-5 October 2018, Rakitje; Ljubljana and Postojna, Republic of Slovenia

Introduction

In order to facilitate the implementation of the provisions of the Vienna Document as well as to increase confidence and security in the South East European (SEE) region, RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation (RACVIAC) has been organizing Vienna Document courses since 2001.

The purpose of this Course was to provide participants with a theoretical overview of the Vienna Document 2011 (VD ‘11), providing a comprehensive analysis of both the theoretical as well as the practical level of the implementation of these activities. It was organized in the spirit and the letters of the VD’ 11. The Course objectives were:

- To overview the specified elements of the VD ’11 highlighting the most comprehensive and commonly followed rules and procedures of its execution;
- To focus on the duties and responsibilities of the personnel to be engaged in the implementation of the aforementioned Arms Control document, thus demonstrating the real spirit of the confidence- and security-building measures;
- To train the participants employed as visitors/evaluators or escort team members in the subjects related to the planning and conducting of such activities based on best practices;
- To deepen contacts between the representatives of national organizations, agencies engaged in the accomplishment of Arms Control and/or security- and confidence-building measures;
- To provide the participants, especially during the practical part of the Course, with an opportunity to exercise or “observe” the real events, thus showing the fields and ways of working in this form of cooperation in the future on the national, regional and international level.

The participants came from the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Croatia, Hellenic Republic, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro, Republic of Serbia, Republic of Slovenia, Republic of Korea and Kosovo**. They were both senior and junior military officials and civilians, dealing with related issues.

The Course was conducted with the assistance of seven lecturers: Col Hans Lüber (OSCE Swiss Delegation, FSC Chairs Coordinator for the Vienna Document); LtC Srečko Matovič, (Slovenian Armed Forces General Staff - SAF VC - Deputy Commander); LtC Dietmar Koeppen (Arms Control Officer, Bundeswehr Verification Centre); LtC Marijan Jozić (Arms Control Officer, Arms Control Division, MoD of HR); Maj Drago Kovačec (Arms Control Officer, Verification Centre, SAF VC); LtC Goran Todorović (Arms Control Inspector, Verification Centre, MoD of RS), Cpt Mihail Várdai (Arms Control Inspector, Verification Centre, MoD of RS).

* 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.
Officer, Arms Control Unit, Defence Policy Department, HU MoD).

**Execution**

The Course was designed mainly for military personnel of the SEE region but it also provided useful insight for civilians, experts from the defence, foreign policy or other related areas. The three-day Course served as a forum for the participants to meet their colleagues from the SEE region in, as well as to meet the representatives and experts from different countries, organizations and agencies dealing with the execution of the VD ’11 and/or other Arms Control regimes.

During the theoretical part, following the Welcome Address of Ambassador Haydar Berk, Director of RACVIAC, several lecturers representing the Arms Control agencies of several countries as well as OSCE delivered presentations on a range of topics.

The topics on the first day were as follows:
- Col Hans Lüber: “Role of the VD’11 in the Light of Current Arms Control and of CSBMs”
- Col Hans Lüber: “Historical Background and Updates of VD’11”
- LtC Dietmar Koeppen: “VD’11 Contents, Structure, Main Parts and Basic Definitions”
- LtC Dietmar Koeppen: “VD’11 Chapter III - Risk Reduction”
- LtC Marijan Jozić: “Prior Notification & Observation of Certain Military Activities”

The topics on the second day were as follows:
- Cpt Mihail Várdai: “Chapter IX, Compliance and Verification”
- Cpt Mihail Várdai: “Chapter IX, Compliance and Verification”
- Maj Drago Kovačec: “Chapter IV, Contacts”
- LtC Dietmar Koeppen: “Chapter IV, Contacts”
- LtC Srečko Matovič: “Preparation for the Practical Part/1”
- “Preparation for the Practical Part/2” (Panel Discussion)

During the practical part of the Course the participants carried out a training evaluation visit at the 1st Brigade of the Slovenian Armed Forces in Ljubljana, which included the following:
- Briefing on the Unit (Base Commander)
- Preparation of Questions
- Questions and Answers
- Tour of the Barracks
- Major Weapon and Equipment Systems

After lunch in the barracks the training evaluation visit was continued in the sub-unit (Slovenian Armed Forces 1st Brigade, fire Support Battery) in Postojna. The practical part finished with the evaluation of the Course including the Closing remarks. The end of the Course was marked with a dinner.
Conclusion

Several participants arrived with an in-depth knowledge of the VD ‘11 and/or other Arms Control regimes and CSBMs but there were many newcomers among them as well. They expressed satisfaction with the topics chosen and with the lecturers’ high level of knowledge as well as the conduct of the practical part.

After a very successful and interactive theoretical part the practical part of the Course was very well-organized too thanks to the professionalism and preparedness of the Slovenian hosts, as well as the close cooperation between RACVIAC and the Slovenian organisers/national authorities.

This Course provided participants with the opportunity to gain both theoretical and practical knowledge of the Vienna Document 2011, and to exercise an evaluation visit thus adding special value to the Course. In addition, we can conclude that the Course was conducted not only according to the letter but also the spirit of the VD’11.