1. INTRODUCTION

RACVIAC was established in 2000 as a Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre with an aim to provide arms control training, promote Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBM) and expand cooperation in South-Eastern Europe (SEE). With a view to enhance regional stability, the Centre later shifted its emphasis onto a wide range of politico-military issues, including Security Sector Reform (SSR) with focus on defence conversion and international and regional cooperation with focus on Euro-Atlantic integration. Developments and changes in the security environment in SEE, as well as the changing needs of SEE countries entailed a review of RACVIAC mission, objectives and structure. This led to the beginning of the transformation process of the Centre in 2007, which was concluded with the signing of the new Agreement on RACVIAC in 2010. Those changes, enabling better preparation of the Centre in addressing future security challenges are also reflected in the name Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre, RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation.

Subsequently, the New Agreement on RACVIAC entered into force on 1st December 2011, which validates the impressive and successful transformation process of RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation, which started back in 2007. The Centre has legally and formally developed into a very unique international, independent, non-profit, regionally owned, academic organization, with the mission to foster dialogue and cooperation on security matters in South-Eastern Europe through a partnership between the countries of the region and their international partners. Promoting enhanced regional security and cooperation through the concept of regional ownership, being tailored to the needs of the region, situated in the region and comprising personnel from the region, RACVIAC perfectly embodies the expression “regional ownership”.

The aim of the Strategy 2015 - 2020 is to set the course for contemporary developments and accomplishments of RACVIAC mission and to provide a basic framework and guidance for RACVIAC program for the upcoming five-year period up to and including 2020 and concurrently explain how we intend to enhance the quality of our activities, their reach and their impact in the next five years.

2. VISION

Taking into account RACVIAC distinguished role on security matters in South-Eastern Europe and having a well-justified reputation as the leading platform for dialogue on security cooperation in the region, RACVIAC shall continue to promote sustainability, openness, transparency and
consistency by developing the required flexibility and capacity to respond to all imaginable security needs of the countries of the region.

RACVIAC shall remain open to substantiated projects providing a coordinated approach to threats we face in the 21st century and capitalize on its achievements and experiences. RACVIAC shall also advocate the Southeast European region as a facilitator of security beyond its borders, setting thus an example for security cooperation and dialogue in the global community.

RACVIAC shall not compete with or duplicate the work of other security organisations but seek close cooperation in order to strengthen regional stability and accelerate Euro-Atlantic integration efforts.

3. MISSION AND VALUES

The mission of RACVIAC is to foster dialogue and cooperation on security matters in SEE through a partnership between the Members and their international partners.

The contemporary security environment is more complex and dynamic than ever before. Threats range from the danger of armed conflicts and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction through terrorism, international organised crime, financial meltdown to migration and climate change. In this view, non-proliferation is recognised as key component to enhancing international security. State security is inextricably linked with regional and global security and interdependent with human security.

RACVIAC response to current and future challenges and threats to security shall include further development of co-operation among the participating States in various areas, actions and policies aimed at strengthening good governance at all levels, ensuring sustainable development in all of its aspects and protecting the environment.

The value of RACVIAC Program and its Main Areas of Interest (MAI) from 2015 to 2020 lies in the fact that it’s committedly imbued with flexibility and development-oriented, providing enough space for emerging challenges and in the same breath the most effective, holistic, comprehensive and internationally-minded solutions to make us even more prepared for the required evolvement.

4. PRINCIPLES

RACVIAC prime objectives will be characterized by Reliability and Accountability, Openness and Transparency, Impartiality and Credibility, Responsibility and Trust, Adaptability and Integrity, Flexibility and Development, Professionalism and Predictability.

RACVIAC shall accomplish its mission by principally promoting:

a. Mutual understanding and building of bridges by providing an independent and impartial platform for dialogue on critical issues related to peace and security.

b. Continuous Security dialogue and permanent adaptation of Security Sector Reform solutions.

c. Arms control treaties, agreements and Arms Control Policies aimed at confidence and security building.
d. European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes including confidence and security building measures.

e. Effective interaction and harmonization with international, regional and sub-regional organizations and institutions.

f. Enlargement of cooperation with the RCC and other regional initiatives as well as the academia and other relevant stakeholders.

g. Enhancement of dialogue with the civil society, the academia and opinion leaders.

h. Implementation of the practice of corporate governance.

i. Cooperation within the SEE area to avoid new divisions and to narrow disparities between and within the countries and to achieve sustainable results.

5. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

RACVIAC strategic objectives are:

a. To enhance the established overall cooperation and security in the region.

b. To capitalize on the progress and achievements made so far.

c. To endow the Centre with sufficient resources and capacities as well as flexibility and credibility to address all imaginable emerging challenges and security threats.

d. To promote Security Sector Reform solutions and encourage regional cooperation and harmonization.

e. To continue to foster trust and contemporary development as a veritable regional forum for cooperation and dialogue, especially on Arms Control Treaties and agreements.

f. To enhance regional European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes.

g. To promote the European Common Security and Defence Policy and its relation to NATO’s Strategic Concept.

h. To seek harmonisation and synergy with organizations, institutions and initiatives of SEE and expanding RACVIAC cooperation network internationally.

i. To raise awareness about the Organization and its activities in and around the region and also increase outreach activities in order to achieve membership of all South-Eastern Europe Cooperation Program parties and to motivate others in the Euro-Atlantic area to participate in RACVIAC activities.

j. To institutionalize RACVIAC as a regional organization by taking samples of existing institutionalized organizations.

k. To enhance the development of national security strategies by encouraging regional
security cooperation and effective interaction to sustainably counter emerging security challenges, e.g., cyber security and other forms of transnational threats including terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, trafficking, organised crime, border security and management and climate change, while particular attention will be paid to all emerging security threats deriving therefrom.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

In order to fulfill its strategic objectives from 2015 to 2020, RACVIAC will initially maintain its current structure with the three main faculties and focus on their Main Areas of Interest, based on a project-oriented approach:

a. Cooperative Security Environment Pillar (CSE) with focus on Arms Control

   Main Areas of Interest

   ➢ Arms Control
   ➢ Physical Security
   ➢ Weapons of Mass Destruction

b. Security Sector Reform (SSR) Pillar

   Main Areas of Interest

   ➢ Basics of SSR
   ➢ Parliamentary Oversight Over the Security Sector
   ➢ Civil-Military Relations
   ➢ Human Rights
   ➢ Gender Equality
   ➢ Defence Resources Management
   ➢ Border Security

c. International and Regional Cooperation (IRC) Pillar with focus on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration

   Main Areas of Interest

   ➢ Enhancement of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Processes
   ➢ Building Integrity
   ➢ Search and Rescue
   ➢ Transnational Threats
   ➢ Cyber Security
   ➢ Energy Security

In the forthcoming period RACVIAC will continuously review its organisational structure in order to reflect on and accomplish its vision for 2015 – 2020. Particular attention will be paid to emerging challenges within the region, which might result in a shift of requirements for RACVIAC. However, any kind of flexible and necessary adaptation will be based on a thorough assessment of
priorities and needs. To achieve the strategic objectives, RACVIAC will implement a five-year planning cycle previously approved by MAG. This cycle will include a contemporary, developed, flexible and need-based program and budget, derived from this strategy. Firmly grounded on the Main Areas of Interest (MAI) each year the Programme and the budget will be adopted for the coming year, proposed for the following year and projected for the following two years. RACVIAC will derive and compose its project-based Annual Program in view of the demands and responses to a comprehensive program framework titled Questionnaire that will be sent to all Members prior to the MAG fall Meeting. With respect to institutional constraints, additional flexibility will be displayed by incorporating initiatives put forward by all other international and regional partners and relevant stakeholders.

MAG will monitor the implementation of this strategy and adopt a new strategy one year before its expiration.

MAG will carefully exploit all avenues to ensure that RACVIAC receives all the necessary means needed to accomplish its mission in the spirit of full regional ownership.

7. CONCLUSION

As threats to security become increasingly complex and interconnected, international co-operation and co-ordination are essential. RACVIAC shall form partnerships with numerous relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations, institutions, academics and other stakeholders to enhance security and co-operation in South-Eastern Europe (SEE) as well as adjacent areas to achieve progress in confronting both existing and emerging threats.

In adopting the Strategy Document 2015 to 2020 for South-Eastern Europe, which complements the previous commitments, RACVIAC is taking an important and historical step forward in developing efforts to intensify co-operation among the participating South East European States, international and regional partners as well as all other relevant stakeholders and thus ensuring security and stability in the SEE region. The RACVIAC Strategy 2015 - 2020 reveals the professionalism and adequate flexibility of the Centre to address all imaginable security threats in the region and its level of ambition to explore and tackle new fields and areas with the established Program Development Group (PDG).

RACVIAC is determined to achieve the objectives and priorities on which we have agreed and will regularly review the progress achieved in implementing this Strategy and the commitments it contains.

The RACVIAC Strategy 2015-2020 is a visible and outstanding sign of the Members’ commitment to identify and implement projects that promote regional cooperation with security and economic benefits for the whole region, as well as a sign of their willingness to share positive experiences and insights with regions outside of SEE.

Furthermore, this Strategy Document mirrors the genuine commitment of the Members not merely to predict the future but to actively create it, while reflecting RACVIAC current unique and prominent role in SEE and providing the basic framework and pathway for the implementation of its operational mission combined with sufficient flexibility for future-oriented organizational development.