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Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

**REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

**The 7th WG2 Workshop on Military
Base Conversion
Zagreb-Čatež, 26 - 28 March 2008**

*In cooperation with the Ministry of
Defence of the Republic Slovenia*

RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation, in cooperation with Slovenian Ministry of Defence (MoD) organized the workshop on the topic: "Slovenian experience in the military bases". The workshop was held in the period of the 26th – 28th March 2008. The first day was organized as a field study trip to Slovenia, and the second day activities were held at the "Vitez Damir Martic" Barracks in RACVIAC, Rakitje - Zagreb.



Workshop participants

The purpose of the WG2 workshop was to bring together representatives from different ministries, regional and local authorities, international organizations, NGOs, financial institutions and businesses to examine and discuss all the aspects of military base conversion (MBC).

***Encourage Regional
Interoperability and
Cooperation***

The seminar gathered participants from Southeast European (SEE) countries as follows: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia *, Moldova, Montenegro, Hungary, Romania and Serbia, with knowledge and experience in MBC, representing relevant ministries, agencies and institutions, as well as parliamentary commissions, which are directly involved in the military base conversion process.

Seminar Opening



2nd from left: Ambassador Nedžad Hadžimusić

The workshop activities started in Čatež, Republic of Slovenia by an opening speech of Ambassador Nedžad HADZIMUSIC, Director of RACVIAC, and Mr. Slavko DELALUT, Director of the Office for Defence Policy of Slovenian MoD

Plenary Session

During the workshop a team of subject matter experts from the Slovenian MoD provided an insight into the military base conversion norms and standards in their analytical lectures.

* Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name



Air Base Cerklje (The Role of Communication Process);

- Ms. Metka Gorišek, PHD, Secretary, Ministry of the Economy MBC Process: Role of the Ministry of the Economy in Case study: Military Air Base Cerklje;

- Mr. Erik Kopač, M.Sc., FSS, University of Ljubljana, General Overview on MBC Process in the Republic Slovenia

The lectures and participants subsequently discussed the pros and cons of the existing systems in each country.



Plenary Session

On the second day of the workshop, which was held in RACVIAC, Dr. Hatmunt KUCHLE from Bonn International Centre for Conversion delivered the presentation on the MBC of Cerklje airbase.

The first presentation was held by Ms. Mojca GEC ZVRZINA, Head of the Real Estate Office of Slovenian MoD. In her presentation she outlined the status of the military structures in the Republic of Slovenia. Ms. Gec Zvrzina elucidated legal acts necessary for a detailed definition of requirements and ways of maintaining prospective military structures in Republic of Slovenia and the procedure of selling non-prospective ones as an example of a good practice in the process of conversion of Slovenian air force base CERKLJE into partially civil facility.



The following experts have presented their expertise:

- Mr. Jože Lacko, Secretary, MoD Social Aspects of the MBC: Case study: Military

Dr. Kuechle (*1st from left*) presented Germany experience and lessons learned. He gave us a brief historical review and explained a definition of conversion. Germany had already faced the issue of downsizing millions of soldiers and closing down of many bases. During the process they were constantly in

needed of creativity, cooperation and innovative ways of financing. At the time it was most important to establish good management structures and alternative models of conducting proper allocation of resources and finding investors.

In order to move forward with the project it was very important to set up a project agency and to involve the citizens. Mr. Kueche also emphasized that conversion was a costly process, which therefore required a thorough market analysis.

He concluded by stressing the importance of fitting the successful projects into economic environment of the region and actively developing innovative ideas with a view to achieving a long-term goal of launching private initiatives and creating new jobs.



RACVIAC was delighted to have hosted Mr. Efrem RADEV, High Expert for Safety Issues from the Regional Safety Council as well as the respective representatives of OSCE, EU, NATO, BICC and RCC

CONCLUSION AND TOPIC PROPOSALS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

The workshop proved as most useful and successful as it had contributed to promoting an even closer cooperation among the SEE countries on MBC issues.

For the next WG2 meeting the participants recommended the following topics:

1. Legal aspect of the base conversion process;
2. Step by step conduct of base conversion;
3. The stakeholders' role in MBC projects (invite government representatives).

Summary

All participants agreed that the conversion of military structures was a very complex process, both country and project specific. Involvement of all the aspects of the society in conversion would contribute to better results and reduce the costs of the process, and in long the term strengthen the military-civilian relations.



Compiled by: 1st Lieutenant Mehmed HALILOVIC, Workshop Director, RACVIAC - CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION and Major Zvonko POPOVIC, WG2 Chairman.

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