



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

## Defence Resources Management: “Transition of Military Education Systems in SEE “ SSR-09-S

04-06 February 2014



Group photo

### Introduction

This seminar was the first in line in a series of RACVIAC’s activities designed to assist countries of the SEE region in their efforts to actively address and implement reforms of the military and civilian education systems in the post-Cold War period. Transition of Military Education Systems in SEE is one of the priority issues within the Security Sector Reform process due to the simple fact that most SEE countries are on the formal path towards EU and/or NATO membership. The seminar “Transition of Military Education Systems in SEE” tackled this highly important element in the management of national resources and also referred to the

changes in civil-military relations in the last two decades in the light of the Euro-Atlantic integration processes, current economic and financial circumstances and the role and position of the military education systems. During two working days, 33 participants from 8 countries conducted or attended national presentations on transition of military education systems in their respective countries and offered unique insights into the role of the military education in SEE today. They also exchanged views on best practices and further actions required in the context of pooling and sharing of defence capabilities as a primary model of future military cooperation. Presentations and speeches were given by presenters from the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence, the University of Ljubljana

(Faculty of Social Sciences), Albanian Military Education and Social Care



33 participants from 8 countries attended the seminar

Directory, the University of Zagreb, the Croatian Defence Academy, Macedonian Military Academy, (University of Štip), University of Defence, Cooperation and International relations in Belgrade, Council for Geopolitics (HU), College of Bionics at the School Centre in Ptuj (SI) and several other regional higher education institutions.

It was agreed that while discussing national issues to the benefit of all, the participants were able to enhance mutual understanding and collaboration in the field of military education and through candid and open sharing of experience take part in building of security in their countries and development of related issues.

### **Activity Background**

The purpose of the Seminar was to provide ideas and solutions to countries of the region which are still undergoing a process of transition, in view of their objectives to establish a long-term acquisition agenda which will contribute to their national security and their current Euro-Atlantic commitments or those in the near future.

It should be noted that the Seminar met with widespread consent, by common

accord of all MAG Member countries, during the last MAG Meeting in October 2013, when the Programme for 2014 was adopted. This in itself proved that South East European (SEE) countries in particular recognized the topic's paramount significance within the framework of EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

Planned, organised and executed by RACVIAC, the Seminar was a product of a joint effort between RACVIAC- Centre for Security Cooperation and the Croatian Defence Academy in Zagreb and was conducted on the premises of RACVIAC in Rakitje, Croatia and in CDA's facilities in Zagreb. It began on Tuesday, 04 February 2014 with a welcome dinner and spanned the next two working days (Wednesday and Thursday) until its official closure on Thursday afternoon, 06 February 2014.

### **Participation**

The participants of the Seminar represented both the military and the civil sector, i.e., the event's activities drew together academics and experts from military academies and the ministries of defence as well as universities of political science, social sciences, electrical engineering, computing and bionics as well as representatives of the civil society (such as the Council of Geopolitics and the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence) from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Hungary, Turkey, Serbia and Slovenia.

<sup>1</sup> Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

### **Activity Overview**

A set of presentations constituted the focal point of this Seminar whose main

purpose was to give a comparative overview of the military education systems in the EU and beyond and SEE in particular, explore connections and possible areas of collaboration with civilian educational institutions while providing concrete examples and answers that can help bring about an all-encompassing transition of the military education systems in the countries of South-Eastern Europe.

Following the participants' arrival on the first day a welcome gathering and dinner took place which was attended by H.E. Ambassador Branimir Mandić, Director of RACVIAC, and the representatives of the Croatian Defence Academy.

The working part of the Seminar was opened by H.E. Ambassador Branimir Mandić, followed by remarks made by Lt.Gen Slavko Barić, Director of the Croatian Defence Academy and Mr. Branko Kromar, M.Sc., Programme Manager of the SSR Pillar at RACVIAC.



Lieutenant-General Slavko Barić

LtGen Barić's presentation on the „Transition of the Military Education System in Croatia“ outlined the current challenges facing military education in Croatia today, notably the situation that the academic programs are not being integrated into the national university education system and the noticeable lack of CAF's influence on the process of their creation. The fact that new academic programmes- Military Leadership and Management and Military Engineering – have recently been accredited by the University of Zagreb, as pointed out by

LtGen Barić, was given due attention by Professor Blaženka Divjak, Vice Rector for Students and Studies at the University of Zagreb, who delivered a presentation the following day on the subject of Cooperation between the University of Zagreb and the Government of the Republic of Croatia in establishing of new Study programs for the Croatian Armed Forces.



Professor Blaženka Divjak

Talking about the changes in civil-military relations (CMR) in the last two decades, including the military education aspect, Mr. Marko Savković, the Programme Coordinator at the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence subsequently elaborated the causes and contributing factors to the civ.-mil. gap and why these gaps differ greatly in SEE, proposing that the problem should be addressed by introducing new issues and topics to the curricula as well as by inventing new learning tools, methods and formats. Subsequently, valuable insights into the Euro-Atlantic integration process and how it has impacted the military education systems were given by LtCol Andrija Platužić of the Croatian Defence Academy, which broadened the topic even more, as well as a presentation on the integration of the military education systems in the civil society, which was given by Jelena Juvan, Ph.D., Assistant Professor at the University of Ljubljana-Defence Research Centre, who put special emphasis on the three models of officer's education in Europe („Yena“, „Falklands“, „Kosovo“) and the new role of the officer-scientist and officer-diplomat, and how this creates new challenges for the military educational system.

The second working day continued with presentations on the new study programmes for the CAF and the International Military Forum (EMILYO-Exchange of young military Officers in Europe), which was elaborated in Maj Vlasta Zekulić's presentation that also provided an excellent overview of the role of the EU support bodies (institutions and forums) that are involved in the EU military education process.



Maj Vlasta Zekulić

The working part of day two also consisted of the national presentations on the transition of the military education systems in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Macedonia, the Republic of Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey, and was followed by a presentation given by the Vice-Dean of the Macedonian Military Academy, LtCol Metodi Hadji-Janev, Ph.D., who gave an enriching geo—political and strategic overview of the future perspectives of military education and their 21st century challenges in a globalized world. On the importance of regional cooperation in the field of military education as a support to Confidence and security building measures in SEE the participants were informed by Col Goran Dikić, Vice Rector of the University of Defence (RS), while the very last presentation and the final activity of this Seminar, given by Robert and Darja Harb, B.Sc., of the College of Bionics at the School centre Ptuj explored the relations between research, bionics and the economy and the according modification and adaptation of the education processes, military education systems included.



At the press-conference

### **Summary and Recommendations**

The first impression concerning the substance of the two-day Seminar on Defence Resources Management: “Transition of Military Education Systems in South Eastern Europe”, duly expressed in HE, Ambassador Branimir Mandić, Director of RACVIAC's closing remarks, was: „ The main objective of the Seminar, to present the changes in Civil-military relations in the last two decades, the impact of Euro-Atlantic integration on military education systems, was successfully achieved. The first important set of goals- the results of SEE and some other countries of Central Europe in the transition and reform process of the Military Education Systems for the period of more than ten or more than twenty years- was fully covered. The second set of goals, the reporting set of objectives of the Seminar, to deliver national presentations on the transition of the Military Education Systems, was also successfully achieved.

In addition to the aforementioned achieved objectives of the Seminar, we must stress that one of the main intents of the Seminar was to increase the visibility of the military education system per se not just in the security sector but to stress

the need for the integration of these systems into the civilian education systems.

Small nations that operate with limited resources within the extremely difficult post-conflict and financial and economic crisis environment, which is a problem affecting not just SEE countries, were able to utilize this Seminar as an excellent opportunity to identify some future areas of cooperation where the implementation of the so-called “Pooling&Sharing/SmartDefence” concept can be implemented.

The participants of the Seminar Defence Resources Management: “Transition of Military Education Systems in South Eastern Europe” agreed that there is a clear need to continue with the exchange of information on this very important issue also in the future. RACVIAC- Centre for Security Cooperation for SEE, they concluded, can serve not only as a platform for but also as a multilateral mechanism in SEE for building of confidence and trust among SEE countries.

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