



**Co-organized by: RACVIAC-Centre for Security Cooperation and NATO**

**Conference:  
NATO Enlargement: Integration and Security in the SEE Region  
16 - 17 November 2011**

**IRC- 05-CF  
EXTERNAL REPORT**

**Background**

NATO's new Strategic Concept, adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, reaffirmed the Allies' commitment to keep NATO's door open to any European country in a position to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership and contribute to the security in the Euro-Atlantic area. It also paved the way for full NATO integration of South-East European (SEE) countries, as potential NATO member states from SEE are demonstrating willingness to take the necessary steps and meet the benchmarks set for their possible future membership. The concept of the conference was developed with a view to providing the countries of the region with an opportunity to discuss regional security issues of mutual concern and to address future challenges and pitfalls they could encounter in the process of NATO integration. Those challenges were discussed and analyzed relying on principles of mutual respect, responsibility and reciprocity.

**The objectives were**

- To present and discuss the achievements of SEE countries on their way to NATO;
- To promote cooperation between NATO and SEE countries through a variety of projects;
- To highlight the most necessary reforms and challenges in fulfilling the conditions for membership;
- To promote an active participation in PfP and EAPC mechanisms;
- To learn from the experiences of member and potential member countries.

**Aim**

The aim of the conference was to examine the prospects of NATO enlargement in the region by informing the SEE countries about past and current developments concerning NATO integration and security in the region, especially in the light of the conclusions of the 2010 Lisbon Summit. Furthermore, the activity provided NATO member and candidate member states from the region with an opportunity to exchange views and lessons learned relating to the progress in NATO integration.

**Conference Co-organizer**

The conference was planned, organized and executed as a joint event by NATO and RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation.

**Acknowledgments**

RACVIAC would like to express heartfelt appreciation to NATO Public Diplomacy Division for the co-sponsorship and genuine support in the successful organization of the conference.

**Venue, duration and participation**

The conference took place in RACVIAC from 15 to 17 November 2011. It was organized as a three-day event, two of which were working days, gathering a total of 36 participants: senior level officials nominated by the contributing countries from the SEE region, diplomatic representatives from NATO HQ, NATO HQ Sarajevo, EUFOR, YATA (Youth Atlantic Threaty Association), Faculties of political sciences and other NGOs.

The conference was also attended by BrigGen Massimo Panizzi - Spokesperson of the NATO Military Committee, Mr Rohan Maxwell - Chief of Politico-Military Advisory Section NATO H.Q. Sarajevo, Mr Fabien Limonier - Political Advisor to EUFOR Commander, Mr Pjer Šimunović - State Secretary in the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia, Mr Dragan Lozančić - Defence Policy Director, MoD of the Republic of Croatia.



*Family photo*

## Conference Agenda

The conference agenda included speeches given by representatives of the above mentioned institutions, as well as national presentations, exchanges of standpoints and experiences on common priorities and challenges, all followed by open discussions. The working part of the conference was opened on 16 November with a Welcome address by RACVIAC Director Ambassador Nikola Todorčevski.



*Welcome Address by H.E. Amb Nikola Todorčevski*

After extending a warm welcome to the prominent guests on behalf of the organizers, Ambassador Todorčevski expressed his satisfaction with the fact that this high-level regional event, a continuation of the previously held activities on a similar topic, represented one step further in RACVIAC efforts to foster NATO and EU integration in South East Europe. Pointing out that the Lisbon Summit Declaration contained several clearly stated points and commitments particularly important and significant for the SEE region, RACVIAC Director emphasized that this conference, as well as other RACVIAC activities and events, was in line with those decisions, and as such it was a clear sign of the Centre's commitment and support to the ongoing efforts of SEE countries in pursuing their Euro-Atlantic integration agendas and a substantial contribution to promote this part of Europe into the zone of stability and security.



*Keynote speech delivered by BrigGen Massimo Panizzi*

Following the welcome addresses, the conference participants had the privilege to hear the keynote speech delivered by BrigGen Massimo Panizzi, Spokesperson of the NATO Military Committee. BrigGen Panizzi presented and explained the structure of NATO Military Committee and its role. He emphasized that new challenges were not simple as they created multi-faceted environment which required more flexibility and a more comprehensive approach to security challenges. He also outlined the key tasks of the new NATO Strategy

Concept and delineated a comprehensive picture of the current situation in NATO Missions in Afghanistan, Kosovo and Iraq by explaining the existing conditions and challenges faced in those missions. The final part of his insightful speech dealt with the transformation of NATO. In this regard, BrigGen Panizzi said that this transformation at the same time marked the end of one cycle and the beginning of another, more unpredictable and more flexible.



*Beginning of Session I*

The first session of the conference was dedicated to the topic "NATO - EU cooperation in the field of crisis management after the Lisbon Treaty". This session was moderated by RACVIAC Deputy Director Col Željko Cepanec while Mr Fabien Limonier, Political Adviser to EUFOR Commander, delivered the main speech. Mr Fabien commenced the presentation with a short overview of the level of engagement of European countries in the SEE region during the early 1990s. Subsequently, he explained the current military and civilian operations of the EU under UN resolutions and the „Berlin plus“ Agreement, describing the structure of participating units, national contributions and troops' strengths. He drew particular attention to EUFOR efforts in Bosnia nad Hercegovina and to the crucial role of countries such as Germany, France and Turkey. Mr Limonier also underlined that bilateral agreements improved the overall cooperation and that operations would be carried out as long as there was political will.

The conference Agenda proceeded with the second session on: „The participation and the role of SEE countries in NATO-led missions: Lessons learned and the way ahead“, moderated by Col Krume Velkov, Director of GS ARM (MK). The second session included speeches by Mr Dragan Lozančić, Defence Policy Director MoD (HR) and Col Drago Radić, Head of NATO/PfP MoD (BA). Mr Lozančić stated that there still existed international interest in our region, which can be attributed to the fact that the transformation of NATO came also as a result of the experience gained in the SEE region. He pointed out that SEE countries shared the same objective and ability to bring the unique experience to Euro-Atlantic integration, emphasizing that the best way to fulfill the membership requirements was participation in PSO operations. Drawing conclusions from the experience of the Republic of Croatia acquired in current missions, he highlighted that participation in PSO had a number of advantages such as: sustainability of forces, contribution

to own development, more effective and stronger alliance, mutual solidarity and, above all, enhanced perception of the SEE region .

Col Drago Radić presented the participation of the AF BH in PSO. He displayed a short overview of the current situation in the AF BH in terms of using NATO/PfP cooperation tools, as well as the latest developments in MAP. He provided the audience with a sequence of presentations focused on participation in UN missions, the Iraqi Freedom mission and the ISAF mission. Col Radić concluded his presentation by providing a summary of lessons learned and future challenges.



*Session II in progress*

The third conference session „Partnership for peace programme: An instrument for dialogue and cooperation” was under the moderation of Col Željko Cepanec, RACVIAC Deputy Director.

The presentation by Mr Mirza Smajić, Faculty of Political Sciences (BA), provided the participants with academic views on general security environment, current and future security challenges, level of succes of PfP as an instrument of dialogue and cooperation, advantages of NATO membership and security prospects of Bosnia and Hezegovina.

Major Nenad Milojević, MoD (RS) informed the participants about the major recent events in Serbia in terms of cooperation with NATO, such as the establishment of the Military Representative Office of the Republic of Serbia to NATO in September 2010, the Project on destruction of APM stockpiles and activities in the Operational Capability Concept Evaluation and Feedback (OCC E&F) programme. Subsequently, he outlined Serbia’s priorities in future cooperation with NATO.

Mr Vedran Obućina, Politea-Association for Promotion of Social Sciences and New Media (HR), presented the role of NGOs in NATO enlargement in SEE and the types of NGOs dealing with NATO, particularly those active in the SEE region. He also explained their goals and main scope of activities.



*Col. Foto DURO-Director MoD (AL)*

The second working day of the conference started with session four dedicated to the accession experience after the last NATO enlargement. This session was moderated by Mr Branimir Mandić. Speeches were given by Col Foto Duro, Director MoD (AL), and Mr Pjer Šimunović, State Secretary MoD (HR).

Col Foto Duro presented six areas of the Albania-NATO integration plan, explaining in detail each of them. In his valuable contribution to the conference, he also explained the areas of AF AL modernization, emphasizing that education and training were oriented towards a broad spectrum of missions. In particular, he illustrated the participation in a variety of NATO structures and initiatives and the key infrastructure available to NATO. In addition, the speaker outlined the strategic areas of AF reforms as well as some principles of the new structure.

Having expressed his great satisfaction with the conference agenda and the audience, as well as his personal pleasure for being able to participate, State Secretary in MoD (HR) Mr Pjer Šimunović stressed that this event once again confirmed RACVIAC as a central forum for security cooperation in the SEE region. Highlighting the importance of NATO’s Open Door policy, he provided the audience with the key areas of necessary reforms: policy, procedures, personnel and operations. He emphasized the importance of the Annual National Programme being based on reality and credibility. Mr Šimunović gave a detailed description of main issues in the procces of NATO accession, depicting them at political, diplomatic, public and operational level. Moreover, he proposed to all the representatives of the countries present at the conference to build the public opinion on NATO membership on dialogue with the public and diplomatic and operational efforts.

The conference proceeded with session five on: „Prospects of NATO membership: Building the confidence among the remaining non-members in the Region and the Alliance itself“. The session was moderated by Mr Igor Tabak, appointed member of the Croatian Parliamentarian Defence Committee, and it included three presentations.

Mr Oliver Krliu, State Adviser MFA (MK), stated that one of the positive results of the Euro-Atlantic integration was the democratization of the SEE region which led to enhanced stability and created a new culture of communication, mutual trust and better understanding. He emphasized that, by participating in missions such as the one in Afghanistan, his country became a contributor to the stability not only in SEE region, but also on the

global level. He pointed out that NATO's Open Door policy, besides being important for SEE countries, was also a good choice for NATO.

Mr Rohan Maxwell from NATO HQ Sarajevo commenced the presentation with short retrospection of NATO expansion history and the facts it was based on. He reiterated that no country is able to face modern threats on its own. Enumerating the forthcoming challenges, he also emphasized that the way to NATO membership is a long-winded process. Furthermore, he explained NATO accession requirements on several representative levels: political, defence, security, economic and legal. He drew comparison among the countries of the SEE region as regards their path to NATO membership. Mr Rohan concluded his presentation by highlighting some challenges: resolving internal tension, implementing reforms, sustaining interest and sustaining credibility.

Ms Biljana Vujović, MoD (ME) representative, delivered an informative presentation about her country's cooperation with NATO, particularly referring to activities in the 4<sup>th</sup> cycle of IPP with its 73 activities in the period 2011-2012. In addition, she explained Montenegro's case of the Regional approach to resource usage, highlighting at the end of her presentation future challenges and priorities.

The last session on the agenda was: „NATO membership – a security guarantee for increasing economic cooperation among SEE countries“ moderated by Mr Željko Cepanec. It comprised a presentation by Mr Sandro Knezović (HR), Institute for International Relations. Mr Knezović's presentation covered the topic “NATO membership – an important precondition for political stability and economic cooperation in SEE”. He highlighted Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty stating that member countries “will seek to eliminate conflict in their economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them”. His presentation was a good opportunity for participants to learn about Croatia's experience and lessons learned in the successful process of accession to the Alliance.



*Session VI in progress*

#### **Conference closing remarks**

The conference was carried out as a combination of lectures/presentations. Each session had sufficient time designated for questions and answers, which allowed participants to engage in open and fruitful discussions.

Closing remarks were given by RACVIAC Director Ambassador Nikola Todorčevski. The Ambassador expressed his satisfaction with the fact that each

subsequent conference proved to be more substantial and more relevant to the needs of SEE countries.

The Ambassador highlighted the following points:

- Participation in PSO is an important step proving the Region's readiness to be part of the Alliance;
- NATO's commitment to its Open Door policy and the integration of the SEE region was confirmed by BrigGen Massimo Panizzi's participation in the conference as NATO representative;
- Although having different approaches to the process of NATO accession, SEE countries share common values;
- Reconciliation will be achieved through Euroatlantic integration, which will give a much needed boost to the global role of the Region.

Ambassador Todorčevski reiterated once again his appreciation to the representatives of NATO member and non-member countries for their active participation in the conference. The conference provided a successful continuation of information and experience exchange in terms of common priorities and challenges in the process of NATO integration. It succeeded to bring together representatives of NATO member and non-member countries in order to discuss NATO Open Door Policy as an essential contributor to the security in the North Atlantic area. In this regard, the conference reaffirmed the support of RACVIAC to open dialogue and security cooperation among countries in SEE and it confirmed SEE countries' commitment to NATO and EU integration of the entire region.