



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

**Workshop on Military Base Conversion and Transition of Military Personnel - Project
“Defence Conversion Modalities in SEE – Specific Regional Model”**

**4th – 5th October 2011
Cerklje (SI)**



Abstract

After more than 20 workshops over the past six years on Transition of Military Personnel (TMP) and Military Base Conversion (MBC), it was inevitable to finalise the important work done in the field of defence conversion matters and produce a (hand)book reflecting the status of MBC and TMP aspects of defence conversion in SEE countries, as it had been announced during the last workshop on MBC held in MAB Cerklje (Slovenia) in December 2010. For this reason the project “Defence Conversion Modalities in SEE – Specific Regional Model” was launched in January 2011, and it is to be concluded by the end of the same year. This workshop brought together members of the Project Area groups, nominated by six SEE countries (AL, BA, HR, MD, MK and RS) after having completed their work on TMP and MBC questionnaires during the first half of 2011, to finalise the central phase of the project and to polish the work on the project documentation.

Following the completion of the whole project work, the end of 2011 will see a publication on SEE experiences in defence conversion aspects, transition of military personnel and military base conversion, which is envisaged to serve as a default reference point in the field.

Activity Background

The workshop on Military Base Conversion and Transition of Military Personnel - Project "Defence Conversion Modalities in SEE – Specific Regional Model" came as a continuation of the work on the defence conversion project launched in January 2011. The project will be terminated at the end of 2011 with the publication of a handbook on defence conversion in SEE. This paper will be the first ever book on defence conversion systems in six SEE countries and, apart from being a relevant reference point for regional conversion projects, it could gain the attention of other international defence conversion projects which in turn might benefit several individual projects in SEE countries. RACVIAC's project publication in this sense can contribute to identifying military facilities in urban areas designated for conversion and facilitate finding potential sponsors for such facilities through developing respective spatial databases. From the perspective of Security Sector Reform (SSR), this might significantly contribute to the overall security as it improves legislative aspects of defence conversion and provides local communities with important infrastructure facilities.



Activity Facilitators

The workshop was planned, organised and executed jointly by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, who shared corresponding organizational and financial responsibilities. The Slovenian MoD fully provided organizational on-site support at Cerklje air-base, while RACVIAC took full care of the participants' transportation and accommodation. The workshop agenda was jointly defined by the Slovenian MoD and RACVIAC.

Activity Venue, Duration and Participation

The workshop was held from 4th to 5th October 2011 in the military air base, Cerklje, Republic of Slovenia. It was organised as a three-day event, two of which were working days. On the first day participants were welcomed at the dinner by Col Zeljko Cepanec, Deputy Director of RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation. The Slovenian Ministry of Defence hosted a cultural tour of Kostanjevica na Krki as well as the dinner in restaurant 'Kmecki hram'. The workshop saw the total of 12 experts in TMP and MBC from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Republic of Moldova, Republic of Serbia and a representative from NATO HQ Sarajevo authorised by both NATO and Bosnia and Herzegovina to cover the MBC project area.

Activity Description and Contents



The first working day started with the Welcome addresses delivered by RACVIAC Deputy Director Col Zeljko Ceganec and Mr Igor Nered, Director General, Logistics Directorate, Slovenian MoD, followed by a short welcome speech by Lt Col Jani Topolovec, BC, SAF, MAB HQ Cerklje. The afternoon session started with a presentation on MAB Cerklje conversion project 'Review of determinants important to military base conversion' given by Mr Joze Lacko, Project Manager of the reconstruction of the airport Cerklje. This presentation was followed by the projection of the film made in support of the MAB Cerklje project.



After the projection, participants engaged in working sessions of their respective Project Area groups, covering the work on the project *Defence Conversion Modalities in SEE – Specific Regional Model*. The next working day saw the continuation of the Project Area groups' working sessions during which the details regarding the final work were discussed and arranged.



After this session participants were taken on a short tour of the air-base during which they had an opportunity to see the displayed air assets. The workshop was closed after the last working session where all the remaining details for the successful completion of the project were discussed. It is also worth mentioning that the outline of the graphic design of the project publication was also presented during the workshop.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This workshop was the main stage of the project “Defence Conversion Modalities in SEE – Specific Regional Model”. It served to revise the work done in completing questionnaires on transition of military personnel and military base conversion systems in countries participating in the project. The requested background papers providing the history of those systems were also discussed. Furthermore, it was agreed how and when certain setbacks identified during the process should be dealt with:

- an updated contact list was prepared for the purpose of more intensive communication;
- the remaining work on the questionnaires and background papers should be completed by the end of October 2011;
- the project publication must be released as scheduled in the project documentation, by the end of the current year.



Lastly, it should be pointed out once again that this unique and extremely important publication which will mark the end of our Defence Conversion project could open a whole new page in addressing, mapping and implementing defence conversion projects in the region of South East Europe.

Lt Col Neven Bajic
SSR Pillar, SME

*Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name