



## **Conference: Security Challenges for Europe**

**21 – 23 November 2018, Zagreb**

The Conference on Security Challenges for Europe, organized by RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Office in Croatia, and Institute for Development and Integrational Relationship was held in Zagreb, Croatia from 21 to 23 November 2018. The Conference gathered prominent local and international experts to discuss the current risks and challenges posed by radicalization and migration. The first day of the Conference started with reviewing the newest geopolitical shifts and highlighted the importance of international support and stability in Europe and the Western Balkans.

Major General (ret.), Jeronim Bazo, Director of RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation, pointed out the importance of RACVIAC in providing international support and of its cooperation with the Croatian government. Dr Michael A. Lange, the Head of the KAS Office in the Republic of Croatia, presented the KAS Office in Croatia and its efforts in the field of security. H.E. Dr Robert Richard Klinke, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Republic of Croatia, Mr Vlado Galić, Advisor for Defence and National Security to the President of the Republic of Croatia and Mr Zdravko Jakop, State Secretary at the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia, demonstrated their practical knowledge in the field of security in the European Union and the Western Balkans.

The topic of the first panel was “Impact of Euro-Atlantic Integration Processes on Security and Stability of SEE”. A moderator of that panel was Mr Stjepan Domjančić from the Croatian Military Academy and among the panellist there were: Brigadier General (R) Rainer Meyer Felde, Senior Fellow, Institute for Security Policy Kiel, Former Senior Defence Advisor, German Delegation to NATO (2013-2017), Mr Zoran Šajinović, Assistant Minister for International Cooperation from the Ministry of Defence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Mario Horvatić, Assistant Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs, MFEA, Mr Ivica Ivanović, Director General of the Directorate for Defence Policy from Montenegrin Ministry of Defence, Dragan Nikolić, State Secretary at the Macedonian Defence Ministry, and Aleš Mišmaš, Director General of the Directorate for Defence Policy from the Slovenian Ministry of Defence. As pointed out by the panellists, the main obstacle to stability in the SEE region is that these countries are not yet stabilised. According to the panellists, many things are to be improved in the region and the regional cooperation could be the key to the solution.

The second panel of the first day was entitled “Comprehensive Approach to Migration Challenges” and moderated by Ms Senada Šelo Šabić from the Institute for Development and International Relations. Ms Alexandra Stiglmayer from the European Stability Initiative presented comprehensive approaches to migration challenges. She talked about the EU asylum policy, liberal values and the human rights in times of crisis. Moreover, she discussed legislative problems of refugees and envisaged the future of the EU. Mr Murat Erdogan, Professor from the Turkish German University in Istanbul, spoke about Turkish experiences with migration and the current situation in Turkey and looked at a possible impact of refugees on the Turkish society. Mr Filip Dragović from UNDP in Istanbul discussed the causes of migration, real facts and challenges.

The panel was followed by a meeting in the Croatian Parliament with the members of the Foreign Policy Committee coming from the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and a Representative Irena Petrijevcānin



Vuksanović from the Croatian Democratic Union, also a member of the European Affairs Committee, the Family, Youth and Sports Committee and the Information, Informatization and Media Committee. The meeting was attended by Ms Alexandra Stiglmayer from the European Stability Initiative, Ms Valery Perry, the Project Coordinator at OSCE Mission to Serbia, Ms Senada Šelo Šabić from IRMO, and Ms Ariane Wolf from the Violence Prevention Network and it gave interested participants the opportunity to hear more information about migration and radicalization. Further cooperation on mutual information provision has been agreed on with a view to better understanding the challenges of migration.

The second day of the Conference was organised as an Academic Forum about “Extremism and Violence: Current Trends”. The panel moderator was Ms Senada Šelo Šabić from the Institute for Development and International Relations. In the first part, Ms Valery Perry, Project Coordinator at OSCE Mission to Serbia, explained the OSCE Mission in Serbia and its role in dealing with migrants. Ms Ariane Wolf from the Violence Prevention Network, Germany, talked about the prevention of violence against migrants and prejudices migrants are exposed to. Mr Igor Tabak, Analyst of the Croatian web portal OBRIS, addressed the topic of violence in the Croatian media. At the second part of the Forum, Ms Tijana Rečević from the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Belgrade tackled the issue of violent extremism and radicalization in the context of the migrant crisis viewed from the Serbian experience. In her opinion, the government of Serbia should take a humanitarian perspective on security problems. The Serbian legislature should introduce a policy to protect immigrants in Serbia. Mr Zoltan Gyorgy Bacs from the National University of Public Services Budapest provided the participants with the theoretical background on extremism. He explained why the present conditions lead to extremism, discussed its historical background and the process of radicalization. At the end of the presentation, he reflected on the current issues involving extremism, its geopolitical background, targets, methods and possible ways of prevention. Ms Marta Zorko, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Political Science of the University of Zagreb, talked about “fake news” and the posting of such news over and over, in different countries and in different context.

The Conference provided a security dialogue between decision makers and experts from Central, Eastern and Southeast Europe and highlighted the values of international security. As there are many obstacles that need to be overcome soon, the cooperation among countries is of crucial importance. The European Union and international organizations like OSCE and NATO are providing necessary resources and knowledge to countries for dealing with migrants, violence and extremism, and for promoting the values of liberty and human rights in their societies. There are many security challenges existing nowadays and the modern media bring about not only more such challenges, but also the whole range of possible abuses. The media must be truthful and accurate in their reporting and human rights and values must not be forgotten. This Conference thus represents the first step towards better integration and cooperation on both the regional and European level.