



**REPORT
ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL
COOPERATION COUNCIL SECRETARIAT**

**BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE REGIONAL
COOPERATION COUNCIL**

**SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF THE REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL IN
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COUNCIL**

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This report on the activities of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretariat is submitted by the Secretary General of the RCC to the RCC Board in line with Article 10 of the Statute of the RCC. It covers the period between 9 March 2011 and 9 May 2011.

I. Summary

The reporting period was marked by intensified efforts and numerous activities undertaken by the RCC Secretariat in view of target-oriented, regionally owned and all-inclusive regional cooperation as well as of efficient and timely implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011 – 2013.

In view of strategic character of relations between the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) and the RCC, successful cooperation with the SEECP Chairmanship-in-Office and Troika was continued. The regular Coordination Meeting between the SEECP and the RCC, following the recommendation of the RCC Board meeting of 2 December 2010, took place before the RCC Board meeting (7 March, 2011) and focused on the envisaged activities in the context of the implementation of the priorities of the Montenegrin SEECP C-i-O and the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013 in the period March - June 2011, respectively. The conclusions of the Coordination meeting underlined the importance of continuing with the cooperation between the RCC and the Montenegrin SEECP C-i-O, particularly in light of the upcoming high-level SEECP political events and consequently further ensure a synergetic cooperation in the context of taking over, by Serbia, the C-i-O of the SEECP. The RCC Secretary General took active part at several high-level SEECP meetings where the importance of further enhancement of the coordination and cooperation between the SEECP and the RCC was highlighted.

The RCC Secretary General and the RCC Deputy SG/Head of Expert Pool held consultations with high officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia in the light of the incoming Serbian SEECP C-i-O and had a meeting with the OSCE Permanent Council.

The RCC Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool (DSG) held a numerous meetings in Brussels with the representatives of DG Enlargement, DG Regional Policy, and together with the LO participated in the IPA Multi-Beneficiary Donor Coordination Meeting, IPA 2010 Conference.

The RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels contributed to the further development of cooperation with the EU institutions and other relevant Brussels based institutions and stakeholders, resulting in a number of meetings held.

The RCC Secretariat continued, through regular publication of the Newsletter, with the promotion of regional cooperation and the activities within the RCC framework, which has proven to be an adequate tool for reaching the wider public as well as stakeholders in the region and beyond.

The activities of the RCC Secretariat Expert Pool were primarily focused on the implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013. Conferences, workshops, consultative meetings, and visits to partner organizations in all priority areas have been prepared or executed and contacts with the wide range of partners have been intensified. The RCC Secretariat's mandate in coordinating and streamlining regional initiatives was accomplished in a comprehensive gathering of relevant stakeholders at the Regional Coordination Meeting "Western Balkans and Europe 2020 – Towards Convergence and Growth", held in Brussels, on 30-31 March 2011. RCC Secretariat actively participated in the work of MB IPA and its Strategic Working Groups' meetings establishing close cooperation with the European Commission's representatives, as well as with other working group members and contributing to preparation of necessary documents. Permanent dialogue was going on with different stakeholders from the region: private companies and associations (ABC and other chamber's networks with signing of the MoU with the ABC), NGOs (TACSO team, ICDT etc), operating RI&TFs and newly established regional networks (SEE Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group, SEE Public Private Partnership Network, Regional Network of Investment Promotion Agencies etc.) discussing the issues and modes of cooperation.

II. General and institutional aspects of the RCC Secretariat's activities

RCC Board Meeting

The RCC Board meeting was held on 8 of March 2011. The RCC Secretary General (RCC SG) informed the members of the RCC Board about his consultations held in Athens, Bucharest, Belgrade and Prishtina as well as with representatives of the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The RCC SG further informed on the signature of the Host Country Agreement on the establishment of the Secretariat of the Task Force for Culture and Society, on the establishment of the Association of Public Broadcasters in South East Europe and on the RCC Secretariat efforts to be as informative as possible.

The RCC Board members commended the improvements made to the Report of the RCC SG. They underlined the effectiveness of the current reporting pattern on the implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013. Several recommendations were made in view of further increasing of the overall reporting potential of the document. The RCC Board members expressed their satisfaction with the newly implemented information mechanism by the RCC Secretariat which dovetails with the recommendations made during previous RCC Board meetings and entails the regular dissemination of various reports on the meetings held by the RCC Secretariat representatives. The RCC SG informed that, following the recommendation of the RCC Board meeting of 2 December 2010, the Coordination Meeting between the SEECF and RCC took place before the RCC Board meeting, and in this context he presented the main outcome of the meeting.

The Deputy RCC Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool stressed that the RCC Secretariat has intensified communication with the relevant partners from national administrations, regional initiatives, donors, business, non-governmental organizations and academia as well as EU institutions. She underlined the importance of the upcoming Donors Coordination Conference, designed according to the desires expressed by the regional initiatives and task-forces. The

Senior Experts of the RCC Secretariat elaborated on the implementation of the RCC SWP and on the planned activities in their respective areas.

Regarding the planned future activities the RCC SG emphasized the following tasks: completion of the establishment of the Task Force on Culture and Society, continuation of the talks with the European Commission and the OECD on the next stage in the transfer of the SEE Investment Committee to the RCC and the organization of the Donors Coordination Conference in Brussels on 31 March 2011.

The RCC SG presented a brief on the RCC Personnel Policy and Recruitment Procedures and in light of the discussion on this item has expressed the readiness of the RCC Secretariat to accept the proposal for establishing a framework to evaluate whether the decisions taken are in line with the RCC Statute. The RCC Board has adopted the budget of the RCC for 2011 and the Decision on extending an invitation to the IPA National Coordinators to attend, as observers, the RCC Board Meeting on 12 May 2011

Consultations of the RCC Secretary General with RCC members

The RCC Secretary General and the RCC Deputy SG/Head of Expert Pool held very useful consultations with high officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia. The main purpose of the meetings was discussion on the coordination and preparation of the activities of the incoming Serbian SEECF C-i-O and the RCC Secretariat, as well as exchange of views on the implementation of the RCC SWP 2011-2013 and the overall developments in the region of SEE.

The RCC Secretary General participated at the meeting of the Permanent Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). At the plenary meeting, the RCC Secretary General elaborated on the recent developments in regional cooperation in South East Europe, provided an in-depth overview of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013, and reflected on the main results achieved so far in its implementation process.

At the meeting of the Permanent Council of the OSCE, the representative of the European Union welcomed the existing partnership between the RCC and the OSCE as well as expressed its firm support for the cooperation in the region guided by the principles of all-inclusiveness and local ownership. The EU stated that it is encouraged by the activities in the implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013 and subsequently urged the RCC to remain committed to the implementation of concrete and result-orientated activities.

Subsequently, the representative USA reiterated the support of the United States for the RCC and the activities of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013, particularly those that involve the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative - Regional Centre for Combating Trans-border Crime.

Coordination between the SEECF and the RCC

The Coordination meeting held on 7th of March 2011 gathered representatives of the Troika of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECF) Turkey, Serbia, the RCC Secretariat and the European Union (EU) institutions – the European Commission and the General Secretariat of the EU Council. The Co-chairs informed on the envisaged activities in the context of the implementation of the priorities of the Montenegrin SEECF C-i-O and the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013 in the period March - June 2011, respectively. The Montenegrin

SEECP C-i-O informed that the forthcoming Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the SEECP will be held on 30 June 2011 and will be preceded by the Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SEECP on 29 June 2011. The conclusions of the Coordination meeting underlined the importance of continuing with the cooperation between the RCC and the Montenegrin SEECP C-i-O, particularly in light of the upcoming high-level SEECP political events and consequently further ensure a synergetic cooperation in the context of taking over, by Serbia, the C-i-O of the SEECP. They included as well an overt emphasis on the need to continue and advance in the process of streamlining of regional initiatives and taskforces in SEE in relation to the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013.

The RCC Secretary General took an active part at the meetings organized under the SEECP C-i-O such as the meeting of the SEECP Ministers of Defence, the Meeting of the Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs and the meeting of the SEECP Ministers for Sustainable Development and Energy. In his addresses, he reflected on the recent climate in the region and emphasized the importance of all-inclusive cooperation of all relevant participants. He elaborated on the state of implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013, presented the main up-to-date results achieved in each priority area of the RCC and gave information on the main results of the consultations and meetings held with various RCC members and the European Commission. The participants welcomed and encouraged the favourable working climate between the SEECP and RCC. The work of the RCC was commended, followed by recommendations to further strengthen the pragmatic and project-orientated character of its activities.

The SEECP Ministers of Defence adopted a Joint Statement stressing the importance of defence and security cooperation for the process of fostering general stability and development in the region.

The SEECP Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs endorsed the Regional Strategic Document on Justice and Home Affairs 2011-2013, which was developed by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretariat and the relevant stakeholders from the region.

The SEECP Ministers for Sustainable Development and Energy adopted the "Budva Declaration on strengthening regional cooperation and coordination in promotion of energy in the context of sustainable development and green economy in South East Europe".

Cooperation with the EU and other Brussels-based institutions

The RCC Liaison Office (LO) Brussels continued with its support for the implementation of the RCC Strategic Work Programme (SWP) 2011-2013, in particular contributing to the further development of cooperation with the EU institutions and other relevant Brussels – based institutions and stakeholders, in particular, the European Parliament (EP), the European Commission (EC), the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC).

The RCC LO has organized a meeting for the RCC Secretary General (SG) with the Director General (DG) 'Education and Culture' of the EC. The RCC SG has briefed the DG on the implementation of the RCC SWP 2011-2013 in the area of education and culture and more specifically on the steps undertaken by RCC for the transfer of the Ljubljana process to RCC.

The RCC LO maintained its close contact with the representatives of European External Action Service (EEAS). The Deputy Head of RCC LO met the Desk Officer for RCC in the European External Action Service (EEAS). The meeting was focused on the Conference « Western Balkans and Europe 2020 » organized by RCC Secretariat on 30-31 March in Brussels and other current activities related to regional cooperation. They also discussed possible timing for the next RCC – COWEB briefings following an earlier meeting with the Permanent Chair of the COWEB. The Desk Officer for RCC in the European External Action Service gave a very high assessment of the RCC Conference « Western Balkans and Europe 2020 »; took a commitment to inform RCC very soon on the plans of the Permanent Chair of the COWEB group on the RCC briefings in the first half of 2011; gave a very positive assessment of the quality of the RCC press-releases and reiterated the importance of the all-inclusiveness principle in regional cooperation activities.

The Deputy Head of the RCC Liaison Office represented RCC in the Third Meeting of the CEFTA Steering Committee and in his intervention underlined that in its Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013 RCC has committed itself to support CEFTA efforts in consolidating and further developing CEFTA 2006.

The Deputy Head of the RCC Liaison Office participated as a speaker in the Parliamentary seminar "Role of parliaments in the legislative processes and in the oversight of governments" with the officials of the Western Balkan parliaments organized in the European Parliament (EP) by its secretariat. He presented to the participants the regional priorities and role of RCC in the parliamentary cooperation.

The Head of the RCC LO participated on the 13 and 14 April in the joint parliamentary meeting (JPM) “Western Balkans – towards a more integrated Europe?” organized by the European Parliament and the Hungarian National Assembly. The JPM was co-chaired by the President of the European Parliament, and the President of the Hungarian National Assembly. The JPM was attended by many MEPs and MPs, and the representatives from Western Balkan Countries’ Parliaments. The event focused on the process of the EU enlargement in the context of the Western Balkans, as well as on the current political, economic and cultural developments in this region. Presentations at the JPM were made by many distinguished speakers, including the Prime Minister of Hungary and the President of the European Commission.

RCC LO Advisor presented the RCC activities at the ‘Transferable experience in regional cooperation’ Panel at the closing conference of the International Centre for Democratic Transition (ICDT)’s flagship project, “Sharing the Experiences of Visegrad Cooperation in the Western Balkans and the Eastern Neighbourhood Countries.

Permanent contacts with the diplomatic representatives of permanent representations and missions to the EU and NATO have been maintained.

Regional cooperation in the field of media

Over the reporting period, the RCC Secretariat met with a number of European Commission officials to outline its activities in media development, their over-arching link to the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013, and the rationale behind RCC-recognized need to

support, within a pluralistic media landscape, public service broadcasters in South East Europe, given their strong role and function in a society, and large influence. The meetings also served to gain insight into Commission's media priorities, particularly in public broadcasting. In May, the Secretariat took part in the European Commission's 'Speak Up!' conference on Freedom of Expression and Media in the Western Balkans and Turkey, held in Brussels. The RCC Secretariat submitted written deliberations on the conference topic and the way forward.

The RCC Secretariat presented the Commission with a draft concept note in support of public service broadcasters' contribution to safeguarding the freedom of expression in the enlargement countries. The Secretariat proposed to organize a seminar in Sarajevo in this context, in autumn 2011. The event would be designed as a follow up to the Commission's May conference on freedom of expression and the media in the enlargement countries, carrying forward its conclusions in the part related to public broadcasting. Together with the Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe, a project in this direction would be designed in time for the seminar, in consultation with all relevant partners.

The Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe also accepted the offer by the RCC Secretariat to co-host, with the Radio-Television of Bosnia and Herzegovina, its next Education Committee meeting in autumn 2011 in Sarajevo, thus enabling inclusive participation of all public broadcasters from South East Europe.

Outreach activities and visibility

The RCC Secretariat has continued to advance the organization's mission of promoting mutual cooperation and European and Euro-Atlantic integration of South East Europe in order to inspire development in the region to the benefit of its people, through various means of communication. The goal of the communication efforts was to deepen the understanding and awareness of what the RCC does, as well as raise and maintain support for its activities.

The Secretariat interacted with the media on a regular basis to increase awareness of RCC activities and generate public interest. Over the reporting period, and to the knowledge of the RCC Secretariat, 165 articles, interviews and statements on the RCC were published in South East European and international media, bringing the total to over 2,500 articles published since the beginning of operations of the RCC Secretariat.

The Secretariat worked to establish relationships and position the RCC as a key regional player through conducting permanent outreach among politicians, opinion-makers, think-tanks, diplomats, public officials, students, academia, businessmen, etc., and attract continuous support of its stakeholders. The content of the RCC website was enriched with new user-friendly features, such as enhanced social media function, multimedia gallery and PDA function. The reporting period witnessed some 786,672 hits, 282,892 page views and 17,748 visits of the website.

Two issues of RCC newsletter were published and circulated to a wide audience. They focused on the endorsement by ministers of justice and interior of the South-East European Cooperation Process of the Regional Strategic Document on justice and home affairs 2011-2013 as well as on

opportunities for cooperation in South East Europe, in political and practical terms, with contributions by 23 prominent regional stakeholders.

Evaluation of general and institutional aspects

The reporting period was characterized by a continuation of the process of undertaking concrete steps within the context of implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013, particularly aimed at the efficient and target-oriented, regionally owned and all-inclusive regional cooperation.

In order to maintain the momentum of the development of regional cooperation and continue with the affirmation of the principle of regional ownership, the strategic character of relations between the SEECP and the RCC remains pivotal. Drawing on the successful cooperation with the previous as well as incumbent SEECP Chairmanship-in-Office, importance of regular Coordination meetings of the SEECP Troika and the RCC Secretariat with the participation of the EU institutions proved to be a very useful tool in providing guidance and enhancing overall coordination.

Within the context of all-inclusiveness as a ground rule of the RCC, the absence of the representatives of UNMIK/Kosovo at the RCC Board meeting on 8 March 2011 highlighted the importance of overcoming residual challenges to regional cooperation and underlined the significance of a pragmatic-driven approach conducive to concrete project cooperation in South East Europe and aimed at boosting balanced economic and social development.

III. Priority areas of the RCC Activities

Following up on the priority actions from its Strategy and Work Programme, and within the mandate provided by the Southeast Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP), regarding coordination and streamlining of Regional initiatives in SEE, Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat (RCC) organized a regional coordination conference titled *Western Balkans and Europe 2020 – Towards Convergence and Growth*, in Brussels, on March 30 and 31. The meeting, organized to explore the possibilities of further alignment of the region to *Europe 2020* policy objectives and principles in a better coordinated way, gathered over 100 representatives of regional organizations and structures, national authorities from Southeast Europe, representatives of international financial institutions, international donor agencies and the officials of the European Union institutions.

The participants have encouraged the RCC to assist in the process of associating the current regional activities with Europe 2020 priorities and structures, where such alignment is possible. RCC is expected to engage directly with regional initiatives by establishing a platform for action as well as providing support in better streamlining of regional activities and increased regional ownership. The existing platforms for regional exchange and cooperation have agreed on the importance of furthering Europe 2020 adoption in the region, wherever possible. *Europe 2020* targets should be adapted to regional realities in cooperation with national administrations. A particular importance should be given to governance mechanisms employed by the regional groups, enabling peer reviews, benchmarking, establishment of indicators, exchange of best

practice and monitoring and reporting on progress made. The participants also stressed the significance of European Commission's role in helping deepen policy dialogue in specific areas, supporting participation of the enlargement countries in Europe-wide initiatives and providing for specific instruments that could facilitate the implementation of *Europe 2020* in the region. That was also an opportunity for deepening communication with different donors according to their wish to improve access to numerous regional projects launched by multitude of regional initiatives and task forces.

The RCC Secretariat actively participated in the work of MB IPA and its Strategic Working Groups' meetings establishing close cooperation with the European Commission's representatives, as well as with other working group members and contributing to preparation of necessary documents. Importance of the RCC contribution to the IPA - MB 2011 – 2013 programming process was underlined in several occasions.

Communication with the MB IPA has been also intensified through participation of the RCC Experts in MB IPA Coordination Meetings, IFIAG meeting and through direct consultations. RCC Secretariat also established or intensified contacts with other DGs in the EC (DG REGIO, DG MOVE, DG Education and Culture, DG International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, etc).

The transition process of overtaking operational and programming role in guiding the SEE Investment Committee (SEEIC) from the OECD to the RCC was generally agreed with the OECD and EC. The RCC Secretariat contributed to development of the working agenda for the next period and in promoting regional approach to the ongoing tasks. RCC Secretariat has also been involved in the preparations of the SEEIC Ministerial Meeting in November 2011.

Permanent dialogue was going on with different stakeholders from the region: private companies and associations (ABC and other chamber's networks with signing of the MoU with the ABC), NGOs (TACSO team, ICDT etc), operating RI&TFs and newly established regional networks (SEE Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group, SEE Public Private Partnership Network, Regional Network of Investment Promotion Agencies etc.) discussing the issues and modes of cooperation. The dialogue further widened with the think tanks from the region and beyond, financial institutions and EC-IFIs partners. RCC was also represented at the different events relevant for development of regional cooperation – from think-tank and academic conferences to the EC dialogue with civil society in the region. Dialogue with the DG Enlargement continued to be regular and substantial, as well as with CEFTA and OECD Investment Compact.

Coordination, brainstorming and streamlining of the RCC Expert Pool activities have been further advanced and an open debate on prioritizing its activities regularly held. DSG also took part and contributed in preparing events of general importance for the RCC (with EC, SEECPCiO, RCC Board members, individual donors etc). Promotion of the RCC and regional cooperation, public and academic lectures, international think tank debates and other forms of representation of the RCC are also included.

1. Economic and Social Development Unit

Investment and Business Enabling Environment

The RCC Secretariat participated at the *South Eastern Europe Investment Committee (SEEIC)* joint meeting with the representatives of the private sector held with the aim to discuss policies relating to enhancing competitiveness in SEE. The joint meeting was used to gather inputs from the private sector representatives on strengthening value chains in the region and promoting development of knowledge economies, while the regular session of SEEIC was dedicated to building a common 2020 vision for the region.

The session was used as an opportunity to propose a new evolution for the SEEIC, one that would take the vehicle closer to becoming an instrument for *Europe 2020* implementation in the region. This approach would be consistent with the conclusions of the Regional Coordination Meeting held in Brussels on March 30 and 31. RCC Secretariat and OECD outlined the proposal whereby the SEEIC would identify *Europe 2020* policy targets and goals that are most relevant to the region and work on adapting these targets and developing a governance mechanism that would ensure these policy targets are being pursued on national level as well. The SEEIC also reviewed the proposed proceedings and possible conclusions of the Ministerial conference on investment proposed to be co-organized between OECD and RCC during November.

Social Development

The RCC Secretariat took part at the *International Financial Institutions (IFI) Advisory Group's Working Group on Social Issues*. The meeting was used to set-out the strategy for IFI involvement in the private sector development and social issues in the Western Balkans. New research was presented to the participants outlining the general consensus on growth model and presenting the impacts of austerity measures on investment programmes in the Western Balkans and effects on the countries' borrowing capacity. EC outlined novel developments in terms of the new cycle of IPA programming and the possible fit with new IFI approaches in the Western Balkans. It was stressed that new financial instruments from IFIs and the EC will be better targeted, and a shift in focus will be made from traditional lending instruments to more innovative financing vehicles. RCC presented its activities in the area of private sector development and invited IFIs to engage with the Social Agenda 2020 platform being currently prepared. European Commission, the World Bank, the Council of Europe Development Bank and the IFI Coordination Office have all expressed interest to join RCC's efforts in this area and take part at the upcoming conference.

RCC Secretariat has undertaken a number of preparatory activities for the roll-out of the *Social Agenda 2020* – a process to develop a regional agenda for social policies in SEE – with the first event planned for May 25 2011. In this context, RCC Secretariat has held numerous meetings and discussions with different stakeholders participating in this conference, in order to ensure broad participation, primarily from the respective ministries in the region, but also from European and international partners.

RCC Secretariat participated at a regional conference *Social Entrepreneurship: A vector of change in the EU* organized by Institute Novum and the European Liberal Forum. In the context of the RCC priority to support mainstreaming social issues into economic policy deliberations,

RCC recognizes social entrepreneurship can play an important development role in the region, and regional cooperation can lead to sharing of knowledge and strengthened impact of social entrepreneurship. RCC was invited to facilitate already initiated process of establishing a regional network to support social entrepreneurship development in the region.

Information Society Development

The RCC Secretariat representatives participated at the regular sessions of the Management and Supervisory Boards of the Regional Foundation *Centre for e-Governance Development (CeGD)*. After a discussion of the activities of the centre during 2010, participants discussed the current and planned activities of the centre in the areas of knowledge platform, educational events and project implementation.

Other activities

The RCC Secretariat participated at the closing conference of International Centre for Democratic Transition's flagship project: *Sharing the Experiences of Visegrad Cooperation in the Western Balkans and the Eastern Neighbourhood Countries*. Having contributed throughout this project in different thematic workshops, RCC Secretariat representatives shared the regional perspective of SEE in the areas of economic development and transferable experience in general.

As a part of its regular activities in representing the region, RCC Secretariat attended the 4th steering committee meeting of the SEE Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning. Special focus was given to the discussions on the implementation of the SEECCEL pilot phase which will produce 2nd generation methodology and instrument for implementation of entrepreneurial learning.

2. Infrastructure and Energy

Energy

After meeting with the ECS and the European Commission representatives, continuation of the tailor-made workshops for parliamentary committees responsible for energy in the RCC members from SEE that are Contracting Parties (CPs) to the Energy Community Treaty (ECT) in a changed format and joint organization of the events following the model of successfully organized workshop on the *Reducing Emissions from Energy Sectors in the Energy Community*, were agreed. An outstanding role of the Energy Community in relation to aligning the region to the sustainability dimension (EU 20/20/20 targets) of the EU 2020 Strategy and the RCC adequate position to support in that respect, were also recognized during this meeting.

Preparations for the second meeting of Sustainable Energy Development Regional Initiative (SEDRI) Task Force to be hosted by the Serbian Ministry of Energy and Mining (SMEM) chairing the Task Force were intensified and carried out in cooperation with the Central European Initiative (CEI) and SMEM. This meeting will discuss next activities of the Task Force that has as main goals: to fully profile the initiative, create the projects pipeline and perform other necessary activities in accordance with the Initiative Background Paper.

The RCC Secretariat actively participated and supported the 7th SEE Congress & Exhibition on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and SEE Conference & Exhibition on Waste Management & Recycling and discussed with the representatives of the principal organizer Via

Expo and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria joint organization of the event focused on the previous mentioned issues and necessary support of the RCC in that respect.

Transport

The RCC Secretariat attended the *SEETO Transport Investment Conference* which was an opportunity to be informed on the status of the top priority transport infrastructure investments under preparation and link with representatives of the Ministries of Transport from SEE and other relevant stakeholders in order to define possible actions towards the implementation of the presented transport projects from SEETO Multi-Annual Action Plan.

The RCC Secretariat co-organized with the Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Association of Consulting Engineers of BIH (ACE) the Second Conference on *Road Infrastructure Safety Management*. The aim of the conference was to exchange information and knowledge, define framework conditions and activities needed for implementation of the EU Road Safety directives with a focus on Directive 2008/96/EC on Road Infrastructure Safety Management. All participants agreed to continue joint activities on transposition and efficient implementation of the Road Safety Audits (RSA) and Road Safety Inspections (RSI) regulations with reference to the above mentioned directive. The conference brought together representatives of the national administrations from SEE responsible for road safety, interior affairs as well as regional transport organizations and academics.

The RCC Secretariat representative participated at the *UNECE Conference on Lurching of the Decade of Action (2011-2020) for road safety* and met with representatives of the UNECE Transport Division in order to explore the possibilities for mutual cooperation in the road safety field as well as with representatives of Serbian Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy as per request to strengthen cooperation with national administration in the RCC members from SEE.

Environment

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) offers an appropriate framework for implementing the crucial RCC activities as promoting the multi-dimensional integrated approach, innovative schemes for financing the infrastructure development and ``green economy`` as a tool for structural changes that are extremely relevant for aligning the region to the EU 2020 Strategy goals.

Considering the environmental implications of energy related activities on the Danube is needed due to multipurpose use of Danube and necessity to reconcile different interests in water use and establish necessary balance. In that respect, the RCC Secretariat agreed with the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) on the next steps in their cooperation, primarily in relation to profiling the approach in addressing the issue raised, mobilizing all important stakeholders and organization (realization) of the events relevant for preparation of a Joint Statement to tackle energy sector impact on the Danube. This act would be analogous to the already adopted Joint Statement on Guiding Principles for the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin addressing navigation impact.

The RCC Secretariat continued discussions with relevant stakeholders in order to promote integrated approach in planning infrastructure development. The overall European Commission coordination alongside the active involvement of the Energy Community, prospective Transport Community and RENA would be crucial in that direction.

The RCC Secretariat supported and took active part at the Network of Association of Local Authorities in South East Europe (NALAS) International Municipal Conference, where variety of civil society organizations and media as ``bottom-up`` approach implementers and important drivers of community development met.

The RCC Secretariat had one of keynote speeches at the *Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change Research for Environmental Protection, Adaptation and Risk Reduction* where a Joint Statement was adopted announcing joint endeavour of SEE countries to contribute to the international efforts to implement the UNFCCC Framework Action for Adaptation. RCC was invited to facilitate the process through providing interconnections among all related regional initiatives and structures that could contribute to that effort.

3. Justice and Home Affairs

RCC strategic role consisting in guiding and monitoring regional cooperation is achieved in JHA area through two strategic instruments: the *RCC Strategy and Work Program 2011 – 2013* and the *Regional Strategic Document and Action Plan*. The *RCC Strategy* focuses on a limited number of targeted actions, identified as regional needs and priorities in which RCC can provide added value. The *Regional Strategic Document* pursues an integrated, coherent and transparent regional cooperation and provides guidance, facilitating the harmonization of the donors' activities thus avoiding overlapping and duplication, in an environment populated by a multitude of strategies and programs. In both cases RCC is monitoring the implementation, review and update the strategic choices.

The endorsement of the *Regional Strategic Document (RSD)* and *Action Plan 2011-2013* by the SECEP ministerial meeting on 18 March 2011, represents by itself a unique event, relevant not only for the region but also for EU MS and institutions. Through the endorsement, the countries of the region politically assume the regional ownership, entrust and make aware the national judicial authorities on theirs implementing, updating and monitoring responsibilities, together with EU and international partners. The endorsement implements the first phase of the RCC work programme action in the JHA area.

The ministerial declaration states that the existing Steering Group on Regional Strategy (SGRS) will continue to meet (in 2011 the planned meetings are: July 2011 a common meeting with IPA-MB Working Group on JLS and December 2011), under the coordination of the RCC Secretariat and will periodically asses the implementation of the Action Plan, review and consolidate the strategic choices. SGRS has to establish the reporting mechanism on regional activities and the regional monitoring tools to assess the level of regional cooperation within JHA area.

The RCC Secretariat representatives have presented to the EU structures (in Brussels) the steps to be taken for the implementation and monitoring of the JHA Regional Strategic Document

(RSD) and its Action Plan. EU officials were consulted about the relationship RCC-EU concerning the implementation of the JHA RSD. Due to their presence in Brussels special focus was on the MARRI – the Albanian Presidency priorities and the MARRI Centre activities.

In the realm of judicial, police and law enforcement cooperation, RCC main efforts were directed towards the promotion of direct communication and mutual exchange of information in the coordination of current and planned police support measures; increasing coordination among regional, EU and international actors in the existing regional legal and organizational framework; ensuring strong support of the regional organizations in the implementation of the regional strategies. Progress has been obtained. The opening of the International Law Enforcement Coordination Units (ILECU's) in Croatia on 30 March 2011, in Zagreb, is one of them.

The RCC Secretariat attended the meeting *Strengthening the Response to Terrorism by Addressing Connections with Related Criminal Activities*, in line with preparations for organizing the follow up meeting of the Southeast Europe Regional Workshop on national coordination and regional cooperation in Counter-Terrorism that will be held in Belgrade in June 2011.

The roundtable *Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans: context and evolution from 1991 to 2010* was co-organized by RCC Secretariat and DCAF. The cross-cutting event – security, justice and home affairs - gathered leading experts dealing with security and justice system reforms in the region together with representatives of seven regional civil society organizations (CSOs) – from Belgrade, Podgorica, Pristina, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tirana and Zagreb. Participants analyzed the developments of the security and justice in the Western Balkans, discussed the main drivers and challenges in the process, and supported an increased involvement of civil society in regional activities.

At the *Regional Co-ordination Meeting of SEE Field Operations on Regional Organized Crime and Other Transnational Threats*, organized by the OSCE, RCC Secretariat presented RSD, its annexes, priorities and plans for 2011 and 2012. In the same time RCC requested SPMU, Border team and Missions to send information about technical assistance implemented so far in order to insert info in the Annex 3 of the RSD. Explanation was given to the participants related to the participation of Kosovo institutions in the activities organized by the RCC.

The key issue of SELEC Advisory Group Meeting and the launching Conference for the EC IPA financed Project: *Police Cooperation Regional Support to Strengthen the SECI/SELEC for Combating Organized Crime* was the transformation of SECI Centre into SELEC. EC and RCC visions on Europol role in the future SELEC coincide: Europol has a driving position as EU body for fighting serious crime; there is a need to avoid duplication of roles and tasks and for strengthening complementarily.

The main theme of the 18th Conference of SEEPAG organized by SECI Centre and the State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia was *Investigating and Prosecuting Cybercrime*. SEEPAG representatives raised the issue of the relationship between SEEPAG and WB Prosecutors Network. In this context at RCC Secretariat proposal SEEPAG agreed to have common meetings with WB-PN.

Annual General Assembly Meeting of SEPCA had as main topics the adoption of SEPCA 3 years Strategy and Action Plan, and the preparation of a donor conference. RCC Secretariat representative mentioned the need for SEPCA strategy to be consistent with RCC Strategy and RSD.

At the International Conference *The Changing Face of Organized Crime in SEE*, organized by SECI Centre and RACVIAC/Centre for Security Cooperation both SECI Centre and RACVIAC reaffirmed their mission to foster dialogue and cooperation on security matters in South East Europe, recognised the necessity of building a more open, transparent and stable environment in the region by encouraging exchanges of information, views and ideas. RCC Secretariat representatives reiterates the convergences existing between justice and security cooperation sector and the need of closer coordination at national and regional level among law enforcement, judicial, intelligence and security structures.

In the fight against corruption RCC Secretariat and RAI activities were very dynamic. With RCC Secretariat conceptual and financial support, Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative (RAI) has established the European network of integrity institutions responsible for conflict of interest prevention and assets declaration named *Integrity Experts Network (IEN)*. The Network serves as a platform for policy making, exchange of information, experience and best practices between the practitioners in the area on focus and it will function under RAI Secretariat support, guidance and coordination. The IEN Secretariat functions are managed by RAI Secretariat.

Within IEN framework, RCC Secretariat and RAI organized the International Workshop *Conflict of Interest Detection, Management and Resolution Experiences*. The main achievement was exchange of information, work practices, knowledge and expertise on conflict of interest; discussions on case studies regarding conflict of interest were held, aiming at the identification and promotion of good practices and experiences.

Under the Montenegrin Chairmanship-in-Office of the SEECP, RCC Secretariat and RAI co-organized the Meeting of the Directors of National Institutions and Agencies for Combating Corruption and Organised Crime of The South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP). RCC Secretariat presented the current status and challenges in the prevention and combating of corruption and the level of implementation of the RCC Strategy and RDS.

The RCC Secretariat participated at a cross-cutting event, important for two RCC priority areas - justice and building human capital - the establishment of the South East European Law School Network (SEELS). The Conference on the establishment of SEELS was organized by the Rectorate of the University Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Open Regional Fund for South East Europe – Legal Reform. The RCC Secretariat representative indicated that the SEELS will find its role in strengthening the institutional capacities of the participating countries, especially in training legal practitioners, judges and public prosecutors. SEELS establishment represents further development of the ongoing regional process of Higher Education Reform. Regional cooperation in the field of Higher Education is an integral part of EU accession and integration. The SEELS Network acquired support by the Universities of Ljubljana, Bucharest, Istanbul, Berlin, Graz, the European Law Faculty Association (ELFA).

4. Security Cooperation

Facilitate and support development of regional mechanisms of security cooperation

The first meeting of the Heads of Procurement Departments from SEE countries was co-organised with SEECPCiO, NATO and RACVIAC. The aim was to provide a list of short, medium and long term procurement projects with details on whether these are already fully funded or not, and to indicate which projects require additional multinational cooperation if they are to be realised.

In cooperation with the Bulgarian State Commission on Information Security invitations to all SEE countries NSA's for the first SEENSA meeting were sent out end of March. The meeting will be held under the patronage of NOS and General Secretariat of the Council of the EU deputy director general – head of the Security Office. In preparing this first meeting RCC representatives met with the Head of NATO Office of Security (NOS) and the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU deputy director general – head of the Security Office. The NOS Director was briefed with the RCC role, objectives, strategy and work program in the security cooperation area, with a special emphasis on the reasons for launching the SEE Forum of the Heads of National Agencies on Protection of Classified Information (SEE NSA) and the need of the EU and NATO patronage. NOS management expressed its full support for RCC efforts and confirmed its readiness to attend the first meeting that is to be organised in Sofia this May. NOS will co-share the patronage with EU. It was mutually agreed on the added-value of the SEE NSA Forum in solving practical issues raised already by SEEMIC and the SEE prosecutors' network (SEEPAG) as obstacles identified in regional cooperation exchange of information.

EU GS Security Office representatives were briefed with the RCC role, objectives, strategy and work program in the security cooperation area, with a special emphasis on the reasons for launching the SEE Forum of the Heads of National Agencies on Protection of Classified Information (SEE NSA) and the need of the EU and NATO patronage. EU representatives gave full support for RCC efforts and confirmed their readiness to attend the first meeting that is to be organised in Sofia this May. They accepted to co-share the patronage with NATO.

RCC Secretariat representatives met with the External Action Service (EAS) Council's representative in the RCC Board. The discussion was focused on the results of the previous meetings with EU MS INT and EU Office for Security, as well as with NOS, on the preparation of the next meetings of SEEMIC and SEE NSA Forum. The issue of the cryptosystem was raised with the EU MS INT Directorate that kindly agreed to consider for offering it to the SEEMIC members, with the EAS assisting them with a solution in getting the internal approval.

In preparation of the next SEEMIC Working Group a meeting took place with the Director of MS INT Directorate. Detailed discussions on the documents to be elaborated by the SEE military experts in relation with the procedures to exchange agreed information analysis on common challenges, as well as a number of other concrete aspects, among them the secure ways for communication to which EU MS INT kindly agreed to direct contributing, with the support that is to be obtained from the political section of the Council's General Secretariat/External Action Service.

The Director of the EU MS INT underlined support for the SEEMIC and RCC efforts. He also underlined that the SEEMIC was of a great interest for the EU MS INT and therefore it should become as soon as possible useful tool in exchange classified information. as well as in relation with countries that are in the European Neighbourhood Policy. He also introduced the concept of 'sponsorship' that is used in EU and NATO exchange of classified information for bridge the gaps that exist until a full agreement in the region would be reached.

Several meetings with the Head of BiH MoD MI were also carried out in the preparation of the first WG of SEEMIC that took place in Sarajevo on the 31st March 2011 with aim preparation of the Third SEEMIC. The majority of SEE Countries members of RCC were represented, as well as the MI of EU. The representatives of the three countries that could not sign the Statement in Belgrade confirmed that the national procedures are being finalized and that probably they will sign it in Sarajevo at the Third SEEMIC. The text of the Procedures was adopted by the representatives of 8 countries and will be subject to further assessment by the MI national authorities of all countries. The second WG meeting is planned for end of June and the Third SEEMIC for the second week of October 2011.

Several meetings were held with the head of the EU MI Branch – EAS in which it was presented a full up-dated package of materials for the requested support by the German CI Agency – BfV and RCC representative received the positive feed-back that our initiative managed to raise the attention of the BfV representatives to the EU and that we will be contacted directly by them later.

RCC representatives met with the NATO SEEGROUP Chairman. BiH SEEGROUP Chairman presented the paper with the proposed Chairmanship work programme and expressed confidence that RCC would contribute to its successful implementation. Possible joint activities where to involve the SEEGROUP and its members were discussed. The SCU experts presented the RCC Strategy and Work Program (SWP) 2011-2013, with a focus on the concrete activities proposed and the initiatives that have been, or are to be launched. It was also mentioned the overall streamlining process envisaged for the next years, keeping in mind the reduced financial resources of the region.

RCC Secretariat was represented at the SEDM CC meeting in Bulgaria. Participants were informed on the RCC views of establishing operational links among some SEDM Projects to be implemented and other relevant regional initiatives. Upon the request of the USA representatives a memo on the issue was drafted by SCU and send to USA Defence Department.

Disaster risk reduction

RCC Secretariat representatives met with IPA-MB programs in DG Enlargement and ECHO officials. An extensive discussion on details related to the ongoing projects on DRR that have been implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), as well as related to the newly launched CPM project and to the future DRR project that most probably will be implemented by the WMO and United Nations International Strategy Disaster Reduction (UNISDR).

Agreement and common understanding was reached on the modalities to work together under IPA-MB programs. The SCU will be present in almost all phases, starting with the concept, evaluation of the implementers' applications, monitoring and assessing the impact of the implementation. To successfully fulfil this role, the SCU experts will be invited since the inception meeting to be part of the Steering Groups that are the analysis and decisional bodies for the implementation of the IPA-MB programs.

RCC Secretariat representatives met with UNISDR Office in Brussels. Few aspects related to the practicalities in connection with the EU projects on DRR for SEE, under the IPA-MB programming, as well as about the DPPI role and its future strengthening to become a reliable partner in implementation of the regional projects together with important specialised implementers, such as UNISDR were discussed. UN ISDR representative expressed views with regard to the capacities of the DPPI Secretariat to ensure the administrative issues requested for the initiative itself, as well as for the support needed by the DPPI CiO and for the development and management of projects' implementation.

RCC Secretariat representative participated in the DPPI advisory board, disaster management training program steering committee and the Regional Meeting raising the issue of urgent necessity for rules and procedures in DPPI. The representatives of WMO and Sweden underlined the expectations of the International organisations that DPPI will build the capacity to match the requirements for implementing bigger regional projects. A new head of DPPI Secretariat was elected.

The RCC Secretariat representative participated in the Inception meeting IPA-MB Program on Civil Protection Cooperation for the candidate countries and potential candidates, and actively engaged in the discussions related to a more strategic coordination and planning at both national and regional level.

5. Building Human Capital and Cross-Cutting Issues

Education

BHC Unit continued active involvement in the project *Building Capacity for Structural Reform in Higher Education of Western Balkan Countries (STREW)*. Meetings have been held with partner institutions in the beneficiary countries, with the aim to define and concretize working packages for each partner institution, receive the input from the partners on their expectations of the project, discuss the actual issues on management of parts of the grant which will be allocated to partners. The RCC will be included in the Monitoring group of STREW project, which aims to facilitate further advances in effective higher education structural reform in the WB Region and its coherent convergence towards European Higher Education Area.

The RCC Secretariat representative met the Head of the Higher Education and History Teaching Department of Council of Europe and discussed possibilities for cooperation between two Secretariats, on the basis of the list of potential areas for cooperation, defined during the visit of the RCC Secretary General to CoE, on 11 January 2011. Head of BHC Unit presented the Letter of Intent for cooperation in the area of doctoral studies, signed by rectors of 5 universities from the region. He invited colleagues from CoE to propose eventual module which would concretise this initiative. He also explained the phase of preparatory activities for organisation of Regional

Training for Education Inspectors and informed that ReSPA, EC, OSCE and ETF already expressed interest to be included in organisation of this event. Counterparts agreed that CoE could provide experts for part of the training dealing with democratic citizenship.

Head of BHC Unit participated at the 14th meeting of the *Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) Governing Board and Consultative Body*, organised by the Centre for Education Policy, as the interim structure until establishment of ERI SEE Secretariat. The event was marked by the hand-over of Initiative's Chairmanship from Croatia to Serbia. Draft Host Country Agreement for ERI SEE Secretariat, together with the draft Statute of ERI SEE was presented. Governing Board adopted ERI SEE Activity and Financial reports for the period August – December 2010, as well as Program for 2011.

The RCC Secretariat representative participated at the 20th *Anniversary of TEMPUS Programme Ministerial Conference* that gathered representatives from 28 Tempus Partner Countries, the European Commission's representatives, EU Delegations, EACEA and other organizations active in the field of higher education as well as representatives from the National Tempus Offices in the Tempus Partner Countries and National Contact Points in the EU Member States. The participants have shared previous experience and success achieved through those 20 years. RCC representative chaired a session devoted to regional dimension of Tempus programme.

The Regional Workshop – Regional Policies and Programmes for Inclusive Education and Training in the Western Balkans and Turkey – Towards Regional Actions, organised by ETF and DG Enlargement enabled RCC Secretariat consultations with key stakeholders from the region on technical ideas, main challenges and potential advantages for regional cooperation, under the framework of EU MB IPA. Major aim of the workshop was defining key actions on inclusive education at regional level, in compliance with regional studies and based on the strategic priorities identified in the MB IPA 2011-2013 Sector Plan on Human Rights, Minorities and Inclusive Education. Participants agreed on the general guidelines for development of the project log-frame during this year.

Science and Research

The Head of BHC Unit met with Senior Economist in the World Bank and discussed development of optimal model for implementation of the project Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation for Western Balkans (RSRDI) as one of the RCC priority projects in the area of Building Human Capital, as envisaged in the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013. The project has been developed by the experts from the region, under the auspices of the RCC. The project will be financed from the EU MB IPA Fund, from the autumn this year. EC had chosen the World Bank as the Contracting Authority of the Project. Counterparts emphasised significance of future partnership between the RCC and World Bank for successful implementation of the project. Head of BHC Unit presented project preparatory activities already achieved under the umbrella of the RCC. Counterparts agreed on the next steps towards start-up of the project, including joint organisation of the Science and Research Ministerial Conference, which would launch the project, eventually co-organised with Serbian SEECIP CiO in November 2011 and organisation of the preparatory meeting for the Ministerial Conference, gathering members of the Coordination Body, possibly in Dubrovnik in June 2011.

The Head of Science Unit of the UNESCO Venice Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE) visited RCC Secretariat and informed on the change in BRESCE policy in assisting the countries from SEE in the area of science and activities aimed towards development of specific national science and research strategies. He explained intention of his Unit to introduce a more regional approach, which might result in development of a strategic document for the Western Balkans region. Head of BHC Unit presented achieved results of preparatory activities for start up of the project Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation for the Western Balkans. He also welcomed proposal for a discussion on fostering cooperation among EC, BRESCE, RCC and other relevant international organisations, for the benefit of scientific community in the region.

Culture

The BHC Unit focused its activities in the area of culture on the transition of the Ljubljana Process. RCC Secretariat representatives met with representatives of EC DG Enlargement and with representative of CoE Secretariat on several occasions. The subject of the meetings was current state of play as well as the next steps to be taken with the aim of establishment effective regional mechanism for continuation of the Ljubljana Process. RCC Secretariat finalised all preparations from its side for launching of the project, including signing of the Protocol between the Government of Montenegro and the Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat on the Host Country Arrangements for the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Council Task Force on Culture and Society, establishment of the Task Force, based on nominations of respective national institutions and international organizations, as well as organising interviews and selecting 3 members of the TF Secretariat. Upon finalization of the necessary internal procedures in EC, the contracts for the II phase of Ljubljana Process between the EC on one side, and RCC and CoE on the other, will be signed, and project implementation would start.

Parliamentary Cooperation

European Commission Enlargement Directorate-General and the RCC Secretariat organised the *Regional Meeting: Role of National Parliaments in Negotiations for the EU Accession*, at the premises of RCC Secretariat. Event gathered Secretary Generals and Chairpersons of the Committees for European Integration of National Parliaments of the Western Balkan countries and Republic of Turkey, as well as representatives of European Parliament and Regional School for Public Administration. Regional meeting particularly stressed crucial importance of new intention of the European Commission to include parliamentary cooperation, for the first time, in the framework of the Multi-Beneficiary IPA Strategy 2011-2013 as one of the priority areas of MB IPA Working Group on Public Administration and Governance. Opening possibility for funding the regional project on parliamentary cooperation in 2012, with the aim to foster systematic cooperation among the parliaments from the region, was recognised as the optimal format for developing well-structured and efficient regional parliamentary project.

Representatives of National Parliaments welcomed efforts of the Regional Cooperation Council in strengthening parliamentary cooperation, on the basis of the RCC Secretariat's Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013, as an effective intention to streamline and concretise parliamentary cooperation. It was agreed to pursue realisation of further activities towards creation of the regional parliamentary project, under the framework of the existing networks for cooperation, such as Cetinje Parliamentary Forum, coinciding with the RCC Strategy and Work

Programme 2011-13. The next occasion for concrete activities towards reaching this goal will be Workshop to be organised during the next meeting of the MB IPA WG on Public Administration and Governance in Danilovgrad, 13-15 April 2011.

IV. Operation of the RCC Secretariat

During the reporting period, the RCC Secretary General in accordance with his competences under Articles 13 and 19 of the RCC Statute transferred the official who occupied the post of Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation, to the post of Junior Political Advisor in the Front Office.

The RCC Secretariat currently comprises a total of 33 staff members, out of which five members are technical and service staff (public affairs assistant, driver/security officer, two drivers/couriers, and receptionist). A complete list of the RCC Secretariat's staff is appended in Annex III to the report.

A remaining open issue related to the setting-up of the RCC Secretariat Liaison concerns the implementation of the provisions of the Headquarters Agreement between the Kingdom of Belgium and the RCC Secretariat, which regulates the status of the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels. The Kingdom of Belgium has conditioned the implementation of relevant provisions of the Headquarters Agreement between the Kingdom of Belgium and the RCC Secretariat providing for the fiscal privileges and immunities of the Head and Deputy Head of the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels with the issuing of an official authentic interpretation concerning the implementation of Article 17.1.(d) of the Agreement between the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Governments of the other SEECP Participating States, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo on behalf of Kosovo in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244, on the Host Country Arrangements for the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Council (Host Country Agreement) by the Parties to this Agreement in which the principle of taxability of the officials of the RCC Secretariat in their countries/places of origin and/or permanent residence would be explicitly confirmed. After a consultation procedure initiated by the RCC Secretary General in August 2008 it became evident that the adoption of an interpretative declaration amending the Agreement would not be acceptable to some of the Parties to the Host Country Agreement, as they consider that such declaration would run counter to the spirit of the current provisions of the Agreement and would lead to its *de facto* amendment. In light of the principles of general international law, the only recourse in this situation would be to proceed with amending the Host Country Agreement accordingly, in light of the request from the Kingdom of Belgium. This, however, remains subject to the will of the Parties to the Host Country Agreement.

In this view, the RCC Secretary General sent a communication to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in early January 2009, proposing to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a Party to and, at the same time, a depositary of the Host Country Agreement to consider the possibility of initiating the process of amending relevant provisions of the Agreement in order to provide for requested confirmation of taxability. This proposal of the RCC Secretary General is still under consideration by the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

V. Membership of the RCC and the RCC Board

In the course of the reporting period there were no changes to the membership of the RCC and the RCC Board.

VI. State of the financial contributions to the RCC Secretariat's budget

Until 4 May 2011 the following contributions to the RCC Secretariat's budget were received:

- Italy	49,961.06 EUR	26 November 2010
- Switzerland	130,120.80 EUR	21 December 2010
- Czech Republic	41,160.74 EUR	27 December 2010
- European Commission	719,280.00 EUR	28 December 2010
- Latvia	50,000.00 EUR	01 March 2011
- Montenegro -1 st installment	20,000.00 EUR	10 March 2011
- Croatia	80,000.00 EUR	30 March 2011
- Bulgaria	140,000.00 EUR	06 April 2011

*Until now The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has not paid its 2010 contribution.

The RCC Secretariat received, until 4 May 2011, a total of 1,230,522.60 EUR as financial contributions of the RCC Board members to the RCC Secretariat's budget for 2011. This sum represents 43,40% of the overall RCC Secretariat's preliminary budget for 2011 of 2,835,360.59 EUR.

Horizontal Functions and Work Programme

Report on the implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011 – 2013 in the period 9 March – 9 May 2011

RCC General

Horizontal Functions:	Activities organized/co-organized by the RCC	Participation at events organized by other partners/institutions
1. Representing the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bled Forum on Europe “Governance and Fear and Prosperity” – Bled, 3 – 4 March 2011, organized by the CeGD • NEXPO 2011 – International Fair of Local Governments – Sarajevo, 10-11 March 2011, organized by NALAS • The Western Balkans in the Realm of the 2011 Hungarian EU Presidency: The Way Forward – Budapest, 21-23 March 2011, organized by CEU and Hungarian MFA with support of FES • International Workshop „A New European Strategy for the Western Balkans and Southeast Europe” – Berlin, 04 April 2011, organized by the Association for South East Europe and German Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2. Assisting the SEECP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing contribution of the RCC Secretariat to the events related to RCC priority areas in correlation with the RCC Strategy and Working Programme 2011-2013 • Assisting in drafting documents for the sectorial meetings organized by the SEECP and related to the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013 	
3. Monitoring regional activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in managerial and steering bodies of different regional initiatives, support in incubating new projects and organizing important events, preparing MoUs with key partner organizations, promotion of RI&TFs 	
4. Exerting strategic leadership in regional cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and analysis of the questionnaire for regional initiatives and organization of the Regional Coordination Conference “Western Balkans and Europe 2020 – Towards Convergence and Growth”, in Brussels, on March 30-31. 	

<p>6. Supporting increased involvement of civil society in regional activities</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing working contacts with regional NGO networks in different areas (JHA, Social Agenda for the Western Balkans 2020, Social Entrepreneurship etc.) and extended regional coordination with CSO structures.
<p>5. Providing a regional perspective in donor assistance, notably in EU assistance under the Instrument for pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPA Multi-Beneficiary Programme Coordination Meeting – Brussels, 01 April 2011 • Meetings with donors interested for regional projects (ADA, SIDA, FES, GIZ etc.) <u>RCC role</u>: presenting regional projects in the RCC scope of work according to the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013 and promotion of other RI&TFs' projects.

Objectives:	Activities organized/co-organized by the RCC	Participation at events organized by other partners/institutions
<p>1. Transfer and management of the SEEIC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In cooperation with the OECD, RCC is providing support in organizing a ministerial on investment in the last quarter of 2011. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8th session of the South Eastern Europe Investment Committee (SEEIC), May 4-5, Paris. <u>RCC role</u>: initiated and presented the outline of the Europe 2020 proposal for the SEEIC and took part in the discussion on competitiveness –related policies. Closing conference of the project: ‘Sharing the Experiences of Visegrad Cooperation in the Western Balkans and the Eastern Neighbourhood Countries’ implemented by the International Centre for Democratic Transition on 9-11 March in Budapest, Hungary. <u>RCC role</u>: presenter and discussant. Business Advisory Council (BAC) Meeting, April 1, 2011, Brussels. <u>RCC role</u>: Discussed on positioning of BAC in the context of new developments in the region, and the development of a new strategy and work programme for BAC’s engagement. SEETO Transport Investment Conference TRINCON 2011 –April 19, 2011, Sarajevo. <u>RCC role</u>: conference participant.
<p>2. Identifying ways and means for improving access to finance for private sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No activities organized by RCC in this area in the reporting period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IFI Advisory Group – Working Group on Social Issues, April 12, 2011, Brussels. <u>RCC role</u>: member of the advisory group, participated in discussions on the future strategies of IFIs’ involvement in the region in the private sector development/social issues domain.

<p>3. Mainstreaming employment and social agenda into economic reform deliberations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCC has started preparing the roll-out of the process to develop a regional agenda for social policies in SEE – Social Agenda 2020 within the Europe 2020 context. A first regional conference on social issues for the Western Balkans is planned for 25-26 May 2011. In this context, RCC has organized meetings and discussions with relevant stakeholders. • Under the leadership of SEE Health Network, RCC is coordinating efforts on organizing the ministerial forum in the last quarter of 2011. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International conference: ‘Social Entrepreneurship: a Vector of Change in the EU’, 14-15 April 2011, Ljubljana, Slovenia. <u>RCC role</u>: keynote speaker and discussant, helping introduce discussion on social entrepreneurship into the policy discourse in the SEE.
<p>4. Promoting the Information Society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Together with the eSEE secretariat, RCC is coordinating the preparatory work for a ministerial conference during 2011. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management/Supervisory Board of the Centre for e-Governance Development (CeGD), Ljubljana, 8 April 2011/21 April 2011. <u>RCC role</u>: providing input and guidance to the management and sharing information on ongoing activities.
<p>5. Horizontal activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCC organized a regional coordination conference titled “Western Balkans and Europe 2020 – Towards Convergence and Growth” in Brussels on March 30 and 31. The conference was organized as a part of the broader process to identify possibilities of closer linkages between the reform efforts in the region and the <i>Europe 2020</i> strategy; to exchange information between the regional initiatives on their current and planned activities and possible linkages to the <i>Europe 2020</i> strategic framework; to inform the donor community of the ongoing efforts at the regional level; and to identify support and commitment to mapping out the path for <i>Europe 2020</i> implementation at the regional level. • RCC set-up meetings with leaders of regional groups to discuss Europe 2020 strategy and implications for the regional initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4th steering committee meeting of the SEE Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECCL) on 22 March in Istanbul, Turkey. <u>RCC role</u>: observer and discussant.

Priority Area 2: Energy and Infrastructure

Objectives:	Activities organized/co-organized by the RCC	Participation at events organized by other partners/institutions
<p>1. Continue implementation of Sustainable Energy Development Regional Initiative (SEDRI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted to the next SEECF Presidency that is at the same time SEDRI Task Force Chairmanship. Held discussions with CEI ES to prepare the second SEDRI TF meeting. Assisted in providing relevant inputs from the SEDRI beneficiaries. Analyzed project proposals submitted by the SEDRI beneficiaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7th SEE Congress & Exhibition on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and SEE Conference & Exhibition on Waste Management & Recycling – Sofia, 13-15 April 2011, organized by the Via Expo as the principal organizer and a lot of other institutions. <u>RCC role:</u> supporting the event as a partner, promoting the SEDRI and activities concerning the integrated infrastructure development planning, discussing with the Via Expo and the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry joint organization of the event to deal with sustainable energy and the RCC contribution in that respect.
<p>2. Explore potential for cooperation with the Energy Community Secretariat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reached agreement on further cooperation between the RCC Secretariat and the ECS. Support to the geographical expansion of the Energy Community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5th Renewable Energy Task Force (RE TF) meeting, 11th Energy Efficiency Task Force (EE TF) meeting and Workshop on “Energy Efficiency Acquis – Practical Implementation Aspects” – Vienna, 15-17 March 2011, organized by the Energy Community Secretariat. <u>RCC role:</u> monitoring and reporting on the Energy Community sustainable energy developments and ensuring synergies with other regional activities in this area. Energy Community Workshop on State Aid, 19th Permanent High level Group (PHLG) meeting, 2nd Joint Meeting of the Energy Community Regulatory Board (ECRB) and the PHLG, and the meeting with the ECS and EC representatives – Vienna, 22-25 March 2011, organized by the Energy Community Secretariat. <u>RCC role:</u> monitoring and reporting on the Energy Community developments, promoting the regional approach in addressing regional energy needs and reaching agreement on further cooperation between the RCC and ECS.

<p>3. Contribute to the preparation and implementation of the Danube Region Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting to the ISRBC activities and projects development. • Meeting with representatives of the Center for Energy efficiency of B&H to contribute to mobilization of civil society actors in relation to the EUSDR priority area ``To encourage more sustainable energy`` and strengthening B&H involvement in the EUSDR. • Enhancing consultative process with the National Administrations of the RCC members from SEE. • Backing civil society actors and local authorities and strengthening their role. • Cooperation with and supporting to the IFI CO. • Support to the MB IPA Strategy WGs, IFI AGs and WBIF SC as the permanent task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Municipal Conference – Sarajevo, 10-11 March 2011, organized by the NALAS. <u>RCC role:</u> support in organizing the event, delivering presentations and participation in the related discussions, contribution to the preparation of the event Declaration, reaching agreement on further cooperation between the RCC and NALAS. • 3rd Meeting on the Follow-up of the Joint Statement on Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin – Vienna, 5-6 April 2011, organized by the ICPDR. <u>RCC role:</u> monitoring and reporting the development in implementation of the Joint Statement on Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin, reaching agreement with the ICPDR on the RCC role in preparing the Joint Statement to address negative environmental impact of energy activities on the Danube, reaching agreement with the ISRBC in relation to joint organization of the Round Table on Fundraising Activities for ISRBC Projects.
<p>4. Explore the potential for further development of air services within the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to the preparation of a project proposal on development of air traffic services in SEE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No participation at the events in this area during the reporting period.

<p>5. Contribute to the promotion of road safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparatory meetings with representatives of the Association of Consulting Engineers of BIH (ACE) and BIH Ministry of Communications and Transport held on 21/25 March 2011, in Sarajevo, regarding the organization of the follow-up of the Conference on Road Infrastructure Safety Management, to be held on 20 April 2011, in Sarajevo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional TIR Seminar, Sarajevo, 29-30 March 2011, organized by the UNECE, TIR Executive Board, in close co-operation with the Indirect Taxation Authority of Bosnia and Herzegovina. <u>RCC role</u>: exploring possibilities for strengthening and establishing mutual cooperation between the UNECE and RCC in the area of road safety identified by the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013. SEETO Transport Investment Conference, Sarajevo, 19 April, organized by the South-East Europe Transport Observatory (SEETO) and Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina. <u>RCC role</u>: monitoring and reporting on the SEE Core Regional transport projects pipelines and networking. UNECE Conference on Lurching of the Decade of Action (2011-2020) for road safety, Belgrade, 27-29 April 2011, organized by the UNECE and Serbian Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy. <u>RCC role</u>: exploring possibilities for organizing joint event together with the UNECE in the area of road safety identified by the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013.
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Priority Area 3: Justice and Home Affairs

Objectives:	Activities organized/co-organized by the RCC	Participation at events organized by other partners/institutions
<p>1. Coordinate the implementation of the Regional Strategic Document and Action Plan on Justice and Home Affairs 2011-2014, and monitoring its implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Conference of the Ministers of Justice and the Ministers of Interior of South East Europe Cooperation Process, “Strengthening Cooperation in the fight against Organized Crime in SEE”, co-organized with the Montenegrin SEECP Chairmanship in Office, 16 – 18 March, in Budva, Montenegro. <u>RCC role</u>: RCC Secretariat together with the SEE countries and international organizations was drafting the Regional Strategic Document and Action Plan which provides a synthetic guidance on the existing programs and plans and helps the harmonization avoiding duplication and overlapping. RDS has been endorsed by the Ministries of Justice and Home Affairs on 18 March 2011. Meetings with the EU structures, Brussels, 28-31 March. <u>RCC role</u>: RCC presented the steps to be taken for the implementation and monitoring of the JHA Regional Strategic Document (RSD) and its Action Plan, endorsed by the SEECP Ministers of JHA. EU officials were consulted about the relationship RCC-EU concerning the implementation of the JHA RSD. Due to their presence in Brussels special focus was on the MARRI – the Albanian Presidency priorities and the MARRI Centre activities. 	

2. Strengthen Judicial and prosecutorial cooperation in criminal matters

- **8th Annual Ministerial Review Conference on Cooperation in the Field of Border Security in SEE**, organized by DCAF and Ministry of Interior of Republic of Slovenia, 1 March, in Ljubljana, Slovenia. RCC role: *RCC has been informed about activities of Western Balkan border police services to provide efficient border security.*
- **Taking Stock and Defining the Way Forward: “Strengthening the Response to Terrorism by Addressing Connections with Related Criminal Activities”**, organized by UNODC, 16-17 March, Vienna, Austria. RCC role: *RCC attended this meeting in line with preparations for organization of the follow up meeting of the Southeast Europe Regional Workshop on national coordination and regional cooperation in Counter-Terrorism that will be held in Belgrade in June.*
- **Roundtable regarding the “Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans: context and evolution from 1991 to 2010”, Sarajevo, 23 March 2011.** RCC role: *Participants exchanged experiences on the security and justice sector reforms in Western Balkans and involvement of civil society in the process. They used the opportunity to enhance networking of specialized CSOs working within justice and security sector.*
- **Regional Co-ordination Meeting of SEE Field Operations on Regional Organized Crime and other Transnational Threats**, organized by the OSCE, 28-29 March, in Pristina, UNMIK/Kosovo. RCC role: *RCC presented RSD, its annexes, priorities and plans for 2011 and 2012. In the same time RCC requested SPMU, Border team and Missions to send information about technical assistance implemented so far in order to insert info in the Annex 3 of the RSD. Explanation was given to the participants related to the participation of Kosovo institutions in the activities organized by the RCC.*
- **Opening Conference of International Law Enforcement Coordination Units (ILECU’s) in Croatia**, organized by Croatian Ministry of Interior and ILECU’s Project Team, 30 March, in Zagreb, Croatia. RCC role: *providing regional perspective in EU assistance under IPA.*
- **SELEC Advisory Group Meeting and the launching Conference for the EC IPA financed Project: Police Cooperation Regional support to strengthen the SECI/SELEC for combating organized crime** organized from 6 to 7 April in Bucharest. RCC role: *The key issue was the transformation of SECI Centre into SELEC.*

		<p>EC and RCC visions on Europol role coincide: Europol as EU body for fighting serious crime; the need to avoid duplication of roles and tasks; Complementarity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18th Conference of SEEPAG organized by SECI Centre and the State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia from 11 to 13 April in Zagreb. <u>RCC role:</u> Main theme: Investigating and Prosecuting Cybercrime. Have been discussed the relationship between SEEPAG and WB Prosecutors Network. In this context at RCC proposal SEEPAG agreed to have common meetings with WB-PN. • Annual General Assembly Meeting of SEPCA, held from 14th April - 16st April 2011 in Skopje. <u>RCC role:</u> Main topics were the adoption of SEPCA 3 years Strategy and Action Plan, and the preparation of a donor conference. • International Conference "The Changing Face of Organized Crime in SEE" organized by SECI Centre and RACVIAC, Centre for Security Cooperation, from 3 to 4 May 2011 in Zagreb. <u>RCC role:</u> Both SECI Centre and RACVIAC reaffirmed their mission to foster dialogue and cooperation on security matters in South East Europe, recognised the necessity of building a more open, transparent and stable environment in the region by encouraging exchanges of information, views and ideas.
<p>3. Support existing initiatives in the area of the fight against corruption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Workshop on "Conflict of Interest Detection, Management and Resolution Experiences", organized on 19 – 20 of April 2011, in Tirana. <u>RCC role:</u> The main achievement was exchanging of information, work practices, knowledge and expertise on conflict of interest; discussions on case studies regarding conflict of interest were held, aiming at the identification and promotion of good practices and experiences. • The Meeting of the Directors of National Institutions and Agencies for Combating Corruption and Organised Crime of The South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP). Organized under the Montenegrin Chairmanship-in-Office of the SEECP, in Budva (Becici), Montenegro from 9 to 10 May 2011. <u>RCC role:</u> RCC presented the current status and challenges in the prevention and combating of corruption. 	

<p>4. Support MARRI in strengthening its capacity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The priorities of MARRI Albanian Presidency, MARRI Centre activities and their convergence with RCC Strategy and RSD have been discussed on 29 March 2011, in Brussels with EU officials in the presence of RCC and MARRI representatives. <u>RCC role:</u> guiding and monitoring regional activities, representing the region. 	
<p>5. Initiate regional cooperation in private and civil law matters and in protection of fundamental rights</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official establishment of the South East European Law Schools Network (SEELS), organized by GIZ and the Centre for International Legal Cooperation, 24 March, in Skopje, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. <u>RCC role:</u><i>SEELS establishment represents further development of the ongoing regional process of Higher Education Reform. Regional cooperation in the field of Higher Education is an integral part of EU accession and integration. The academic networking will bring end to the fragmentation of the regional processes. The main objective of SEELS is to strengthen cooperation and to increase the competitiveness of the Law Faculties in the region, to promote better performance and capacity of the academic institutions.</i>

Priority Area 4: Security Cooperation

Objectives:	Activities organized/co-organized by the RCC	Participation at events organized by other partners/institutions
<p>1. Facilitate and support development of regional mechanisms with low-cost activities and high impact on confidence building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several meetings with the Head of BiH MoD MI were carried out in the preparation of the first WG of SEEMIC that took place in Sarajevo on the 31st March 2011 with aim preparation of the Third SEEMIC. The second WG meeting is planned for end of June and the Third SEEMIC for the second week of October 2011. • Two meetings took place with representatives of CIA and DIA from the US Embassy in Sarajevo. The RCC representative informed them on the SEEMIC activities in which the Agencies representatives demonstrated deep interest. • Implementation of the RCC SWP in the security cooperation priority area was discussed in Bulgaria with the national RCC coordinator, the State Commission on Information Security – members of the Commission and the designated for SEENSA team of experts, the International cooperation directorate of the State Agency of National Security of Bulgaria, the acting Head of the Defence Information Service of the MoD and designated directors from DIS on SEEMIC and the International Cooperation Department of the Civil Protection agency. • Meetings in Brussels – Representatives of the RCC Secretariat had meetings with representatives of: the External Action Service (EAS) of the Consilium, the NSA of the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU, NOS of NATO, the Head of EU Member States Intelligence (MS INT) Directorate, and the Chairman of SEEGROUP NATO. NOS NATO and NSA EU agreed to offer their patronage of the First Meeting of the Heads of NSDA from SEE countries members of the RCC. It was mutually agreed on the added-value of the SEE NSA Forum in solving practical issues raised already by SEEMIC and the SEE prosecutors’ network (SEEPAG) as obstacles identified in regional cooperation exchange of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEDM CC meeting, Bulgaria. Participants were informed on the RCC views of establishing operational links among some SEDM Projects to be implemented and other relevant regional initiatives.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings were held with EU and NATO Member States Germany (Counter-Intelligence LO in Brussels) and Romania (Head of the National Registry for Classified Information) for the two initiatives that are to be launched in the next period. • In preparation of the next SEEMIC WG a meeting took place with Director of the MS INT Directorate. Detailed discussion on the documents to be elaborated by the SEE military experts in relation with the procedures to exchange agreed information analysis on common challenges, as well as a number of other concrete aspects, among the secure ways for communication to which EU MS INT kindly agreed to direct contributing, with the support that is to be obtained from political section of the Council's General Secretariat/External Action Service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>2. Continue work toward establishment of regional structures for disaster risk reduction, in cooperation with international partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCC representatives met with DG Enlargement, IPA MB programmes and ECHO officials. An extensive discussion on all the details related to the on-going projects on DRR that have been implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), as well as related to the newly launched CPM project and to the future DRR project that most probably will be implemented by the WMO and United Nations International Strategy Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). • Agreement and common understanding was reached on the modalities to work together on the most important projects that are related to the regional cooperation for the candidate and potential candidate countries, under IPA-MB programs. • RCC representative met with UNISDR Office in Brussels. Few aspects related to the practicalities in connection with the EU projects on DRR for SEE, under the IPA-MB programming, as well as about the DPPI role and its future strengthening to become a reliable partner in implementation of the regional projects together with important specialised implementers, such as UNISDR were discussed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCC representative participated in the DPPI advisory board, disaster management training program steering committee and the Regional Meeting. The representatives of WMO and Sweden underlined the expectations of the International organisations that DPPI will build the capacity to match the requirements for implementing bigger regional projects. • The RCC representative participated in the Inception meeting IPA-MB Program on Civil Protection Cooperation for the candidate countries and potential candidates, and actively engaged in the discussions related to a more strategic coordination and planning at both national and regional level.

Priority Area 5: Building Human Capital and Cross-cutting Issues

Objectives:	Activities organized/co-organized by the RCC	Participation at events organized by other partners/institutions
<p>1. Contribute to the promotion of road safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCC representatives met with representatives of the EC DG Enlargement and with representatives of Coe Secretariat on several occasions. The RCC Secretariat finalised all preparations for launching of the project, including signing of the Protocol between the Government of Montenegro and the Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat on the Host Country Agreements for the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Council Task Force on Culture and Society, establishment of the Task Force, based on nominations of respective national institutions and international organizations. 	
<p>2. Support to education reform, with emphasis on higher education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring coordination meetings on the Building Capacity for Structural Reform in Higher Education of Western Balkan Countries – STREW project. During the reporting period the meetings have been held with partner institutions in the beneficiary countries. The aim of the meetings was to define and concretize working packages for each partner institution, receive the input from the partners on their expectations of the project, discuss the actual issues on management of parts of the grant which will be allocated to partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14th meeting of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) Governing Board and Consultative Body, 11 March, Belgrade. <u>RCC Role:</u> updating ERI SEE Governing Board on the RCC novelties and providing advice on institutionalization of ERI SEE Secretariat. 20th Anniversary of TEMPUS Programme, 29-30 March, Belgrade. <u>RCC Role:</u> Chairing one part of the Plenary Session, promotion and development of the idea of cooperation among the universities from the region in the area of doctoral studies. Regional Workshop - – Regional Policies and Programmes for Inclusive Education and Training in the Western Balkans and Turkey – Towards Regional Actions, 4-5 April, Torino. <u>RCC Role:</u> Assisting development of log-frame for regional project.

<p>3. Development of Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation for the Western Balkans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCC Secretariat's continued consultations with the members of the Coordination Body of the project <i>Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation for the Western Balkans</i>. Project will be launched in the second part of 2011. • Head of BHC Unit met with Senior Economist in the World Bank, Mr. Paulo Correa on 22 March in Zagreb. The main topic of the meeting was development of optimal model for implementation of the project Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation for Western Balkans. Counterparts agreed on the next steps towards start-up of the project, including joint organisation of the Science and Research Ministerial Conference, which would launch the project, eventually co-organised with Serbian SEECF CiO in November 2011 and organisation of the preparatory meeting for the Ministerial Conference, gathering members of the Coordination Body, possibly in Dubrovnik in June 2011. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
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Priority Area 6: Parliamentary Cooperation

Objectives:	Activities organized/co-organized by the RCC	Participation at events organized by other partners/institutions
<p>1. Assisting the development of the Parliamentary dimension of the SEECF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliamentary seminar Role of the parliaments in the Legislative Processes and in the Oversight of the Governments was held on 29-30 March 2011, in Brussels, as the follow-up to the previous event from February in Sarajevo. The purpose of the event was to focus on the new powers of national Parliaments in the EU and their role in European legislative processes; the place of the EP in the institutional structure of the EU; the parliamentary scrutiny and cooperation between legislative and executive powers; and the Parliaments' oversight over the executive branch and its relations with independent bodies. 	
<p>2. Assisting the institutionalization of the Cetinje Parliamentary Forum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG Enlargement and the RCC Secretariat the RCC Secretariat organized Regional Meeting: Role of National Parliaments in Negotiations for the EU Accession, at the premises of RCC Secretariat on 17 - 18 March. Event gathered Secretary Generals and Chairpersons of the Committees for European Integration of National Parliaments of the Western Balkan countries and Turkey, as well as representatives of European Parliament and ReSPA. Regional meeting particularly stressed crucial importance of new intention of the European Commission to include parliamentary cooperation, for the first time, in the framework of the Multi-Beneficiary IPA Strategy 2011-2013 as one of the priority areas of MB IPA Working Group on Public Administration and Governance. 	

ANNEX II

LIST OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS ATTENDED BY THE RCC SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE RCC SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS IN THE PERIOD FROM 9 MARCH TO 9 MAY 2011

- Bled Forum on Europe “Governance and Fear and Prosperity” – Bled, 3 – 4 March 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
- IPA MB – Competences for Competiveness and Private Sector Development in the Western Balkans and Turkey: Towards Regional Actions, Regional Workshop – Budva, 03 – 04 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Panel on Higher Education Reform in Serbia: Foresight 2020 – Kopaonik, 05-07 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Cross-cutting Issues)
- Sharing the Experiences of Visegrad Cooperation in the Western Balkans and the EaP Countries – closing conference – Budapest, 9 - 11 March 2011 (Expert on Economic and Social Development, Liaison Office Advisor)
- Meeting with the Assistant Minister on Civil protection, Ministry of Security of BiH, Chair in Office of the DPPI – Sarajevo, 09 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Security Issues and Expert on Security Cooperation)
- Meeting with a representative of the US Embassy in Sarajevo related to Security Cooperation initiatives – Sarajevo, 10 March 2011 2011 (Senior Expert on Security Issues and Expert on Security Cooperation)
- NEXPO 2011 – International Fair of Local Governments – Sarajevo, 10 - 11 March 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool and Senior Expert on Energy and Infrastructure)
- 14th meeting of the ERI SEE Governing Board and Consultative Body – Belgrade, 11 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Cross-cutting Issues)
- Participation in the CEFTA Steering Committee – Brussels, 11 March 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Participation at the Meeting of Defence Ministers of the South-East European Cooperation Process – Budva, 14 – 15 March 2011 (Secretary General)
- 5th Renewable Energy Task Force meeting, 11th Energy Efficiency Task Force meeting and Workshop on Energy Efficiency Aquis Implementation – Vienna, 14 - 17 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Energy and Infrastructure)

- PMSC/MPFSEE and SEDM Coordination meetings and meetings related to SEECIM, SEESIAM and SEEMIC – Sofia, 14 - 18 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Security Cooperation)
- Participation at the Regional Conference of Ministers of Justice and Ministers of Interior on the topic of “Strengthening Co-operation in the Fight against organised Crime in SEE” – Budva, 16 – 17 March 2011 (Secretary General, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Participation in the Euro Comment briefing on the extraordinary European Council meeting on 12 March 2011 - Brussels, 16 March 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Taking Stock and Defining the Way Forward : “Strengthening the Response to Terrorism by Addressing Connections with Related Criminal Activities” – Vienna, 16 - 17 March 2011 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- IPA Working Group on Public Administration and Governance – Sarajevo, 17 - 18 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Cross-cutting Issues)
- Participation in a Seminar “Is the Lisbon Treaty delivering for citizens?”, organized by the European Ombudsman with a key note speaker the President of the European Council - Brussels, 18 March 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- 4th Steering Committee meeting of SEECCEL – Istanbul, 21 - 23 March 2011 (Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- The Western Balkans in the Realm of the 2011 Hungarian EU Presidency: The Way Forward – Budapest, 21 - 23 March 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
- Workshop on State Aid, 9th Permanent High Level Group meeting, Joint ECRB and PHLG meeting on Wholesale Market Opening and meeting with the ECS and EC representatives – Vienna, 21 - 25 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Energy and Infrastructure)
- Presentation of SEENSA project to the Bulgarian NSA Council – Sofia, 21 - 23 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Security Cooperation)
- Meeting with representatives of the World Bank on preparations for the Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation for the Western Balkans – Zagreb, 22 March (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Cross-cutting Issues)
- Official establishment of the South East European Law School Network (SEELS) – Skopje, 24 - 25 March 2011 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Meeting with representatives of the BIH Road Directorate and IPSA Institute - Sarajevo, 25 March 2011 (Expert on Infrastructure)

- 1st Regional Coordination meeting of the Law Enforcement Programmes in SEE – Pristina, 28 - 29 March 2011 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Regional meeting: “Regional Cooperation in MHEWS and Risk Assessment in SEE” – Sarajevo, 28 - 29 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Security Cooperation)
- XXII DPPI SEE Regional Meeting – Sarajevo, 28 - 29 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Security Cooperation)
- Speech at the Sixty fourth session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) on the topic of the role of regional integration and cooperation for promoting sustainable development in the ECE region – Geneva, 29 March 2011 (Secretary General)
- Meeting with representatives of the European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe - Zagreb, 29 March 2011 (Spokesperson/Head of Media Unit)
- Participation in a EP seminar for the Western Balkan countries“ Role of Parliament in the legislative processes and in the oversight of governments” - Brussels, 29 March 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- 20th Anniversary of the TEMPUS Programme – Belgrade, 29 - 30 March 2011 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Cross-cutting Issues)
- Opening Conference of ILECUS in Croatia, Regional Workshop – Zagreb, 29 - 30 March 2011 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Regional TIR Training Seminar – Sarajevo, 29 - 30 March 2011 (Expert on Infrastructure)
- Participation in the Euro Comment briefing on the European Council meeting held on 24-25 March 2011 - Brussels, 30 March 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- “Western Balkans and Europe 2020 – Towards Convergence and Growth”, Regional Coordination Meeting – Brussels, 30 - 31 March 2011 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Head and Deputy Head of Liaison Office, Spokesperson, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Senior Expert on Energy and Infrastructure, Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Cross-cutting Issues, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Expert on Security Cooperation)
- Meeting with the Director General for Education and Culture, European Commission - Brussels, 31 March 2011 (Secretary General)
- IPA Multi-Beneficiary Programme Coordination Meeting – Brussels, 1 April 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)

- Business Advisory Council (BAC) Meeting – Brussels, 1 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- 10th Meeting of the Partnership for Improvement of Danube Infrastructure and Navigation (PIDIN) – Vienna, 1 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Energy and Infrastructure)
- ETF meeting Policies and Programmes for Inclusive Education and Training in the Western Balkans and Turkey – Torino, 3 - 6 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Cross-cutting Issues)
- Meeting with Croatian journalists (HRT, RTL Televizija, Globus, Hina, Tportal.hr, Javno.hr, Mediaservis) - Zagreb, 4 April 2011 (Secretary General, Spokesperson)
- International Workshop „A New European Strategy for the Western Balkans and Southeast Europe” – Berlin, 4 April 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
- 3rd Meeting on the follow up of the Joint Statement on Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin – Vienna, 5 - 6 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Energy and Infrastructure)
- Meeting the Director for Enlargement, Non-EU Europe and Support to the FAC of the GSC - Brussels, 6 April 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- South-East European Centre for Law Enforcement (SELEC) Advisory Group Meeting – Bucharest, 6 - 7 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Visit to the Parliament of Montenegro and meeting with President of the Parliament, Mr. Ranko Krivokapić – Podgorica, 7 April 2011 (Secretary General)
- Participation in a COST seminar “News and Views on the European Union and Member States Partnership for International Cooperation” - Brussels, 7 April 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Participation at the Meeting of the SEECP Ministers for Sustainable Development and Energy – Budva, 8 April 2011 (Secretary General)
- 7th Regular session of the Management Board of the Regional Foundation Centre for e-Governance Development (CeGD) – Ljubljana, 8 April 2011 (Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Meeting the Desk Officer for RCC in the European External Action Service - Brussels, 8 April 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- 18th Conference of the SEEPAG: Investigating and Prosecuting Cybercrime – Zagreb, 11 - 13 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)

- Meeting of the Steering Committee of the IPA MB on the EU Civil Protection Mechanism for Candidate and potential candidate countries – Brussels, 11 - 12 April 2011 (Expert on Security Cooperation)
- Meeting with the Deputy Director General of DG Energy - Brussels, 12 April 2011 (Head of Liaison Office)
- SEE Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Congress and Waste Management and Recycling Conference – Sofia, 13 - 15 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Energy and Infrastructure)
- International Financial Institutions (IFI) Advisory group Meeting – Brussels, 12 April 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool and Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Multinational Advisory Group (MAG) Meeting – Sarajevo, 13 April 2011 (Senior Expert for Security Cooperation)
- Ministerial Meeting “Climate Change Research for Environmental Protection, Adaptation and Risk Reduction” – Belgrade, 13 April 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
- Participation in a joint parliamentary meeting “Western Balkans – towards a more integrated Europe” organized by the European Parliament and the Hungarian National Assembly - Brussels, 13 - 14 April 2011 (Head of Liaison Office)
- SEE Health Network Meeting – Bled, 14 April 2011 (Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Address at the 859th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council – Vienna, 14 April 2011 (Secretary General)
- Meeting of the Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe - Istanbul, 14 - 15 April 2011 (Spokesperson/Head of Media Unit)
- Meeting with a representative of the US Embassy in Sarajevo related to Security Cooperation initiatives – Sarajevo, 15 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Security Issues and Expert on Security Cooperation)
- Meeting with the head of the DPPI Secretariat – Sarajevo, 15 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Security Issues and Expert on Security Cooperation)
- Social Entrepreneurship Conference – Ljubljana, 15 - 17 April 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool and Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Annual General Assembly Meeting of SEPCA – Skopje, 14 - 16 April 2011 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)

- MB IPA Working Group on Public Administration and Governance – Danilovgrad, 14 - 15 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Cross-cutting Issues)
- The first meeting of Heads of Defence Procurement Departments – Budva, 18 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Security Cooperation)
- SEETO Transport Investment Conference TRINCON 2011 – Sarajevo, 19 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Senior Expert on Energy and Infrastructure and Expert on Infrastructure)
- Meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council – Strasbourg, 19 - 21 April 2011 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Workshop “Conflicts of Interest, Detection, Management and Resolution Experiences” – Tirana, 19 - 20 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Second Conference on Road Infrastructure Safety Management (Directive 2008/96/EC) – Sarajevo, 20 April 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Expert on Infrastructure)
- Participation in a policy debate organized by the European Movement International with the Prime Minister of Luxemburg "Economic Governance – From crisis to resolution, from monetary to economic union" - Brussels, 20 April 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Centre for e-Governance Development (CeGD) Supervisory Board Meeting – Ljubljana, 21 April 2011 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Conference for Launching of the Decade of Action (2011- 2020) for the Road Safety in the UNECE region – Belgrade, 27 - 29 April 2011 (Expert on Infrastructure)
- Participation in EPC policy briefing with the SG of the European External Action Service : “Europe's neighborhood in transition - challenges for the European External Action Service” - Brussels, 30 April 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- The Changing Face of Organized Crime in South Eastern Europe: Trends and Developments – Zagreb/Rakitje, 3 - 4 May 2011 (Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs and Expert on Security Cooperation)
- Participation in the EU-Moldova Forum with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova - Brussels, 4 May 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- The Joint meeting of the SEE IC with representatives of private sector and 8th Meeting of the SEE IC – Paris, 4 - 6 May 2011 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool and Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Liaison Office Advisor)

- Participation in the EPC Policy dialogue: “Dealing with the past: justice and reconciliation in the Western Balkans” with a Director in DG Enlargement and MEPs – Brussels, 5 May 2011 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Meeting the Head of the Europe and Central Asia Unit in the World Bank Office – Brussels, 6 May 2011 (Head of Liaison Office, Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Meeting with the Director-general of the Romanian Office of National Registry for Classified Information and work with his team for the preparations of the inputs in the first Conference of the SEE Forum of the Chiefs of National Security Agencies - Bucharest, 6 May 2011 (Expert on Security Cooperation)
- ‘Speak Up!’ Freedom of Expression and Media in the Western Balkans and Turkey, European Commission’s conference - Brussels, 6 May 2011 (Spokesperson/Head of Media Unit, Liaison Office Advisor)
- Meeting with the Romanian Chief of Military Intelligence and work with his staff on the SEEMIC issues - Bucharest, 9 May 2011 (Expert on Security Cooperation)

ANNEX III

LIST OF OFFICIALS OF THE REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL (RCC) SECRETARIAT (Until 9 May 2011)

SECRETARY GENERAL

1. Mr. Hido Bišćević- Secretary General of the RCC

EXPERT POOL

1. Ms. Jelica Minić- Deputy Secretary General/ Head of Expert Pool
2. Mr. Sanjin Arifagić, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Head of Economic and Social Development Unit
3. Mr. Miroslav Kukobat- Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy, Head of Infrastructure and Energy Unit
4. Mr. Virgil Constantin Ivan Cucu- Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Head of Justice and Home Affairs Unit
5. Mr. Efrem Radev- Senior Expert on Security Cooperation, Head of Security Cooperation Unit
6. Mr. Mladen Dragašević- Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Head of Building Human Capital and Cross-Cutting Issues Unit
7. Mr. Sorin Sterie- Expert on Security Issues
8. Ms. Amna Redžepagić- Expert on Infrastructure and Energy
9. Mr. Predrag Vujičić- Expert on Justice and Home Affairs
10. Mr. Nand Shani- Expert on Economic and Social Development
11. Ms. Maja Taylor- Assistant to the Head of Expert Pool
12. Ms. Elvira Ademović- Assistant to the Expert Pool

FRONT OFFICE

1. Mr. Jovan Tegovski- Chief of Staff
2. Ms. Dinka Živalj- Head of Media Unit/ Spokesperson
3. Mr. Dorin Vremis – Junior Political Advisor
4. Ms. Jasna Sinančević- Personal Assistant to the Secretary General
5. Ms. Nataša Mitrović- Assistant to the Front Office

ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

1. Mr. Alexandru Murzac- Head of Administrative Unit
2. Mr. Sead Filipović- Finance Officer
3. Ms. Mirela Mahić- Administrative Officer
4. Mr. Maid Medunjanin- IT Officer
5. Ms. Alma Gadžić- Accountant
6. Ms. Dijana Kešelj- Translator

LIAISON OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

1. Mr. Basil Coronakis- Head of Office
2. Mr. Stanislav Daskalov- Deputy Head of Office
3. Ms. Lidija Topić- Advisor
4. Ms. Martine Dell – Office Administrator

RCC SECRETARIAT'S TECHNICAL AND SERVICE STAFF

1. Ms. Selma Ahatović- Lihic- Public Affairs Assistant
2. Mr. Siniša Cvetković- Driver/Security
3. Mr. Fikret Kadrić- Driver/ Courier
4. Mr. Denis Sulić- Driver/ Courier
5. Ms. Vanja Vekić- Receptionist