



**Talking points for Hido Bišćević
Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council**

**Signing of Protocol
on Regional Cooperation in Education and Training among members of the
European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe**

Sarajevo, 30 September 2011

Mr President of the Association, Directors General, Colleagues,

- It is a pleasure to welcome you in Sarajevo today, at the premises of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretariat, on this very important occasion - **signing of Protocol on Regional Cooperation in Education and Training among members of the European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe.**
- The signing of the Protocol is a proof that, regardless of oscillations in political and socio-economic conditions in South East Europe, the region has continued moving forward. Moreover, regional cooperation is entering a phase where regional ownership should become the stepping-stone towards regional responsibility.
- At the same time, the forthcoming October-December period could bring important signs regarding the European integration path of the countries from the region.
- In this context, the RCC and its Secretariat recognize the indispensable role the public service media have in promoting regional cooperation, building a free, democratic, pluralistic, tolerant and inclusive society, as well as the challenges they face in fulfilling that role. They are one of the most powerful channel for deepening dialogue and understanding in South East Europe.

- A year ago, **the RCC**, together with the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), **brought together broadcasters, government officials, regulators and experts from South East Europe to an international conference in Sarajevo**, where the participants agreed that the region's public service media should become the engines of technological, economic, political, and cultural development of their countries, supporting integration in the EU.
- In line with the conclusions of the October conference, a follow-up meeting, **in Novi Vinodolski in November 2010, established the European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe**, as a non-profit professional body of the public service media in the region. Its establishment was supported by the RCC.
- The RCC views the Association as an important regional cooperation mechanism for enhancing sustainability, higher level of independence, professionalism and responsibility of the public media. This, we believe, will in turn result in a healthier media sector and societies across the region.
- Education and training are key to ensuring market competitiveness, as only the well-trained, up-to-date staff are able to keep abreast with technological and societal challenges of the fast developing world we are living in, and as such can fulfill the public service remit of the members of the Association.
- The Protocol on Regional Cooperation in Education and Training among members of the European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe is an important contribution to the public service broadcaster's cutting-edge advantage in the challenging media market.
- The Protocol lists a number of extremely important objectives, with the crucial aim to enable staff at all levels to meet present and future challenges; and strengthen the contribution of the public service media to the development of modern democratic societies in South East Europe.
- We very much look forward to concrete activities on enhancing the public service remit, support and knowledge-sharing among the signatory parties.
- I wish the **impressive number of 12 public service media from South East Europe**, signatories to the Protocol, backed by the RCC and the EBU, a successful cooperation in education and training, with a hope that other working groups within the Association will shortly follow the example, to the benefit of the public media, but also all of us, their viewers and listeners.

- You can count on the Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat's support in this process.
- Thank you for your attention.