



WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE CHIEF OF STAFF,

MR. JOVAN TEGOVSKI

**4TH SOUTH EAST EUROPE WORKSHOP ON COUNTER TERRORISM
“THE LINKS BETWEEN ORGANIZED CRIME AND TERRORISM”
4 – 5 NOVEMBER, ANTALYA**

Honourable Director Celik,

Distinguished representatives of national authorities and international organizations,

Ladies and Gentleman,

- I have the pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) as one of the co-organizers of this Workshop and express gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey for hosting this event for the second year in a row. Certainly, I wish to thank the United Nations Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate, the SEE Law Enforcement Centre and the Centre for Security Cooperation - RACVIAC for their valuable contribution and joint efforts in organizing this event.
- Today and tomorrow we have on our agenda a theme of importance not only for the region of South East Europe (SEE), but also beyond. The terrorism and organized crime, and in particular the links between both are not just a regional but a global and very complex problem with political, security, economic, social and human consequences.
- With this in mind, this workshop is an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas on the level and efficiency of cooperation in this very sensitive area; explore ways on how different agencies and organizations could enhance and better support regional cooperation as well as share views and experiences and propose appropriate recommendations for the future.

- Our discussions should and would contribute to improve regional capacities to address many interrelated issues in the fight against organized crime and terrorism by enhancing awareness and strengthening the knowledge in the field; promote coordination at the national and regional level, and stimulate the dissemination of good practices.
- The globalisation has brought a lot of benefits to the countries and their citizens, however it has brought a lot of new challenges and unexpected developments resulting in unprecedented casualties, material damages, financial losses etc. Terrorist organizations and organized criminal groups are working more and more closely, are increasing their links, have clear set of activities and high level of operational cooperation.
- Our region is not an exception. Although, the countries have improved their counter-terrorism capacities and made progress in the fight against the organized crime a number of challenges still remain. Significant problems not only in these two areas, but also in the fight against corruption, trans-border organized crime, drug trafficking and irregular migration have yet to be addressed.
- And, as we are all aware, these problems do not have a pure national dimension, but they are of wider international and regional nature.
- Enhanced and coordinated regional cooperation, including through developing of a common policy framework and formulating recommendations for policy makers and civil society, coordinated and joint operations, cooperation and exchange of information between intelligence, law enforcement and judiciary agencies must be high on our agenda when discussing the ways how best to address the phenomena of terrorism and organized crime.
- The regional cooperation is one of the well recognized means to ensure unity of purpose and thereby to support efforts to overcome hurdles in these two areas. It also upholds and nurtures mutual trust and confidence.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- At this point, allow me to recall the mission of the RCC, which is to promote and strengthen regional cooperation in SEE, uphold an all-inclusive and regionally-owned framework and support the European and Euro-Atlantic perspectives of the aspirants from SEE. Under the political guidance of the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECp), the RCC works to ensure

progress in key areas of cooperation, such as economic and social development, energy and infrastructure, justice and home affairs, security cooperation and building human capital.

- The RCC operates in an environment in which there is an apparent call for greater efforts to ensure economic growth, strengthen rule of law and further align judicial systems and law enforcement structures to EU and international standards, improve security, promote freedom of expression, etc.
- The new RCC Strategy and Work Programme (SWP) for 2014–2016, adopted by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SEECP last June in Ohrid, will address all priority areas of our activities, however putting the focus on important issues related to the economic and social development such as the economic governance, competitiveness, creation of jobs, rule of law etc.
- In order to assist governments in implementing their individual development strategies and EU accession related goals, the RCC intervened with a time bound SEE 2020 strategy - Jobs and Prosperity in a European Perspective. It is inspired by the EU 2020 both in terms of the issues addressed and the concept of expediting progress in areas of common interest through greater cooperation.
- The main goal is to boost prosperity and job creation, as well as underscore the European perspective of the region's future. The SEE 2020 sets out the sectoral priorities that are generally borne out from regional and national priorities as well as the actions RCC intends to undertake to implement them. It is centered on five pillars: integrated, smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and governance for growth. It should bring a switch from the consumption-led model of growth to one led by investment, production and exports.
- However, the strategy must be followed by development of national action plans which would enable achievement of the agreed targets and, in parallel, by further enhancement of the necessary conditions, in particular by strengthening the rule of law and overall stability and security in the region.
- The strategy is envisaged to be adopted at a Ministerial meeting scheduled for 21 November 2013 in Sarajevo.
- Referring to the RCC SWP 2014-2016, let me underline that the areas of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) and Security remain one of the key priorities of our work focusing on the fight against organized crime, the promotion of regional cooperation in the field of migration and fight against human trafficking.

- Both – economic development and rule of law – as priorities of our engagement in the period ahead are fully in line with the recommendations from the recently published EC’s Enlargement Strategy and Key Challenges for 2013-2014.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Let me conclude by stressing that the security challenges and threats we are faced with in the areas of terrorism and organized crime must be effectively addressed through reinforcement of the national capacities, strengthening of the regional cooperation, real time exchange of information, as well as exchange of best practices and lessons learned.
- I would like to reiterate that the RCC Secretariat will continue to work closely with all stakeholders dealing with these issues, to streamline regional activities and to make regional cooperation more efficient, thereby confirming its role in building and monitoring regional cooperation in SEE.

Thanking for your attention, I wish you a successful and fruitful workshop.