

SIXTH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL REVIEW CONFERENCE

Belgrade, Serbia

05 - 07 March 2009

Ministerial Declaration on Border Security in South Eastern Europe

Joint Declaration of the

Minister of Interior of the Republic of Albania, the

Minister of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the

Minister of Interior Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia, the

Minister of Interior and Public Administration of Montenegro, and the

Minister of Interior of the Republic of Serbia.

Belgrade, 06 March 2009

The Sixth Annual Ministerial Review Conference on Border Security establishes common goals for cooperative actions to achieve stability and prosperity in the region. We, Ministers of Interior/ Security of South East Europe, gathered here, in Belgrade, March 5-7, 2009, in order to set shared obligations and common goals for our Border Police for the full implementation of the standards needed for membership in the European Union and the adhesion to the Schengen requirements.

While **reaffirming** the spirit of cooperation and the objectives set out in the Ministerial Declarations signed in Bled in February 2004, in Skopje in February 2005, in Sarajevo in February 2006, in Dubrovnik in February 2007, and in Budva in February 2008, **we also:**

- **share a common belief** that our citizens are best served through a well established and functioning border control enhanced according to the best practices of the countries of European Union;

- **emphasize the central importance** of the border security dimension in all aspects of the negotiation process for full membership in European Union;

- **endorse the achievements** realized in the area of legal reform that resulted in the conclusion of appropriate bilateral and multilateral international agreements and required implementation protocols stipulated by the Police Cooperation Convention for South-East Europe;

- **share a common appreciation**

- for the significant move towards the creation of the leadership and management concept for each national organisation accompanied with a set of national rules and regulations and operational procedures which facilitate well-established and effective border checks and -surveillance;
- for the steps taken towards operational implementation of concepts on Risk Analyses, Criminal Intelligence and Investigation;
- for the creation of curricula for the Advanced Distance Learning course for Station Commanders and other special education and training programmes;
- for the progress made in the field of logistics to support operational activities with appropriate technical solutions for communication;

- **pledge to support** the process of establishing a Coordination Centre for the enhancement of operational cooperation between national authorities related with border security provision as proposed by the Minister of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina;

- **believe** that the progress made will initially lead towards visa liberalization and at a later stage its complete abolishment, while mutually working towards the implementation of Schengen requirements;

Furthermore, we:

- **appreciate** the assistance provided by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) through its Border Security Programme. The co-operation with DCAF enhanced our strategic vision and facilitated the improvement in operational capabilities of respective border services as well as created a regional network of experts strengthening trust and transparency;
- **will continue** firmly this co-operation by extending DCAF's current mandate and express our dedication to the implementation of the obligations stated in this Ministerial Declaration.

On our way towards full compliance with European Union standards and the implementation of best practices of the EU member states, we envisage the following goals for 2012:

In the area of **Legal Reform:**

- Border Security related legislation is harmonised with EU standards;

In the area of **Leadership and Management:**

- The Management Concept of the National Border Police (planning, organizing, motivating and controlling) is approved and is in the process of implementation;
- A full set of national operational procedures for border checks and border surveillance reconciled with Schengen requirements is established and implemented;
- A modern Anti-Corruption Programme for the Border Police is endorsed. Measures to implement this programme are continuously revised and upgraded.
- A Common Centre of Operations to coordinate the implementation of cross-border operational cooperation is established and functional;

In the area of **Logistical Support:**

- Procurement programmes for technical equipment respecting relevant EU standards are in place and lead to coordinated purchases of standardised, compatible and interoperable technical systems;
- A coordinated and synchronised system for the exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences leading to the harmonization and coordination of regional activities in all fields related to telecommunication, information technology and specialised equipment is established and followed as an every day practice;
- Common measures to create a required infrastructure providing timely and efficient transmission of information are agreed and in a permanent use facilitating further the regional police cooperation;

In the area of **Education and Training**:

- A Consortium of national education and training establishments in South East Europe and partner institutions within the EU responsible for border police education is functional. The Consortium leads the way to the maintenance, further development, and delivery of Advanced Distance Learning Courses for Station and Regional Commanders. The Consortium products meet the needs of the respective target groups and stakeholders, anticipate changes in the border management and are adaptable to the future trends;
- National curricula and special training programmes leading to the improvement of operational cross-border cooperation capacity are established and best practices are included in the learning environment ;

In the area of **Risk Analysis, Criminal Intelligence and Investigations**:

- A full set of operational procedures for Criminal Intelligence, Investigation and Risk Analysis in accordance with the relevant EU accession criteria and Schengen requirements is jointly developed, and adapted to the national process of implementation;
- An Information Management System operated and managed by specially trained professionals in accordance with relevant FRONTEX standards and the EU best practices is in use for a comprehensive information exchange between relevant national and international actors;

In order to **assure** implementation of the goals set above, we, the Ministers, will instruct relevant managerial staff to develop specific plans of action, including time frames, personal responsibility and required resources.

We **express** our gratitude to the Government of Serbia for the excellent hosting of the Sixth Annual Ministerial Review Conference.

We **sincerely appreciate** the assistance and support provided by the governments of Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland in the establishment of our respective Integrated Border Management systems and kindly ask for their continuing support in the implementation of the goals set today.

We **welcome the widening** of our circle of Ministries of Interior by those of European Union member states supporting the efforts to achieve the goals agreed.

We **look** forward to the Seventh Annual Ministerial Conference – which will be hosted by the Republic of Albania in 2010 – with optimism and in anticipation of seeing considerable progress towards achieving the objectives agreed through this Ministerial Declaration



Mr. Bujar Nishani
Minister of Interior of the
Republic of Albania

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Mr. Tarik Sadović
Minister of Security of
Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Ms. Gordana Jankuloska
Minister of Interior of the
Republic of Macedonia

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Mr. Jusuf Kalamperović
Minister of Interior and
Public Administration of
Montenegro

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Mr. Ivica Dačić Minister of
Interior of the Republic of
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