



REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE MINISTERS OF JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**

**“Regional and international cooperation
in the fight against organised crime in Southeast Europe:
Challenges and Achievements“**

**Session II: Next steps in the preparation of
a regional arrest warrant, regional network of judges and a
regional judicial atlas in criminal matters**

***ADDRESS
OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE OF RM
MR BLERIM BEXHETI***

**Belgrade, Serbia
29 – 30 November 2011**

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Dear colleagues,

It gives me a special pleasure and honour to take part in today's conference on the topic: “Regional and international cooperation in

the fight against organised crime in Southeast Europe: Challenges and Achievements”, at which it will be debated about the next steps in the **preparation of the regional arrest warrant, regional network of judges and regional judicial atlas in criminal matters.**

I would like to inform you that the Republic of Macedonia, together with the other states from the Western Balkans, follows the global trends in tackling organised crime. The reforms that are being undertaken are in the function of increasing the efficacy of the criminal prosecution and judicial authorities and promoting the cooperation among states regionally and internationally.

With the expansion of criminal offences with a foreign element in recent decades, the level of international judicial cooperation in the penal field gains new dimensions, which exceeded a long time ago the frameworks which in the Republic of Macedonia are regulated with the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

I would specifically underline the adoption of the Law on International Cooperation in Criminal Matters in September 2010.

This Law enables fast and transnational cooperation among states, and expensive and extremely slow procedures are replaced with simple, efficient and economical procedures. It specifically governs crossborder surveillance, controlled delivery, use of persons with disguised identity, joint investigative teams, etc. in addition to the other forms of international cooperation.

The Law has been fully harmonised with the European Conventions on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters; Extradition; Transfer

of Sentenced Persons; the Additional Protocols and the European Convention on Transfer of Penal Procedures, which have been ratified by the Republic of Macedonia and which are part of our internal legal order.

It is with pleasure that I would like to point out that the Republic of Macedonia has acceded to all international instruments in this field, and the international standards are regularly implemented in our national legislation.

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Today, in international legal cooperation we can be proud with the successful implementation of the direct cooperation among the courts and investigating and judicial authorities. Thanks to that cooperation, very many cases have been resolved in the past years.

We are aware that the legal framework is an exceptionally important segment and the main precondition for the successful dealing with organised crime. However, the practical operation and cooperation among the competent state bodies of the states in the region is of crucial importance in the fight against organised crime, corruption and other increasingly more frequent sophisticated forms of criminality.

For these reasons, we judge that the states from the region should work in the future on the reinforcement and promotion of regional and international cooperation with a view to realising the common

objective – the region to become an area in which citizens will feel safe and will trust their own state and its power to protect them.

Taking as a starting point the fact that the efficient legal and judicial cooperation is the fundamental means for the successful tackling of transnational organised crime and corruption, and thereby taking as a starting point the basic requirement that no one may avoid criminal prosecution or gain or keep property advantage with the criminal offence committed, a change in the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia was adopted in April this year.

Namely, with the change in the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, under which its own nationals may not be extradited, and the entry into force of Amendment XXXII, there was a need to regulate the procedure for extradition of its own nationals with bilateral agreements.

In this direction, I would like to point out that the Republic of Macedonia has experienced a significant progress in terms of extradition and would like to inform you that within this short period we signed bilateral agreements on extradition with the Republic of Croatia, Montenegro, and today we are signing such an agreement with the Republic of Serbia as well. There are ongoing negotiations to conclude agreements also with other states.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia has articulated their strong determination to intercept these increasing phenomena by means of an efficient policy of prevention and repression of organised crime and corruption through numerous activities and measures aimed at reinforcing the legal and institutional framework,

strengthening the capacity of institutions and reinforcing and educating the existing and new human resources.

However, despite the activities being undertaken and the results accomplished in this field, the need for further regulation in this field nationally, regionally and globally remains. Organised crime is our common problem and for this reason we should jointly counter it, promoting the existing mechanisms for the prevention and combat against this evil of the present.

With a view to efficiently suppressing criminality in the region of Western Balkans and Southeast Europe, the Republic of Macedonia took in to consideration the initiative raised at the Regional Ministerial Conference, held in the Republic of Slovenia in April this year, which relates to the drafting of a Regional Arrest Warrant taking as an example the European Arrest Warrant.

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Please allow me to articulate my belief that any form of improvement of the judicial and court cooperation in the region in this field will enable all states and their citizens further successful approximation to the European Union.

As to the regional network of judges and regional judicial atlas in criminal matters, I consider that the support from the European Union in this direction would be highly beneficial for both the Republic of Macedonia and the entire Western Balkans region.

Thank you for your attention.

