

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**from the forum**

*“The Republic of Macedonia in Peacekeeping Missions and its Contribution towards Regional Cooperation – Challenges and Trends,”*

**organized by**

The Association of Macedonian Alumni of the  
“George C. Marshall” European Centre for Security Studies

Skopje, November 16, 2010

As part of its 2010 program, the Association of Macedonian Alumni of the “George C. Marshall” European Centre for Security Studies held a forum entitled **“The Republic of Macedonia in Peacekeeping Missions and its Contribution towards Regional Cooperation - Challenges and Trends”** at the Army House in Skopje. Numerous members of the association, defence experts, representatives of NGO’s, ministries and government agencies attended the event.

The forum began with opening remarks from the president of the association Prof. Dr. Stojan Slaveski.

Mr. Emil Dimitriev, Deputy Defence Minister of the Republic of Macedonia and Mr. Walter Leux, Deputy Ambassador of the Republic of Germany in Macedonia addressed the audience on behalf of their institutions.

Marshall Centre professor, **Martha McSally, Col. (ret.)**, a former fighter pilot with experience in Afghanistan, talked about the problems coalition partners face during operations. She underscored the contribution that Macedonia is making in building up the Afghani armed forces.

General Zoran Dimov discussed the problems faced by Macedonian peacekeepers while conducting operations outside the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

Colonel Ljube Dukovski spoke about regional military cooperation and contributions towards peacekeeping missions.

The introductory presentations were followed by an extensive and fruitful debate, which can be summarized as follows.

Peacekeeping missions can be viewed as a facet of globalization, in which a globalized world seeks global stability. Even when a distant military or security crisis does not threaten the territorial integrity and sovereignty of a particular country, or is not even a full-blown crisis, it still endangers individual or group stability in the broadest

sense of the word. Sometimes it is a threat to energy sources or to the arteries which transport the energy that is the lifeblood of the global economy and its commerce. Sometimes a crisis may pose a threat to strategic allies and regional partners, through which the desired geostrategic status quo of a certain place in the world has been projected. Then again, a crisis may involve a safe haven used by international terrorist networks for training and financing.

Currently, the most important peacekeeping mission is the NATO-led operation for stabilization and peace support in Afghanistan. Among other things, the operation symbolizes the wholesale transformation of the North Atlantic Alliance and the armed forces of its member and partner nations, as they confront the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that require the alliance to act outside the Euro-Atlantic area.

Since the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, Afghanistan has become a focus of interest of the international community. In response to those attacks, the United States in cooperation with the NATO nations, launched the anti-terrorist operation “Enduring Freedom” in 2001. The aim of this operation has been to unseat the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and to destroy the terrorist bases of Al Qa'eda. In order to provide a more secure operational environment for the military missions and other international agencies involved in the operation, and to enhance the overall conditions in which the Kabul government functions, the UN Security Council in December 2001 adopted Resolution 1386, thereby initiating the creation of a multinational force for the stabilization of Afghanistan. This force was given the name International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF.

Sharing common democratic values, the Republic of Macedonia remains committed to participating in and contributing to activities by the international community aimed at responding to the threats and challenges to international peace and security. With its contribution of 3.5 % of its total military force – greater than that of some long-standing members of NATO – the Republic of Macedonia is acting as a *de facto* NATO member, sharing in the commitments and responsibilities of the international community in its fight against terrorism. This has permitted the rapid transformation of the country from a recipient of security to a contributor to security, thus raising Macedonia's profile as a nation whose internal values are identical with those of the Western democracies.

By its participation in the peacekeeping missions, the Republic of Macedonia demonstrates that it is part of the international anti-terrorist coalition, and makes a modest but invaluable contribution towards building peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic region and beyond. Moreover, the benefits derived by ARM from its participation in peacekeeping missions, particularly the lessons it has derived from the experience, will be felt in years to come. It is a privilege for a country with a modest economy to have such well-qualified and trained soldiers, capable of showing a high level of professionalism and contributing to the positive image of the peacekeeping missions.

The Army of the Republic of Macedonia has faced a number of challenges in conducting these missions. These have to do mainly with the selection of suitable

personnel and the preparation of contingents for their mission. Other problems that have arisen are: the considerable costs involved in mounting a mission, the variety of equipment required (spare parts, re-supply, maintenance etc.), deployment to different locations during a mission; execution of missions with several strategic partners, etc. The positive effects from participating in peacekeeping operations have been: the achievement by ARM key personnel of a high level of interoperability, the acquisition of experience in working in a joint multinational environment; the achievement of a high level of motivation among the personnel involved, mainly due to the financial compensation they receive.

Macedonia's deputy defence minister allayed concerns expressed in some quarters regarding ARM's preparedness for further peace missions. The minister declared that ARM will participate in additional peace missions and the operation in Afghanistan in accordance with its capacities and abilities. He also pointed out that NATO membership remains the strategic choice of the Republic of Macedonia. The Organization of Macedonian alumni of the Marshal Center supports this decision by the government. However, there are certain areas in which improvement is needed: There needs to be better command of military terminology; better psychological preparation of peacekeeping units; improved understanding and application of CIMIC; increased use of equipment compatible with NATO specifications; pre-departure simulation training that will prepare troops for the conditions they will face on the ground, etc.

The association expresses its readiness to contribute to the administration's ongoing efforts towards realization of the nation's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. In that respect the association offers its intellectual capacities in many areas, including the training of human resources. We believe that the Association of Macedonian Alumni of the "George C. Marshall" European Center for Security Studies has again demonstrated that it is a significant element in the NGO sector: the Association has its own areas of expertise, but it can also draw on the pool of experts at the Marshall Center (Germany). The Association will maintain its commitment to analysis of the issues in the defense and security area and Euro-Atlantic integration. We affirm our readiness as a partner with the government to contribute our intellectual resources through the conclusions and recommendations of forums such as this one.

Respectfully,

President of Marshall Center – Macedonia  
Dr. Stojan Slaveski