

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

from the forum

*"Terrorism as a Global Threat  
and the Role of Republic of Macedonia in the Fight against It"*

organized by

**the Association of Macedonian Alumni of  
the "George C. Marshall" European Center for Security Studies**

Skopje, 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2006

The forum, part of the association's 2006 program, was held at the Army House in Skopje. The event was attended by numerous association members, as well as by terrorism experts from the NGO sector and representatives of the government of the Republic of Macedonia. The event got under way with welcoming remarks by the president of the association, Prof. Stojan Kuzev. Introductory remarks were given by Dr. Trpe Stojanovski – representative of the Ministry of the Interior and by ambassador David Lit from the Marshall Center.

Presentations on the topic of were given by Mr. Metodi Hadzijanev, representative of ARM and by Dr John LeBeau professor of national security studies at the Marshall Center.

Following the presentations, participants put forth a variety of opinions on the general subject of terrorism and on the specific role that the Republic of Macedonia is playing in combatting terrorism at the global level..

There is a need for **national strategies** which will underpin the concept of territorial integrity in regions subject to large-scale violence, ethnic conflicts, racism and religious hatred. Such strategies will help to prevent the spread of these conflicts and tensions to the very institutions that are charged with maintaining stability and security. The regions of the Near East and parts of Southeastern Europe are critical in this regard, since both areas are still grappling with problems concerning recognition of territories, borders, ethnic minorities, etc.

**Regional and global cooperation** in the fight against terrorism will help Southeastern Europe (SEE) evolve into a modern region, with multiculturalism and the free movement of its peoples. That will reduce the impact of the transformation in the region, based on which many countries in SEE or parts of their territories are still beyond the reach of regional initiatives, development of democratic foundations, establishment of right goal orientation etc.

What distinguishes post-9/11 terrorism is the religious motivation that now drives radical groups. The use of religious rules of behavior has been encouraged by the radical doctrine that freedom of behavior is being restricted, identity lost and an alien way of living imposed.

An important role in spreading terrorism to the West is being played by those Moslem leaders who call on their followers to seek revenge for coalition operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the view of such leaders and their adherents, the coalition forces are occupiers.

Contributing to the tension are the countries that support terrorism, such as Iran with its possible acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, and Lebanon, with its provocations via Hezbollah against Israel and the USA.

Adding fuel to the flames are terrorist organizations that operate globally under the banner of Islam, as well as the adverse impact of globalization on living standards in parts of the Islamic world.

**The role of the Republic of Macedonia** in supporting for the fight against global terrorism clearly shows the nation's commitment to EuroAtlantic goals and the efforts of the international community to secure peace in the Near East and SEE. By signing terrorism-related conventions and pursuing a policy of the total elimination of terrorism, Macedonia has demonstrated its determination to be seen as a loyal partner.

**NATO and the USA** are playing an important role in the fight against terrorism on a global level. As key international players, they have a responsibility to establish and maintain world order and peace. Inclusion of smaller countries represents a responsibility to carry out joint training and exercises in accordance with NATO standards. The Republic of Macedonia has established a system of training which features well-coordinated, planned and organized instruction, supported by NATO and PfP programs. For example, more than 100 ARM and association members have attended programs at the George C. Marshall center. Some have even attended more than one course.

**The Republic of Macedonia has demonstrated its support for the international fight against terrorism by implementing the conclusions of the 2002 Prague Summit and the 2004 Istanbul Summit. Following on from those meetings, Macedonia undertook the following activities:**

- Further reforms in the security sector;
- Participation in anti-terrorist operations;
- Exchange of intelligence;
- Logistical cooperation;
- Weapons control, especially as it relates to the threat of the spread of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction;
- Prevention of illegal trade in weapons, munitions, explosives and materials and technology with terrorist applications;
- Cooperation with neighboring states in border protection and
- Support for regional cooperation.

In addition, the Republic of Macedonia for a third straight year has sent contingents to support peace-keeping missions (Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia.) Under provisions of the Strategic Defense Review, transformation of ARM and its full professionalization should enable Macedonia by 2013 to deploy peace-support missions of up to 1000 soldiers. However, such progress will depend on concomitant social achievements as well as on the outcome of social trends that Macedonia will face in the next few years.

In its bid to establish a democratic and modern society, the Republic of Macedonia has demonstrated its creativity by standardizing all the segments of the state apparatus wherever there is a necessity to harmonize with EU legislation and NATO procedures. Some participants in the forum criticized an alleged lack of cooperation among state bodies in the fight against terrorism. This merely serves to underline the urgency of supporting and completing the ongoing reforms. Establishment of a joint intelligence committee at the national level will contribute to better cooperation and exchange of intelligence among the security organizations tasked with combating terrorism. It will also improve the cooperation

with the USA, NATO and PfP. Another quality aspect of Macedonia's fight against terrorism is the Center for Crisis Management, which coordinates our response to crisis situations, including terrorist actions.

The position of the Republic of Macedonia vis-à-vis terrorism is significant due to the geo-strategic position it occupies in the Balkans and its clearly expressed commitment to becoming a member of the EU. Some of the reasons include good neighborly relationships and good cooperation the security bodies at national levels have in their fight against terrorism.

Examples can be seen in our integrated border security and in regional cooperation of police departments, in enhanced border and customs controls and in cooperation among the NATO and PfP countries in the region.

Macedonia can also point to the training and professionalization of key personnel, the upgrading of equipment to NATO standards, and to the way of thinking about the terrorism and adopting applicable rules of behavior etc.

Protecting critical infrastructure is vitally important for the smooth functioning of a democratic society. This includes securing sensitive IT and communication infrastructure and combating cyber crime.

Drawing on the analysis of local, regional and global trends in combating terrorism and on the comments expressed during the forum, we offer below a number of goals that need to be realized if Macedonia is to play its part in winning the fight against .

**F**irst, to continue with determination and targeting the substantive goals of the international community in combating terrorism through accomplishing NATO and EU planned activities in the process of staff training, unification of training, exercises, coordinated tasks and efficient work of the governmental institutions.

In this respect, the Republic of Macedonia should accelerate implementation of the plan for establishing a Joint Intelligence Committee, with a permanent HQ and representation from the nation's intelligence and security agencies and accomplishing cooperation and goals with the partners' departments. This alone will contribute to better and more efficient exchange of the intelligence that is crucial for the country's defense as well as for ARM missions abroad.

**S**econd, intensifying cooperation of the institutions engaged in combating terrorism, with emphasis on hiring and training personnel for the Crisis Management Center and Directorate for Protection and Rescue. This could be done by supporting defense missions and activities for combating terrorism using civilian structures.

Of key significance should be the preparation and development of the nation's defense and security capacities for participation in peace-support missions abroad. The Strategic Defense Review envisages a figure of 1000 soldiers by 2013.

**T**hird, massive involvement and staff training for combating terrorism is necessary. Coordinated participation and activities among security agencies in the public and private sector is necessary too. It is becoming more and more common to use unsolicited information provided by people employed in private companies, public enterprises, civic associations, business elites etc. regarding terrorist activities. Developing a creative approach to accomplishing homeland security and defense lies in the success of state bodies in using information provided by citizens. Therefore, it is important to initiate projects that will bring issues in the area of personnel management, administration, information technology, and personal and industrial security closer to everyone with the ability to fully apply them. Furthermore, it is necessary to provide protection for people who supply information about

terrorism, organized crime, financing of dubious activities etc; their personal security, conspiracies, when and how the information can be given and its follow up.

However, in dealing with the threats of terrorism, Macedonia's credibility rests on its ability to successfully overcome a number of challenges. Hence we have singled out those areas in which we believe improvement is needed:

- ***fight against corruption*** (reports are still being published in which Republic of Macedonia is identified as a country with a high level of corruption. This is a serious problem in dealing with terrorism, especially where terrorism intersects with organized crime);

- ***professionalization of personnel*** (the transition from one social system to another is not yet complete, since some personnel have outmoded work-habits and lack foreign language proficiency, particularly in English. They are not ready to accept new modern methods of interactive and coordinated work and to adapt to western security procedures, tactics and techniques);

- ***strengthening and improvement of technology*** (the fact that the current terrorism is a phenomenon which significantly narrows the dividing line between the trivial and modern on the one hand and its flexibility on the other, imposes a need for the latest technology which will be compatible with the current methods used for dealing with terrorism at a global level).

- ***strengthening of border security*** (in spite of the intensive transformation of border security, and bearing in mind the previously mentioned challenges, border security should still be improved, so as to prevent terrorists from transiting the Republic of Macedonia and from using its territory as a base for any kind of terrorist activity);

- ***interagency cooperation*** (successful management of the terrorist threat is almost inconceivable without established horizontal links and without an understanding of the "common language" of executive bodies up to the lowest tactical level);

- ***implementation of the law*** (although some analysts comment that the full rule of law does not exist in the Republic of Macedonia, it should be pointed out that such conclusions are provisional and not complete. Specifically, the legal establishment and its harmonization with legislation of the EU countries is at an appropriate level. What is lacking, however, is implementation, i.e. the complete application of rules and regulations.)

Regardless, such gaps can easily be filled by structures that lack progressive intentions and are capable of inflicting significant damage to the Republic of Macedonia, not only in the area of security but in a wider sense too.

In that regard, the Association of Macedonian Alumni of the "George C. Marshall" European Center for Security Studies is an important player in the non-governmental sector. By expressing points of views, assessments, attitudes and proposals it can help state bodies to plan and realize national interests. Therefore, the association emphasizes its continued readiness to cooperate and contribute in accomplishing the strategic goals of the Republic of Macedonia.

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