

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

from the forum

### *"Border Security of Republic of Macedonia – Implementation, Status and Problems"*

organized by

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

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The forum attracted an impressive number of participants from the association, as well as experts in the fields of defense and security studies and representatives of NGOs and various ministries and agencies of the Macedonian government. The forum was opened with introductory remarks from association president Dr. Stojan Kuzev. Interior Minister Ms. Gordana Jankulovska, US ambassador, Her Excellency Gillian Milovanovich and German ambassador, His Excellency Ralf Breth.

Following the opening remarks, presentations were given by Dr. John Clark, professor of leadership, management and defense planning at the Marshall Center, and by Sashko Kocev, advisor on cross-border cooperation at the Ministry of Interior (MOI).

Professor Clark's presentation was entitled "**Organization for Safe Borders**". He began with an assessment of the threats and risks to a country's borders, concluding that 100% defense, while impossible, still remains a desired goal. He also presented an ideal model of safe borders, under which borders would be open for the movement of people, goods and ideas but almost hermetically sealed for terrorists and criminals.

Professor Clark continued by showing the structure of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, highlighting the following offices and agencies:

- Directorate for transport and border security;

- US Coast Guard;

- Bureau for borders and immigrant services and

- Directorate for Science and Technology.

Dr. Clark outlined what he considered to be the key initiatives in border security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Central to his idea of "Smart Borders for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" are customs agencies and their powers

A 21<sup>st</sup> century customs agency should encompass the following elements:

- Initiative for container security;
- Partnership between commerce and customs in the fight against terrorism;
- System for tracking vehicles and cargo;
- Free and secure trade;
- Immigration;
- Secure electronic network for rapid border inspection and
- Information system for tracking students and visitors.

In “Smart Borders for 21st Century” technology can play a key role. Therefore Dr. Clark suggested elements of crucial importance in planning and selecting technology. In this process, he said, interministerial coordination can be a decisive factor and in no way should be neglected.

He completed his presentation by recommending a number of considerations that should be taken into account when defining a system of secure borders for the Republic of Macedonia.

Mr. Sashko Kocev, advisor on cross-border cooperation at the MOI, gave a presentation entitled "**Integrated Border Management – Experiences and the Current Situation**". His review included the following points.

- Features of border security system applied in the Republic of Macedonia (hereinafter "RM") from its independence in 1991 to 2004. This was a period of divided responsibility, the Ministry of Defense being responsible for the so-called green border and MOI taking responsibility for border crossings and internal security. The system was characterized by poor coordination and the lack of prescribed standards for cooperation between the institutions involved in border security.
- Adoption of the Integrated Border Management (IBM) model, this being one of the basic conditions for future full membership in NATO and the EU.

Establishment of an inter-ministerial working group for IBM composed of representatives from 9 (nine) ministries. Following European standards, the working group developed a National Strategy for IBM, which was adopted by the government in December 2003.

- In line with the strategy, a number of actions have been taken:
  - ⇒ Changes in legal regulations, creating a legal framework for application of the IBM concept;
  - ⇒ Establishment of the border police within the MOI as a specialized service for border security;
  - ⇒ Transfer to MOI of the responsibility for securing national borders;
  - ⇒ Education and training of border police;
  - ⇒ Development of a modern IT system;
  - ⇒ Detailed definition of the jurisdiction of the different ministries involved in IBM and
  - ⇒ Enhancement of cross-border cooperation with the border agencies of neighboring countries.
- Organizational and functional configuration of the border police on three different levels: national (strategic), regional (operational) and local (tactical);
- Activities in line with the three basic pillars of IBM: Inter-agency cooperation, intra-agency cooperation and international cooperation;
- Lessons learned in developing cross-border cooperation;
- Main challenges currently faced by the border police: an increase in the number of illegal crossings of the border with EU member Greece, the fight against organized crime especially human trafficking and smuggling of immigrants.

These two absorbing presentations drew a number of questions and comments from association members in the discussion period that followed. The main points of the discussion are given below:

- Although fifteen years have passed since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain, border security remains a significant element in overall national security;
- A professional approach based on experience and scientific research is a basic prerequisite, if the border police are to meet today's challenges;
- The IBM concept, adapted to conditions in Macedonia and the region, represents a model for efficient border management, with optimal usage of human and material resources;
- RM, as a candidate country for EU membership, is firmly committed to the complete application of European standards in the area of border security (Schengen *acquis*).

The presentations and ensuing discussions provided an opportunity for the airing of opinions on the transfer of border security from ARM to MOI. Given that effective border security is one of the criteria for EU membership, it was suggested that the process of transformation has been completed remarkably quickly, bearing in mind the security challenges in the region and trends in the European Union. Regional and global cooperation on border security will transform South East Europe (SEE) into a modern region with a vibrant multiculturalism and the free movement of people. That will reduce the influence the transformation in the regions because of which many countries in SEE or parts of their territories are still out of the control of the regional initiatives, development of democratic foundations and establishing real orientation and similar.

In the hope that they will make a soundly based contribution to Macedonia's EuroAtlantic integration, the Alumni Association would like to present the following recommendations for the more efficient functioning of border security in the republic.

- Total border security is an illusion;
- The border must be secured in depth;
- Consideration should be given to the establishment of permanent inter-ministerial working groups to promote effective border security;
- It is essential that the system and those who operate it be tested on a regular basis, using simulation exercises that are as realistic as possible, and
- Consideration should be given to reviving abandoned concepts concerning national security.

The European Center for Security Studies provides security professionals both military and civilian with advanced training and exposure to fresh ideas and opinions. In so doing, it contributes through its students to accomplishing the strategies of the international community in the defense and security sector.

The work of the Alumni Association is a real refreshment, an important subject and assistance to the state administration of Republic of Macedonia by which the security flow in planning and accomplishing the national strategy for defense and security will contribute to Macedonia's taking its rightful place in the international community and is a clear signal to realize our aspiration for NATO and EU membership.

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