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Initiatives under way and further action needed

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Security Sector Reform and the Media

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In a transition country, especially after a long rule of a regime such as we had until October 2000, all spheres have to undergo thorough reforms.

Many legal and structural reforms are ongoing and one of the important sectors which needs to be fundamentally restructured is a security sector.

A success of the security sector reforms depends very much on how strong and persistent is a public pressure on the elected bodies and a government to carry on with real rather than cosmetic changes. In a society like Serbia, where state institutions do not function yet, a success of such demanding endeavour depends very much of two factors. One is capability, integrity and commitment of the responsible minister and her/his staff, and the other is a public support, which gives legitimacy to the reform programme and unpopular measures that must be undertaken.

In order to carry out reforms, make the state institutions functioning and building sustainable democracy, a systematic education of journalists and media people should be conducted, thus creating a pool of qualified journalists and analysts, who are equally important to those who are directly involved in the reform, process.

MEDIA TRAINING PROGRAMME: SUPPORT TO REFORMS IN SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

The Media Center is intent to implement a media training programme entitled "Support to reforms in Serbia and Montenegro", supported by European Agency for Reconstruction, within the CARDS program for the Western Balkans.

The Media Center has proposed five specific areas to focus on, considering them central for important reform processes, one of which is defense and security sector issues:

List of topics to be addressed by a series of courses tackling security issues and defence sector reforms are classified into five main clusters:

- Reform of Serbia and Montenegro security sector
- Democratic control of S&M armed forces
- S&M army reform
- Reform of the police and secret services in S&M
- Global and national security

Lecturers: Experts of the Centre for Civil-Military Relations, Faculty of Political Sciences, Serbian and Montenegrin governments, as well as experts from the region and Euro-Atlantic community.

Duration: The courses shall last one, three or five days and shall be held in Belgrade and inland Serbia, primarily for younger journalists.

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The shared characteristic of all training courses is participation of a foreign lecturer, a moderator (acting as an intermediary between the lecturer and journalists), and the final output in the form of a glossary or exercise book for subsequent use.

In addition to its main objective, which is to improve professional coverage of reform processes, the journalists training program shall, to the extent possible, also aim at strengthening the capacities of individual media. In brief, further to acquiring the knowledge necessary for the grasp of reforms, the program shall be geared to develop analytical, critical and investigative journalism. To support all this, an insight into current developments and experience of the countries in the region shall be provided.

MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT: CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AND SECURITY ISSUES

In order to facilitate an open dialogue concerning confidence building measures between the military and civil society through media, educate public on the need for democratisation of civil-military relations and the role of the media in particular in redesigning traditional dichotomy between the society and the defence sector and fighting the authoritarian historical legacy, the Media Center is intent to implement the media monitoring focusing in the civil-military relations and security issues.

Since the media have considerable impact on the society at large, especially in times of overall modernization and democratisation of society and ongoing transitional process, media and journalists play an extremely important role of presenting to the general public the necessity and significance of overall social and economic reforms in a timely, professional and objective manner.

To that end, the Media Center's project "Media Monitoring" will provide regular quantitative and qualitative analyses of media coverage, focusing mostly on civil-military relations, security issues and defence sector reforms.

In the course of ten-month period of implementation, the Project's findings stemming from the monitoring will be placed at the Media Center's web site and update monthly. Additional explanations and in-depth assessments will be given at monthly press conferences at the Media Center.

Monitored media outlets:

Regular analyses will include daily prime time newscasts aired by seven major TV stations - the Radio & Television of Serbia, the BK Telekom, the TV Politika, the TV Studio B, the TV B92, the TV Novi Sad and the TV Pink, as well as a weekly programme focusing on the military "Permission to speak (aired on RTS).

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Regular analyses of the print media will cover six relevant dailies published in Serbia – Kosovo excluded – such as the Politika, the Danas, the Blic, the Glas Javnosti, Balkan and the Vecernje Novosti as well as the Serbian weeklies the NIN, the Vreme, the Reporter, the Nedeljni Telegraf and Blic News. Papers' circulation and the SMMRI's data on their impact on the public have been decisive for the choice of the papers to be monitored.

Media Support to Security Sector Reforms in the Western Balkans Project

The Media Center is intent to organize 12 two-hour expert panel discussions, with ensuing TV and radio production, intended for both domestic and foreign journalists covering security sector reform (SSR) issues. The thematic concept of the panels will be based on a combination of central and/or inadequately and scarcely covered aspects and dimensions of the SSR process. When addressing the security issues, special emphasis will be placed on the experience and results of the former socialist Eastern European countries which already underwent the reforms of the armed forces, as well as the endeavours of the neighbouring countries through participation of the experts from the region.

The proposed project is to provide the journalists and other researchers with unbiased interpretations and in-depth analyses of achievements and difficulties of the security sector reforms in Serbia and Montenegro and comparative analyses overview, for the purpose of better understanding and more competent coverage of security related issues.

The aim of the proposed project is to give the press the tool to promote in the public the view of the necessity for changing the civil-military relations and make the public aware of non-transparency of defence-related issues which in their

The Project will assist the journalists to utilize the legitimate function of the media, acting in the public interest, to set public agenda actively promoting democratic principles, including the principles of the democratic control of armed forces.

This project proposal is in the phase of fund-raising.

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Conference Papers constitute studies designed to promote reflection and discussion on civil-military relations and issues of democratic control over defence and security sector. The publication of these documents is **unedited** and **unreviewed**.

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