



**REGIONAL ARMS CONTROL VERIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION ASSISTANCE CENTRE
(RACVIAC)**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO 11th SP WT III MEETING

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. After 4 years of its existence, RACVIAC is a well-established institution in SEE. It focuses, in essence, on the organization of seminars and courses in a rather broad spectrum of issues with visible impacts – RACVIAC has hosted over 2600 participants from 30 countries in 90 activities up to now. It provides a platform for dialogue, exchange of views, promoting co-operation and is a respected institution not only for arms control (AC) training. RACVIAC is successful and its contribution for SEE countries is appreciated.

2. The first phase of RACVIAC was characterized by focussing on regional AC training mainly. In parallel aspects for promotion of dialogue and co-operation amongst SEE states were touched.

3. The second phase of RACVIAC is characterized by a refocus of its activities, emphasising military-politico issues. AC training has been maintained (DAYTON Art IV, Vienna Document 99, Open Skies, CFE, English AC Terminology). The scope of participants has increasingly included members of ministries outside the MOD (MFA, MOI, Ministry of Education), from the civil society as well as parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, and NGOs. The number of activities has increased and co-operation with other institutions, working in the same fields, (DCAF, SEESAC, SIPRI, NATO, OPCW, SEDM, UNDP, DPPI, OSCE), has been expanded significantly.

4. The third phase of RACVIAC is in the process of preparation and development of a Defence Conversion Center. Defence Ministers of the South East European Co-operation Process (SEEC) adopted a Declaration on Defence Conversion in Bucharest on 31 March 2005. According to this Declaration the Ministers of Defence encourage RACVIAC to strengthen its role as a regional centre for defense conversion, using the existing capacities of RACVIAC.

RACVIAC will not be turned into a center dealing exclusively with defence conversion, but will include it additionally to the existing scope of activities.

PRESENT SITUATION

5. After the 11th MAG Meeting and the adoption of the RACVIAC Programme and Budget 2005, RACVIAC will continue with the main areas of activities from the Medium Term Strategy as follows:

- Reform of armed forces (democratic control of armed forces, code of conduct, downsizing & retraining)
- Confidence and security building measures (orientation course for site commanders)

- Selected border management (co-operation with DCAF, OHRID border process Meeting)
- SALW (co-operation with SEESAC)
- Export control of dual-use equipment (co-operation with SIPRI)
- Disaster Management (in co-operation with DPPI, SEDM, UNDP, NATO, civil-military co-operation, protection of critical infrastructure)
- Arms Control issues (DPA, CFE/adapted CFE, English Arms Control Terminology, Open Skies)

6. Regarding co-operation, RACVIAC continued to co-operate with SEESAC and DCAF, as well as with SIPRI and OPCW.

Good relations have been established with the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office for Articles II and IV, Dayton Peace Accords.

RACVIAC also installed good relations with the OSCE Secretariat and they promised to officially invite RACVIAC to all OSCE Meetings (AIAM, FSC and CPC).

RACVIAC successfully co-operates with DTRA, whose personnel is attending and participating in RACVIAC's activities. They send assistances to RACVIAC courses (CFE, Dayton Art. IV).

RACVIAC was present at the Final Planning Conference of the SEESIM 04 Exercise, in the framework of the SEE Defence Ministerial (SEDM) in September and additionally at the Director's level at the exercise in TR, November 2004. This might lead to future concrete SEDM/RACVIAC activities in Disaster Management and Border Management.

RACVIAC participated at the Southeaster Europe Clearing House Conference in Ljubljana on 30th November 2004 and became a member of the SEEC Organizing Committee.

7. RACVIAC deepened co-operation with countries in the region by visiting regional countries, organizing meetings of Ambassadors and Defence Attachés of MAG and other interested countries accredited to Croatia in RACVIAC. The Director of RACVIAC met high-ranking officials from several regional countries and visited a number of embassies in Zagreb. Additionally, several Ambassadors accredited to Croatia as well as officials from international organizations and institutions visited RACVIAC.

8. RACVIAC activities continue to be well accepted and fully booked by participants from the region.

9. As MD has become a full member of the MAG, it sent a member of permanent Staff to RACVIAC, who is sponsored by NL.

10. Changes in the MAG, resulted from the 11th MAG Meeting are as follows:

- Denmark is no longer a full member in the MAG, but received observer status
- Canada, Czech Republic, Poland, Spain and USA are observers to the MAG

ACTIVITIES

11. Since November last year, RACVIAC has executed a further 12 activities:

- In the field of AC: An Orientation Course for Site Commanders (BA, HR, S&M); a Dayton IV Inspection and Escort course with the practical phase in S&M; an English Arms Control Terminology Course; Seminar on Arms Control Regimes in SEE.
- Regarding Military-political issues: Training week for Parliamentary Staff Experts from SEE in co-operation with DCAF; Seminar on the Role of Paliaments in Security

Sector Reform in co-operation with SEESAC; a Seminar on SALW Control in SEE-Regional Seminar on Renewing the UN PoA on SALW and Progress Towards EU Accession; a Disaster Management Workshop focused on protection of critical infrastructure in co-operation with DPPI in the beginning of May 2005

- Four specific meetings were organized for **RACVIAC/MAG internal business**:
 - First Friends of the Chair Meeting in October took place in RACVIAC
 - Second Friends of the Chair Meeting in February took place in the German MFA, Berlin
 - Defence Attaches Meeting in January
 - Ambassadors Meeting in March
- Besides that, RACVIAC hosted/supported following **other meetings**:
 - Workshop SPECTRA organized by the Croatian MOD, Transition Office from 16-24 October 2004
 - Regional Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI) Meeting on 2nd March 2005 organized by the Stability Pact WT III

GAPS

12. There are however, some areas of concern at present:
 - The input from SEE states regarding programme, RACVIAC's further development and the overall interest in RACVIAC's activities may be assessed as decreasing.
 - Many other organisations and institutions are working in similar fields as RACVIAC.
 - There remains some incompatibility of the planning processes with partner organizations.
 - RACVIAC is not able to provide expertise in analyzing the real needs of SEE countries.

PERSONNEL

13. The biggest challenge for the near future will be the availability of an appropriate number of permanent staff with sufficient expertise, especially in the field of defence conversion.

14. Some MAG countries are no longer sending staff members such as BG, FR and GB, and this trend might continue.

15. Increasing difficulties exist regarding recruitment of personnel that can cope with RACVIAC's new focus and more military-politico direction and defence conversion. MAG countries should try to include, increasingly, personnel from outside of the arms control and even the military community. The more demanding our programme becomes, the more relevant expertise of staff members will become. Regional ownership has to be carried by regional responsibility.

16. The experience of participants from the countries of the region sometimes does not correspond to the required level of knowledge (English knowledge and professional expertise). We also have increasing difficulty to find qualified lecturers.

FUTURE

17. RACVIAC's main challenges in the near future will be the issue of defence conversion. All MAG nations welcomed the fact that the Ministers of Defence from the region put the request forward to have defence conversion as a major topic in the area of defence policy. This proves demand driven approach and regional ownership. MAG members agreed to approve RACVIAC dealing with defence conversion in principle and drafted a statement which takes into consideration proposals of MAG countries made at this meeting.

The statement includes the MAG decision:

- to task the Director of RACVIAC to prepare a Concept Paper, including all relevant aspects concerning the future possible involvement of RACVIAC in the field of defence conversion
- to distribute the Questionnaire on Defence Conversion Progress and Needs to the competent national authorities and to prepare a report on the answers received for the MAG countries.

All MAG countries agreed to hold an extraordinary MAG Meeting in the first week of July, dedicated primarily to the question of defence conversion.

RACVIAC is currently in the process of preparing this extraordinary MAG Meeting in July. If the MAG then approves the new tasks for RACVIAC, then the further steps will be: recruitment of personnel with appropriate expertise, organisational frame, co-operation with other relevant organizations, ensuring additional funds which are required, and organization of three Working Groups on defence conversion issues.

18. RACVIAC was offered by Slovenia and France to organize 2 joint activities. The first activity on the Code of Conduct will be sponsored by Slovenia, while the second activity, on European Security and Defense Policy, will be conducted in RACVIAC and sponsored by France.

19. RACVIAC will try to establish better links to organizations who have expertise in analysis of security sector reform, and who could advise us on the real needs and the priorities of the SEE countries (SP, NATO, SEDM, UNDP, DPPI, OSCE, EU, SIPRI, OPCW, CPC).

20. To achieve this goal, RACVIAC will on the other hand strengthen and re-establish contacts with high ranking officials of SEE countries. Regarding this we need the help of the Stability Pact, as well as for a stable financing of RACVIAC for the future.