

AR/054

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SEESAC ACTIVITY REPORT – AR54

SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE REGIONAL SEMINAR TOWARDS NATO AND EU ACCESSION: EFFECTIVE EXPORT CONTROL LEGISLATION – LESSONS LEARNED

SEESAC FUNCTIONAL AREA	FA 2 - Legislative and Regulatory Issues FA 3 - Management Information
SEESAC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY	OA 1 - Capacity Building OA 2 - Co-ordination Measures OA 3 - Information Management and Exchange

On 20 - 22 June 2005, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria and SEESAC co-organized a regional seminar on effective export control legislation in light of NATO and EU accession. The governments of all countries participating in the Stability Pact Regional Implementation Plan on SALW were represented at the meeting. Civil society was also represented, with delegates in attendance from the Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD), Saferworld and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). In addition, CSD assisted in the planning and the organization of the seminar.



The seminar had two aims: 1) to highlight lessons learned, by the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania, with the aim of facilitating the process of EU Accession for other regional governments in terms of SALW transfer issues; and 2) to disseminate country specific information on the implementation of effective export control legislation – in light of NATO and EU accession goals.

The opening statements were presented by Nikolay Milkov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, Krassimir Benevski, UNDP Bulgaria, and Diman Dimov, Deputy Team Leader SEESAC. As NATO members and EU acceding countries, the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania are particularly well placed to play a leading role in sharing their experience regarding the implementation of effective export control legislation. The seminar therefore presented each country's experience with the implementation of legislation harmonized to NATO and EU best practices, the highlight being on the Bulgarian export control system. The discussions were wide ranging and increased the insight of all participants regarding potential pitfalls and challenges in bringing the domestic legislation in line with EU requirements.

One of the primary functional areas in SEESAC's mandate is addressing the legislative and regulative issues regarding SALW in stakeholder nations within South Eastern Europe. The SEESAC work in this field concentrates mainly on providing support to the regional harmonisation of arms control and export legislation. Management of information is another primary functional area of SEESAC. Bringing together



SEE countries to share their experiences on export control legislation increases transparency and provides excellent opportunities to discuss lessons learned.

The conclusions from the Seminar on Export Control Legislation could be summarised as follows:

- ❑ The implementation of the export control legislation is not a single act but a process, which the SEE countries will continue to improve.
- ❑ One area that requires special attention is the strengthening of administrative capacities.
- ❑ An important lesson learned from the Bulgarian experience is the need to achieve a balance between state control and the opportunity for the arms industry to compete successfully in the global market.
- ❑ The recommendation is to maintain a regular dialogue with representatives from the arms industry in order to raise awareness regarding existing export control legislation.

Ongoing information sharing about regional arms laws remains a priority for SEE countries. The participants of the seminar reached an agreement to provide information about the latest changes of their countries' arms laws to SEESAC in order to facilitate an update of the SEESAC South Eastern Europe Arms Law Compendium.

For further information on this event please contact Diman Dimov, Deputy Team Leader SEESAC, by telephone on (+381) (11) 344 6353 or by email at diman.dimov@undp.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Wilkinson', is located below the contact information. The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

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