



Contact:

Danijela Đurić
SEESAC Communications Assistant
Tel: +381 11 344 63 53
Fax: +381 11 344 63 56
E-mail: danijela.djuric@undp.org
URL: www.seesac.org

MEDIA ADVISORY

REGIONAL SEMINAR ON THE MARKING AND TRACING OF FIREARMS HOTEL ZIRA, BELGRADE (SERBIA), 14 – 15 SEPTEMBER 2010

On 14-15 September 2010 the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) is hosting a **regional seminar on the Marking and Tracing of Firearms** for government officials and international organizations.

The seminar will be opened at 09.15 by **Mr. Thomas Gnocchi**, Head of Political Section, Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia and **Mr. William S. Infante**, UN Resident Coordinator and chaired by **Mr. Diman Dimov**, SEESAC Team Leader. The seminar will be attended by the government representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The seminar is funded by the European Union (EU) and it is an activity under the EU COUNCIL DECISION 2010/179/CFSP of 11 March 2010 in support of SEESAC arms control activities in the Western Balkans, in the framework of the EU Strategy to combat the illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition. The goal of the seminar is to review the process of: i) the adherence to international instruments; ii) the adoption of national legislation on marking and tracing in the countries of the South East Europe (SEE); and iii) the implementation of the national legislation. A specific objective will be to review the implementation of the requirement for marking of imported weapons under the UN Firearms Protocol. The outcome of the seminar will be the identification of support mechanisms and synergies in the following areas: i) development and implementation of policy and legislation; ii) membership in the Permanent International Commission for Firearms; iii) identification of technical support for marking and tracing of firearms; iv) identification of capacity building needs; and v) identification of synergies between the national institutions.

Most of the SEE countries have in their legislation references to marking and tracing of weapons. All have acceded to the relevant international instruments in that area: the UN Firearms Protocol, the International Tracing Instrument and the UN Programme of Action on SALW. Many have also undertaken the harmonization of their legislation with the Council Directive 91/477/EEC on the control of the acquisition and possession of weapons. The current challenge for the SEE countries is the implementation of their legal and political commitments in the area of marking and tracing of firearms. The main difficulties are in the field of marking of imported weapons, the ballistic tracing, the development of effective weapons registration and record-keeping systems, and the participation in information exchange mechanisms.

The official language of the seminar is English. Simultaneous translation will be provided. There will be an opportunity for interviews after the first session of the seminar.

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About SEESAC:

The South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) has a mandate from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) to further support all international and national stakeholders by strengthening national and regional capacity to control and reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and thus contribute to enhanced stability, security and development in South Eastern and Eastern Europe. More information about SEESAC can be found on <http://www.seesac.org/about-seesac/1/>