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## 8th Meeting of the Regional Information Exchange Process (RIEP) - Participants Call for the Continuation of the Process

On 20 November 2012, members of the Regional Information Exchange Process (RIEP) attended the group's 8th meeting. Funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by UNDP/SEESAC, REIP gathers representative of government authorities responsible for arms exports control from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia.

The meeting was held in Tirana, Albania and participants were welcomed by Mr. Gert Kodra, Expert of the Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Dr. Ivan Zverzhanovski, UNDP/SEESAC's Team Leader a.i.

"We all can recognize that RIEP has become an important facilitator of the dialogue between Balkan countries in the field of export control, an important step to their future integration into the EU," said Mr. Kodra in his opening remarks and highlighted the importance Albania gives to export control as an element of its national security.

On this occasion, the UNDP/SEESAC team reviewed the group's most recent accomplishments in advancing export control on both national and regional level through exchange of information on brokering activities, as well as production and development of national and regional reports. Next steps were considered and agreed upon, setting the ground for the continuation of the RIEP.

A significant portion of the meeting was dedicated to regular information exchange on export and import policies of participating countries. Representatives discussed recent updates in SALW legislative procedures, the existing controls of SALW brokering activities as well as the post-export control measures and ways of improving those.

With the first phase of the REIP initiative coming to a close, participants expressed their great satisfaction with the results accomplished in the course of the past three years and appealed for the continuation of the process under the leadership of UNDP/SEESAC.

RIEP was initiated in 2009 with the aim of improving the capacity of responsible national authorities to control arms exports, through the provision of technical support and advancement of regional cooperation and exchange. In the course of the process, the participating countries have made great strides in their ability to track the flow of arms and have significantly improved transparency of these transactions through the production of national and regional reports. The Western Balkan Regional Report on Arms Exports, of which the 4th edition is coming out in November 2012, can only be compared to the Regional Report produced by the EU member countries.



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