



***REPORT
ON THE ACTIVITIES OF
THE REGIONAL
COOPERATION COUNCIL
SECRETARIAT***

**BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE REGIONAL
COOPERATION COUNCIL**

**SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF THE REGIONAL
COOPERATION COUNCIL IN LINE WITH
ARTICLE 10 OF THE STATUTE OF THE
REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL**

SARAJEVO, 5 March 2009

I. Introduction

This report on the activities of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretariat is submitted by the Secretary General of the RCC to the RCC Board in line with Article 10 of the Statute of the RCC. It covers the period between 6 December 2008 and 28 February 2009.

In the reporting period the Secretariat of the RCC continued with its substantial activities on the implementation of its Strategic Work Programme 2008 – 2009 as well as with the implementation of the conclusions of the RCC Board held on 12 December 2008. The Secretariat also continued with the activities relating to political relations with RCC members, process of networking between the RCC members from South East Europe, European Commission, International Financial Institutions (IFI's) and other donors, the outreach campaign in the members from South East Europe, enhanced dialogue with the European institutions as well as enhanced dialogue with other regional organizations and initiatives.

A complete list of events attended by the Secretary General of the RCC and the officials of the RCC Secretariat is attached to this Report as Annex I.

II. Political aspects and general framework of the RCC activities

The scope of activities in the reporting period maintained its usual dynamics and pace due to the occurrence of important events which affected the region of South East Europe and provoked action on the part of the RCC.

Firstly, the effects of the dispute between the Russian Federation and Ukraine concerning the pricing and transport of natural gas supplies, which resulted in a complete halt in the delivery of energy supplies to Europe, had the most dramatic consequences on South East Europe. In order to draw the attention of the highest officials of these two countries to the vulnerability of South East Europe and its dependence on energy supplies from the Russian Federation, the RCC Secretary General wrote, on 8 January 2009, letters to the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin as well as to the Prime Minister of Ukraine, Yulia Timoshenko and invited them to resume deliveries of natural gas to South East Europe.

Secondly, there is growing awareness that the effects of the global financial and economic crises could spill over to South East Europe and put into question not only regional cooperation and projects generated within the framework of the RCC, but the overall efforts of individual governments aimed at achieving European and Euro-Atlantic integration, sustained economic development and durable stability architecture as a whole.

The communication of the RCC Secretary General with the government representatives of the region during the Informal Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) Participating States in Chisinau on 30 January 2009 as well as on the occasion of the Belgrade high-level meeting on regional cooperation and solidarity on 3 February 2009, indicates that there is increasing awareness of the need to accelerate the EU accession related reforms. There is also growing receptiveness towards regional solidarity at this time of crisis as well as a growing understanding that cooperation and economic development must proceed regardless of outstanding bilateral issues.

In the light of the possible adverse spilling over of the economic and financial crisis to South East Europe, the RCC Secretary General wrote to the Member of the European Commission responsible for Enlargement Olli Rehn as well as to the current Czech and incoming Swedish Presidencies of the EU Council, outlining concrete proposals for countering the spill-over effects of economic recession and financial crisis and calling on the officials to keep the focus of the EU on South East Europe and assist it with all the instruments and facilities at their disposal in overcoming the difficult period ahead. Secretary General informed as well Prime Ministers of the RCC members from South East Europe, in subsequent letters, on his proposals addressed to the European Commission.

The launch of the networking mechanism between the RCC members from South East Europe, the RCC Secretariat, with the involvement of European Commission and relevant IFIs, resulted in an analytical document produced by the RCC Secretariat outlining the priorities of the region within the framework of the five priority areas of the RCC. In its initial stage this process addressed specifically National Coordinators from RCC members from South East Europe but, in order to achieve full coordination and ensure efficiency of available programmes and projects, the involvement of other main players with interest in South East Europe, namely the European Commission and IFI's is to be assured. So far the response from these partners to this initiative has been positive.

Taking into consideration the complexity and demanding character of this process as well as its novelty and usefulness in identifying priority areas for generating regional projects, its first steps are encouraging. It was evident from the discussions that this process needs to be further elaborated and explained to all the participants in view of the existing mechanisms within the Multi-beneficiary IPA. The RCC Secretariat is firmly convinced of its inherent added value for promoting the principle of genuine regional ownership and mobilizing the potential for sustainable regional cooperation in South East Europe.

As far as regional cooperation in the wider context of European integration is concerned, contacts with the current Czech and incoming Swedish Presidencies of the EU Council have confirmed that the region of South East Europe and, particularly the Western Balkans, shall be among the priorities of their terms-in-office. Both current and incoming Presidency of the EU Council expressed readiness to make substantial efforts to support concrete regional cooperation projects and to open avenues for accelerating the EU integration process. In political consultations with representatives of the region, the

Secretary General conveyed this message and strived to impress on the region the necessity to keep up the work in 2009 and make positive steps in this direction.

The headway achieved within the RCC framework in the course of the reporting period in respect of the development of regional cooperation in South East Europe in general and with the elaboration of the lists of project ideas identified as priorities to be further developed based on the input from the RCC members from the region, in particular, was somewhat overshadowed by the non-attendance of the delegation of UNMIK/Kosovo at the last meeting of the RCC National Coordinators from South East Europe (Sarajevo, 19 February 2009) which had not obtained entry visas for Bosnia and Herzegovina despite a timely notification of its participation at the meeting in line with the RCC statutory arrangements and the official request for facilitation of the issuing of entry visas addressed by the RCC Secretariat to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The RCC Secretariat drew the attention to this issue by *demarche* to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a letter to Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, demanding an official explanation for this incident in clear contravention with all the statutory documents of the RCC and obligations of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the Agreement between the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Governments of the other SEECP Participating States, the United Nation Interim Administration in Kosovo on behalf of Kosovo in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 on the Host Country Arrangements for the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Council (Host Country Agreement). Under Article 19 (d), the Host Country Agreement provides for the exemption of immigration restrictions to representatives of RCC members participating in the meetings held in the RCC Secretariat premises. Repetition of such incidents entailing absence of an RCC member from the discussions, activities and decision-making could seriously hamper regional cooperation. The RCC Secretary General urged for responsibility and flexibility in enabling regional cooperation within the framework of the RCC. Following request for clarification, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina provided the RCC Secretariat with official apologies on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina in respect of the recent case of failure of issuing of visas to the representatives of UNMIK/Kosovo and gave assurances that all necessary measures will be taken in the near future in order to avoid reoccurrence of such events and to assure full application of the Host Country Agreement in respect of participation of representatives of all RCC members at the meetings in Sarajevo.

III. Political consultations with RCC members from South East Europe

In the reporting period, the RCC Secretary General held political consultations with the Prime Minister of Albania, Sali Berisha on 9 December 2008. Both officials agreed that South East Europe was maintaining measured progress towards European integration by carrying out sustained reform policies in the region. Prime Minister Berisha highlighted the importance of preserving European and Euro-Atlantic perspective for all South East European countries. He added that, thanks to the successful work of the RCC, the time

has come for regional cooperation to be brought to a higher strategic level in the most important areas.

The RCC Secretary General proceeded with political consultations with the highest officials of RCC members from South East Europe by meeting the Prime Minister of The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Nikola Gruevski on 11 February 2009. He used the opportunity to invite the Skopje authorities to propose projects to be implemented under the EU's Multi-beneficiary Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (MB IPA) Programme, and take full advantage of cooperation links the RCC has built with EU institutions for this purpose. Prime Minister Gruevski confirmed his country's strong commitment to regional cooperation and fully supported RCC efforts in this respect. Both officials agreed that reform processes and positive trends in regional cooperation should be continued.

As a follow-up of political consultations with the highest officials of Bosnia and Herzegovina and with regard to the distribution of competencies in this country, the RCC Secretary General held talks separately with the Republika Srpska Prime Minister Milorad Dodik on 15 January 2009 and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Prime Minister Nedžad Branković on 19 January 2009. The RCC Secretary General conveyed his expectations of an active role of Bosnia and Herzegovina's entities in preparing projects of strategic importance as the proposals of the Council of Ministers of the country, in the process of the realization of the EU's MB IPA Strategy.

IV. Process of networking among RCC National Coordinators from South East Europe, RCC Secretariat, European Commission and relevant international financial institutions

The RCC Secretary General convened the third Meeting of the RCC National Coordinators from South East Europe on 19 February 2009. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the identification of possible specific areas of project-oriented cooperation within the RCC framework in which concrete and targeted projects could be developed, in partnership with the European Commission, relevant international financial institutions (IFI's) and other donors.

National Coordinators were presented with a list of Project Ideas for MB IPA 2010 developed in the five priority areas of the RCC which will be submitted to the European Commission for funding from the MB IPA, a list of Project Ideas for Other Donors as well as with a preliminary list of events in 2009. National Coordinators were informed that these projects are the result of extensive discussions the RCC Secretariat carried out with all the regional stakeholders, ranging from the countries of the region, European Commission, IFI's, bilateral donors as well as of the insight of the RCC Secretariat into the regional cooperation perspectives taking into consideration the diverse status of South East European countries with regard to the EU. The template used for the elaboration of projects is that of the preliminary project idea of the MB IPA.

Networking between the RCC Secretariat, European Commission and relevant IFI's has been strengthened during the reporting period also through participation of the Deputy Secretary General of the RCC/ Head of Expert Pool in the RCC Secretariat at the meetings of the International Financial Institutions Advisory Group (IFI AG) in December 2008 and January 2009. It was an opportunity for the RCC Secretariat to take part in the review and assessment of the financial crisis developments, possible policy responses and planned support by the members of the IFI AG, with special emphasis on the impact of the global crisis on accession countries and support by European Commission and IFIs.

V. Cooperation with the EU and other Brussels-based institutions

In the reporting period the cooperation with the EU and its institutions was particularly dynamic and versatile. In order to maintain the focus of the EU on South East Europe, the RCC Secretary General paid a visit to Sweden on 17 February 2009, when he spoke with Minister of Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and other officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). Minister Bildt reiterated the support of Sweden for the RCC and stressed the utmost importance of the RCC for cooperation in South East Europe and completion of the region's EU integration processes. The two officials discussed possible joint activities during the Swedish EU Presidency in the second half of 2009, which are to be finalized in the coming months. The Swedish Presidency announced preliminary readiness to co-organize with the RCC a major event on tackling the effects of the economic crisis on South East Europe and on its development perspectives.

The RCC Secretary General also met the Director-General in the Directorate-General for Enlargement of the European Commission Michael Leigh on 10 February 2009 on which occasion the Secretary General handed a letter addressed to the Member of the European Commission responsible for Enlargement Olli Rehn, outlining concrete proposals for countering the spill-over effects of economic recession and financial crisis on South East Europe. In his letter of 10 February 2009 to the Member of the European Commission Olli Rehn, the RCC Secretary General invited the European Commission to consider the advancement of the target dates for the realization of activities envisaged under the MB IPA for 2009, speed up the disbursement and contracting of the remaining MB IPA funds, to ensure that guarantees for the operation of the EU banks active in South East Europe are brought in line with those of the Eurozone, to accelerate the establishment of the Western Balkan Investment Framework as well as to consider the idea of holding an IFI Advisory Group high-level meeting alongside the forthcoming Meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the SEECP Participating States in early June 2009 in Chisinau.

Director-General Leigh confirmed the European Commission's continued support to the region and the work of the RCC, and in this context also recalled the Commission's

Crisis Response Package and allocation of 120 million EUR under the 2009 IPA. It is hoped that these funds would generate additional financial support of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Council of Europe Development Bank and other leading European banking institutions.

Besides high-level contacts of the RCC Secretary General with the officials of the current and future Presidencies of the EU Council as well as with the European Commission, the RCC Secretariat, in particular through the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels and the Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the Council of the EU, maintained and deepened working contacts with all relevant Brussels-based stakeholders.

To further enhance coordination of activities under the IPA Programme strategy, the RCC Secretariat's representatives led by the Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool participated in the IPA Multi-Beneficiary Coordination Meeting, held in Brussels on 15 and 16 January 2009. Pursuant to that, the European Commission's representatives expressed interest in establishing closer cooperation between the RCC Secretariat and the Regional Programmes Unit of the Directorate-General for Enlargement and asked for an outline of possible project ideas to be presented for IPA funding before the deadline for submission of project ideas for IPA 2010 funds which will be beginning of May 2009. The Deputy Secretary General of the RCC /Head of Expert Pool presented 12 projects in five priority areas, indicating that some project ideas have been elaborated and finalized, while others were still in the emerging stage.

The representatives of the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office and the Western Balkans Unit in the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU held a meeting on 29 January 2009, with the aim of establishing close working contacts between the Liaison Office and the team of the Western Balkans Unit in the Council of the European Union General Secretariat and to exchange of views on respective activities in the region. During the meeting it was pointed out that the regional cooperation within the RCC is developing in a successful manner that should be continued and underpinned with concrete projects with regional dimension.

Furthermore, the representatives of the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office had, in the course of the reporting period, meetings with the Member of the European Commission responsible for Environment, the Director for Transport in Directorate-General for Transport and Energy of the European Commission, the Director for Western Balkans in the Directorate-General for Enlargement of the European Commission as well as with the Director of the EU Military Intelligence of the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU.

Intensive activities to keep the current Czech and the incoming Swedish EU Council Presidencies engaged and focused on South East Europe continued in the reporting period. Major efforts were invested in regular liaising and discussing all important aspects of regional cooperation as well as raising the awareness to developments in South East Europe and to the need for urgent action and accelerated implementation of the

envisaged EU measures for the region. Among the most important activities within this context were participation of the RCC Secretary General at the Expert Seminar for the Western Balkans in Stirin Castle (near Prague) at the level of COWEB capitals (Informal COWEB Capitals meeting) in early February 2009 as well continuation of the practice of COWEB briefings and widening it with thematic presentations of regional activities in specific fields.

The Deputy Secretary General of RCC/ Head of Expert Pool and the Head of the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels briefed the COWEB on 22 January 2009 and presented the RCC activities and efforts in coordination of established initiatives as well as the initial stage of the preparations of the projects to be submitted for MB IPA funding. The RCC Secretariat also assisted in the organization of COWEB presentations of the Director of MARRI Regional Center and the Senior Advisor to the Southeast European Police Chiefs Association – SEPCA.

In parallel contacts were established with the officials of the Spanish and Belgian Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the two countries assuming the EU Presidency in 2010, and as a result political consultations of the RCC Secretary General with high-level officials of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been scheduled for March 2009.

As a concrete proof of its determination to support the regional cooperation in South East Europe, the Czech EU Council Presidency provided additional financial contribution for the organization of the Conference on the Regional Research Strategy for the Western Balkans, organized jointly by the Czech Presidency of the EU Council and the RCC Secretariat in Sarajevo in April 2009. In cooperation with the Czech Institute of International Relations, a public lecture of the RCC Secretary General has been arranged in Prague for April 2009.

Both the current Czech and the incoming Swedish EU Presidencies have confirmed that the region of South East Europe and particularly the Western Balkans are and shall be among the priority agenda items during their terms in office and that they will make substantial efforts to support concrete regional cooperation projects and open avenues for accelerating the EU integration process, despite serious internal and external challenges in the course of 2009. They have expressed the intention to put the focus on making progress in the implementation of the European perspective and in achieving concrete results in the visa liberalization process. They have repeated the message that the final decisions in this regard would depend on the individual country performances. All interlocutors have expressed strong interest for an adequate inclusion of UNMIK/Kosovo in concrete regional cooperation activities within the RCC framework.

Both, the current Czech and the forthcoming Swedish EU Presidency have expressed readiness to continue with the practice of inviting the RCC Secretary General to meetings relevant for South East Europe and regional cooperation (the Informal “Gymnich” meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the EU Member States, the Ministerial Conference on Migration in Central and South Eastern Europe - during the Czech Presidency of the EU Council) and have announced intention to provide high-level

participation at the most important events organized in the framework of the SEECP and the RCC.

NATO Committee on South East European region – SEEGROUP - composed of the Allies and the Western Balkans' countries, requested a briefing on the activities of the arms control and verification center RACVIAC and invited its Director and the representative of the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels to participate at the security and defense cooperation meeting. Both NATO officials and the SEEGROUP representatives expressed their interest for a close cooperation with RACVIAC and RCC on issues of particular interest for the Alliance, in particular trainings of urban rescue teams in South East Europe and on networking with NATO centers of excellence on topics such as weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and cyber terrorism.

In the context of the development of cooperation with NATO, the representatives of the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels met with the Deputy Assistants of the Secretary General of NATO and directors of the main divisions dealing with the region of South East Europe.

VI. Cooperation with other regional organizations and initiatives

Further to the decision of the RCC Board of 12 December 2008, authorizing the RCC Secretariat to start negotiations with the Central European Initiative (CEI) on a Memorandum of Understanding regarding cooperation between the RCC Secretariat and the CEI, the RCC Secretariat forwarded a draft version of the Memorandum of Understanding amended in accordance with the statutory documents of the RCC to the CEI Executive Secretariat on 26 January 2009. The draft is currently under consideration by the CEI. The final draft version of the Memorandum of Understanding will be submitted to the RCC Board for approval and adoption.

A representative of the RCC Secretariat participated in the Senior Officials Meeting of the Danube Cooperation Process (DCP), held in Kiev on 3 February 2009. The format of the DCP includes 13 countries belonging to the Danube hydrological basin, the EU Commission and the RCC as the successor to the Stability Pact. The main purpose of the Meeting was to discuss the methodology of preparing for the forthcoming 4th DCP Ministerial Meeting which will be organized in Kiev in June 2009 at a date following the SEECP Summit. The participants also discussed the perspectives of the DCP development as well as the proposal on "How to Enhance Co-ordination and the Efficiency within the Danube Co-operation Process" and its projects put forward by the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe Special Coordinator Dr. Erhard Busek. In light of the transition from the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe to the RCC and the necessity to assure coherent approach in respect of the proposals regarding the perspectives of the development of the cooperation within the DCP framework, the RCC Secretary General appointed Dr. Erhard Busek, Coordinator of Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) as his Advisor on

Danube-Related Issues. SECI Coordinator Dr. Busek participated already at the last Senior Officials Meeting of the DCP in this new capacity.

VII. Outreach activities and presentations

In December 2008, the RCC Secretariat announced the winners of its Essay and Photo Contest 2008, which was open for submission of works in September/October 2008. The theme of the contest was Regional Cooperation in South East Europe. The works were to reflect the RCC mission of promoting mutual cooperation and European and Euro-Atlantic integration of South East Europe in order to inspire development in the region to the benefit of its people.

The RCC Secretariat continued its series of presentation of activities, mission and structure to a wider circle of government officials, business sector, civil society and the media of the RCC members from South East Europe. Presentations were held for the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 20 January 2009 in Sarajevo and for the authorities of Albania on 24 February 2009 in Tirana. A similar presentation of the RCC for Brussels based institutions and media is envisaged to take place in Brussels during May or June 2009.

The RCC Secretary General gave a presentation at the Breakfast Policy Briefing of the European Policy Centre on 11 February 2009, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the phasing out of the Stability Pact and the establishment of the RCC. The aim of the briefing was to present RCC achievements of the first year and challenges ahead for the RCC and South East Europe to reach their goal of joining the EU. To an audience of around one hundred representatives of European institutions, governmental representatives, diplomatic missions, think-tanks, financial institutions and media, the RCC Secretary General pointed out the critical importance of the upcoming period when political leaderships in South East Europe will be called for additional level of responsibility and urgency in dealing with EU oriented reforms and in addressing remaining open issues.

On 27 February 2009, the RCC Secretariat organized a panel discussion in Sarajevo „One Year of the Regional Cooperation Council: Achievements and Way Forward“, marking the first anniversary of its establishment.

VIII. Priority areas of the RCC Activities

1. Economic and Social Development

Public Private Partnerships

Following extensive discussions with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE) in the months of December 2008 and January 2009, the RCC Secretariat has begun to make preparations for a ministerial level regional conference on Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). Focusing on the prospects for developing strategic infrastructure networks in times of global financial crisis, the conference will explore how PPPs might serve as a framework for attracting foreign direct investments (FDIs) in uncertain times. Three outcomes are expected: the garnering of political support for the PPP approach, the launching of a regional PPP expert network, and the promotion of a regional PPP capacity building program – a project which the RCC Secretariat is developing together with the UN ECE and which will be presented for possible funding through the MB IPA.

The RCC Secretariat has thus far carried out the necessary research in order to prepare a substantial agenda and is currently in dialogue with a number of potential international partners and participants for the event, including the World Bank, International Financial Corporation (IFC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), EBRD, and others. The RCC Secretariat has also secured the involvement of the Western Balkans' first national PPP Agency (from Croatia) and expects to secure a co-hosting arrangement with the relevant institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. University of Sarajevo's Faculty of Economics has also been engaged in the development of the project.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

In January 2009, the representative of the RCC Secretariat attended the quarterly meeting of the Electronic Southeast Europe Initiative (eSEE) which met in conjunction with the first training seminar of the Centre for eGovernance Development (CeGD) in Ljubljana. Discussions are currently under way with the UNDP funded Secretariat of the eSEE initiative regarding the preparation of the next eSEE Ministerial Conference expected to take place toward the end of 2009. There is a pressing need to redefine some of the unrealistic objectives and deadlines originally envisaged under the eSEE Agenda Plus – the initiative's implementation road map – which is expected to take place in the context of this high level event. The RCC Secretariat has also played an active advisory role vis-à-vis CeGD which is currently facing a number of challenges with some key stakeholders.

Meanwhile, the RCC Secretariat has made arrangements with Greece's INA Academy as well as Austria's Centre for Social Innovation to host two information society related events in the months of April and June 2009: a seminar on eGovernance, and a workshop on the role of ICT in harnessing the potentials of South East Europe's scientific diaspora, respectively.

Employment Policy

Having had virtually no response from relevant international partners concerning the joint organization of the next meeting of the South East Europe Employment Network as well as its operational work plan, the RCC Secretariat has undertaken to prepare such a work

plan on its own. This work is under way. Its results will be shared with the Employment Network and relevant international actors at a meeting which the RCC Secretariat plans to organize in May 2009. It is hoped that the work plan can subsequently serve as a road map for this network, and its future meetings as a forum for tracking implementation and sharing best practices.

Social Dialogue

The RCC Secretariat has been approached by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) concerning the organization of a possible joint event focusing on some aspect of economic and social dialogue. Given FES' previous involvement with trade unions, the RCC Secretariat has proposed a social dialogue workshop to which FES has agreed. Nonetheless, the RCC Secretariat has yet to secure the support of the relevant European employers' and trade union organizations. This is crucial given some regional actors' persistent reluctance to engage in social dialogue, especially on the employers side.

Health

The pending Memorandum of Understanding on the future of the South East European Health Network has now been signed by all but one party, which is expected to sign it in the coming weeks. This paves the way for the establishment of a regional secretariat for this initiative and the gradual transformation of its projects into long-term programs. The RCC Secretariat has received detailed input concerning the latter from the Network's World Health Organization (WHO) Coordinator and the Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Network's future relationship with the RCC has been prepared. Though it does not envisage direct fund-raising support by the RCC, the RCC may consider including some regional health programs into its portfolio to be shared with interested donors.

2. Infrastructure and Energy

Environment

During the reporting period, the activities of the RCC Secretariat focused on cooperation with the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), UNECE Water Convention Secretariat and UNDP Regional Office in Montenegro. This cooperation primarily related to the preparation of the environmental events with REC within the agreed framework program Roadmap for Environmental Cooperation in South East Europe comprising three more thematic events that will be quarterly co-organized and hosted by the RCC Secretariat, namely: Natura 2000 in South East Europe, Priority environmental infrastructure investments in South East Europe and Multilateral cooperation on environmental issues through Multilateral Environmental Agreements in South East Europe. The Natura 2000 event is tentatively scheduled for the last week in April 2009 and the Priority Environmental Infrastructure Investments in South East Europe event for 18 June 2009.

Cooperation with the UNECE Water Convention Secretariat concentrated on the preparation of the Water Conference preliminary scheduled for 18 - 20 May 2009 which would include two main topics: (i) preparation of the second assessment of transboundary waters in South East Europe and (ii) addressing the common issues for the region (e.g. hydropower, navigation, flood management, preparation of Integrated Water River Basin Management Plans in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), climate change adaptation etc.) and presentation of concrete projects necessary to implement Water Convention, EU WFD and EU Flood Directive. While added value of the first conference topic would be to ensure concrete output that would be presented at the fifth meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention in November 2009 and finally at the next Ministerial Conference ``Environment for Europe``, the second topic would be primarily important to back regional cooperation and learn more about the position of donor community and IFI's to support the previous mentioned projects.

Collaboration with the UNDP Regional Office correlated to the preparation of the Preliminary Project Ideas (PPIs) concerning the biodiversity protection and ecosystem services as well as the establishment of the Regional Forum and the implementation of the part of the Climate Change Framework Action Plan for Adaptation. These PPIs are preparing in accordance with the MB IPA template requirements in order to be able to apply for the MB IPA support.

Taking into account demanding list of the RCC environmental events a few bilateral supporters and the Netherlands' Regional Environmental Programme representatives were contacted in order to back its implementation.

Energy

The RCC Secretariat and the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina organized the workshop ``Parliaments – Support to Harmonized Energy Reforms in Southeast Europe`` in Sarajevo on 15 December 2009. The workshop gathered parliamentarians from the parliamentary committees dealing with energy issues from South East Europe and representatives of the European Commission, International Energy Agency, UNDP, Energy Community Secretariat (ECS), World Bank and UN ECE. The event discussed energy issues in a comprehensive way and broader context of the challenges South East European region is facing and proved that such events are very important for raising the awareness of the needed energy reforms, facilitating law making process and supporting the parliamentarians to oversee their governments` activities. The event concluded that it is essential to organize a sequence of tailor made events for parliamentarians from the RCC members from South East Europe. In that respect, it was agreed with the ECS representatives to prepare up to three events during 2009 that would address specific requirements of parliamentarians from the region concerning the energy sector reforms and social implications of these reforms. Currently, the RCC Secretariat is examining which RCC members from South East Europe are interested to be the first to start the sequence of events.

The RCC Secretariat cooperated with the ECS participating in the 5th Energy Community Energy Efficiency Task Force meeting and discussing the concrete cooperation in the area of energy efficiency as well as possibilities to enhance cooperation with the local authorities and civil society actors in the areas of energy considering that the ``bottom – up`` approach provided through this cooperation is extremely relevant to complement efforts on higher levels.

During the reporting period efforts were made on the preparation of the energy efficiency project proposal with the representatives of the UN ECE EE21 Project, Network of Associations of Local Authorities in South-East Europe (NALAS), European Foundation for the Sustainable Development of the Regions (FEDRE) and Regional Network for Efficient Use of Energy and Water Resources for Southeastern Europe (RENEUER), to be supported through the MB IPA. ECS offered to present the project at the next Energy Efficiency Task Force meeting in May 2009.

The representatives of the GTZ Open Regional Fund for Energy in South East Europe were approached in order to support development of preliminary project ideas in the area of energy particularly energy efficiency and renewables that would be afterward submitted for support to other donors and the MB IPA.

Due to recent gas crisis the RCC Secretariat was contacted by a few stakeholders to be a part of the solution. Additionally, the RCC Secretariat is invited to share its position on the energy crisis, energy security, energy efficiency and climate change participating in meetings and other events.

Based on existing CEI infrastructure - already established network of CEI National Energy Coordinators, cooperation between the RCC Secretariat and the CEI to launch the initiative on sustainable energy development in the region is under consideration. At the possible next stage of initiative development other relevant stakeholders would be included as well.

Transport

Taking into account EU policy towards the inland waterways development and South East Europe Transport Observatory (SEETO) future plans to increase the role of this transport mode, the representatives of the RCC Secretariat met the Sava Commission and the World Bank representatives in order to support fund raising for Detailed Design for Sava River Waterway. Cooperation with the Sava Commission resulted in the preparation of the first draft for the second topic of the Water Conference as well. In the forthcoming period, it would be very important for the RCC Secretariat to ensure improved cooperation with the key partners in the transport area (European Commission and the SEETO) particularly concerning the RCC Secretariat involvement in the Transport Community Treaty for Western Balkans negotiations, implementation of the European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) Agreement and implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of the South East European Core Regional Transport

Network and Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding on Railway Transport Area.

The RCC Secretariat participated in the Workshop on the Follow-up of the Joint Statement on Inland Navigation and Environmental Sustainability in the Danube River where the integrated approach when planning and developing projects particularly transport ones was emphasized and the Railway Reform Workshop where the approximation and harmonization requirements for the SEETO participants in the area of Railway Network Access were presented.

During the reporting period all relevant initiatives, taskforces and other partners were offered to cooperate in order to prepare PPIs to be supported through MB IPA or other potential donors explaining the requirements for these applications.

Due to multidisciplinary character of the infrastructure activities in relation to both preparation of the events and relevant preliminary project ideas, a variety of stakeholders are contacted and included in its` developing alongside the active participation of the European Commission.

With regard to the part of the RCC Strategic Work Programme 2008-2009 focusing on the cooperation with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the RCC Secretariat met representatives of the Regional Education and Information Center for Sustainable Development in South East Europe providing support for some of its forthcoming activities.

3. Justice and Home Affairs

Coordination platform and streamlining of regional taskforces and initiatives

During the reporting period, the RCC Secretariat continued with the establishment of a structured regional mechanism, a system of direct, quick and constant circulation of information, able to coordinate and integrate the needs of cooperation at EU, regional and national levels. The structured regional mechanism integrates national law enforcement agencies, police departments, prosecution offices and judiciary with regional and international organizations. Regional mechanism addressed three processes: harmonization and implementation of legislative framework; institutional and functional standardization; forms and methods of cooperation. This integrated mechanism of cooperation and coordination, able to influence and speed up the accession process should be fully functional at the end of 2009.

To this purpose, bilateral agreements on forms and methods of cooperation at the regional level have been agreed upon and are awaiting to be signed with the SECI Center on Fighting Ttrans-Border Organized Crime, the Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative (RAI), the Migration, Asylum, Refugess Regional Initiative (MARRI) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); the activity of liaison police officers' and

prosecutors' networks has been improved; a holistic approach on enhancing regional cooperation among police and law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges has been addressed; a number of regional projects ideas have been drafted in close coordination with national authorities and regional initiatives; consultation are in course to elaboration of a South East European Multiannual Regional Strategy in the area of justice and home affairs.

The RCC Secretariat directly supports the implementation of three regional normative documents: SEECP Ministers of Justice Memorandum on Legal and Judicial Guarantees against Unlawful Processing of Personal Data adopted in Chisinau in October 2008; SEECP Ministers of Home Affairs Common Declaration regarding the Strengthening of Cooperation in Combating Cybercrimes adopted in Chisinau in October 2008 and the Police Cooperation Convention concluded in Vienna in 2006.

Participation in project implementation and development of project ideas

The RCC Secretariat is involved in ongoing projects such as: EU - ILECU's Project; Anti-corruption Consultancy RAI – Project; Justice Integrity and High Level Corruption Survey RAI – Project; continuation of I-24/7 Main Border Checking Point, Interpol – Project; incorporating the work on Anti-corruption in Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Investment Reform Index 2009; visa regime among SEECP countries –Project initiated by the Moldovan SEECP Chaimanship-in-Office. Through its partnership in ILECU's Project, RCC Secretariat becomes an active actor in the process of harmonizing national legislations in the field of criminal law, and synchronising the use of the European and international tools of criminal investigation and prosecution.

The RCC Secretariat and the SECI Center have finalized the discussions to formalize the cooperation and to consolidate the bilateral relationship in the areas considered of great importance for combating organized crime such as: cooperation with EUROPOL; strengthening the cooperation with European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) as well as with World Customs Organization (WCO) and Interpol; Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC) Convention signature, ratification and implementation; finalization of the Organized Crime Threat Assessment for South East European Region (OCTA SEE); access to European Commission and other donors' funds.

The SECI Center identified and sent to RCC Secretariat for consideration two projects ideas: *“Transforming the SECI Regional Center for Combating Trans-border Crime into the Southeast European Law Enforcement Center (SELEC)”* – enhancing centre capabilities, ensuring compliance with the protection of personal data, and capacity to form partnerships with other institutions; *“Strengthening the analytical capabilities in order to prepare a Common Threat Assessment on Organized Crime for South East European Region (OCTA-SEE)”*.

The RCC Secretariat is working on the transformation of the South Eastern Europe Prosecutors' Advisory Group (SEEPAG) in a more effective and efficient network of experienced prosecutors, able to provide real operational support, legal assistance, advice

and guidance to SECI Center's liaisons officers in the investigation of trans-border organized crime. To avoid overlapping, duplication and fragmentation at regional level, the RCC Secretariat, with the SECI Center and the Council of Europe's assistance, will facilitate SEEPAG and Prosecutors' Network in South-Eastern Europe (PROSECO) to develop contacts and to initiate regional coordination.

With respect to the fight against corruption, the RCC Secretariat and RAI increased their common engagement on prevention and counteracting corruption. Corruption related to public and private sector has been addressed, RAI and the RCC Secretariat's experts together with national representatives focused on the tools to detect and investigate corruption in public procurement, especially 'red flags' as a new instrument taken from the practice of international organizations and investment banks. In 2009, the RCC Secretariat and RAI started the implementation of two projects approved by RAI Steering Group: Anti-corruption Consultancy and the Survey on Justice Integrity and High Level Corruption financed by the United States of America.

Assisted by the RCC Secretariat, MARRI enhanced its capacities to work closer with the European Commission, and to complement the EU efforts towards the visa facilitation process and furthermore to have the visa liberalisation. In December 2008, MARRI had a presentation to the European Commission. In February 2009, MARRI, together with RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels was invited by the Czech Presidency of the EU Council to have a presentation for COWEB, followed by a session of questions and answers, where the relations between MARRI and the RCC were discussed as a very important and positive aspect.

MARRI identified and sent to RCC Secretariat for consideration and further action four project ideas: *"Assessment of Types of Identification Documents in MARRI Member States"*; *"Building a Regionally Integrated Approach of MARRI Member States for Successful Preventing and Combating of Trafficking in Human Beings (THB)"*; *"MARRI Interactive Migration Map"*, *"Migration and sustainable socio-economic development in the Western Balkans"*.

The RCC Secretariat actively supported the recognition of the Southeast Europe Police Cooperation Convention (PCC) as an important legal framework for judicial cooperation. PCC Secretariat, located in Ljubljana, has been set up to organize the implementation and to draft guidelines, manuals and model agreements for the Convention become effective.

Close coordination and periodical exchange of information between South East Police Chief's Association (SEPCA) and the RCC Secretariat has been established, SEPCA gaining more visibility and receiving continuous political support. SEPCA plays an important role in police cooperation through projects and actions coordinated at the level of police managers. SEPCA identified and sent to RCC Secretariat for consideration and further action four project ideas: *"SEE forensic science adjustment project"*; *"Police corruption – raising police integrity project"*; *"Traffic safety"*; *"Female police officers network"*.

Based on priorities of the RCC members from South East Europe and the inputs received from the European Commission, regional and international organizations, the RCC Secretariat identified following project ideas to be possibly elaborated and implemented in the context of MB IPA: “*SEE e-justice*” (cases and documents management); “*Integration of the law enforcement agencies of Western Balkan countries in the EU counter-terrorism effort*”; “*Combating money laundering and financing terrorism; assets confiscation*”; “*Cyber crime units in SEE*”; „*Setting up the Regional Office of „South East European Drugs Coordination“(SEEDC“)*; „*Regional network of (independent) anti-corruption agencies*“.

4. Security Cooperation

Disaster preparedness and prevention

In cooperation with the World Bank, the RCC Secretariat has facilitated the creation of the South-Eastern and Central Europe Catastrophe Insurance Facility (SECE-CRIF). Following the Regional Conference on the SECE-CRIF (Zurich, October 2008) organized jointly with the World Bank and the United Nations Disaster Reduction Initiative (UN ISDR), the RCC Secretariat took the lead in this initiative and the follow-up letters to the Prime Ministers of the South East European countries were sent at the beginning of December 2008. Visits and meetings in Greece, Croatia, Serbia and Bulgaria took place to further clarify the project's contribution to strengthening disaster preparedness and risk reduction capacities in South East Europe. To date, seven RCC members from South East Europe responded positively and expressed interest in becoming the first shareholders of the SECE CRIF and were invited to the Preparatory Shareholders' Meeting on the establishment of the SECE-CRIF that will be held in Sarajevo on 16-17 March 2009 at the RCC Secretariat's premises. The main goal of the meeting is to prepare the draft of SECE CRIF Shareholders' Agreement and other essential supporting documents that will be signed at a later stage by all future country shareholders.

A project on establishing a South Eastern Europe Firefighting Regional Center (SEEFREC) was developed in coordination with the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE) and supported by the World Bank. The project-idea was sent to the RCC National Coordinators from South East Europe for consideration and comments by relevant national authorities. After receiving responses from the RCC members from the region (expected until the end of February 2009) next steps in the context of elaboration and preparation of this project will follow.

The RCC Secretariat has, in cooperation with the DPPI SEE, provided assistance to UNDP in drafting a Regional Program on Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe – a Grant application form to be submitted to European Commission. The project aims to strengthen capacity-building in disaster risk reduction through regional cooperation in South East Europe.

Non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons

After signing of the new agreement between the RCC Secretariat and the UNDP extending the activities of the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) and transforming them to community violence prevention conceptual approach, a concrete project was drafted, signed and funded by Norway for 2009. Joint activities with SEESAC were planned and full support will be offered to the UNDP in further fundraising for this initiative.

Coordination and streamlining of regional taskforces and initiatives

A coordination meeting of relevant initiatives in South East Europe in the field of security cooperation was organized jointly by the RCC Secretariat and RACVIAC. The RCC Secretariat, RACVIAC, DPPI SEE and SEESAC's representatives discussed their work in the region and possibilities of mutually acceptable cooperation. DPPI SEE and SEESAC clearly defined that they intend to operate within the RCC framework and expect full-fledged cooperation with the RCC. On the other hand, RACVIAC stated its independence and readiness to assist the RCC and its Secretariat in carrying out the activities in the field of security cooperation.

Consultations with relevant regional and international partners

Consultations regarding possible cooperation were held with the George C. Marshall European Centre for Security Studies (Marshall Center) and with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF). The RCC Secretariat's activities were presented and mutually beneficial cooperation discussed. The following project ideas were outlined as acceptable for cooperation in the security area – a new comprehensive analysis of the challenges in the security domain in South East Europe, civil-military relations, gender issues, exchange of information between law enforcement institutions, and security sector matrix of priorities and initiatives, security sector reforms as well as the role of civilian experts in security sector capacity buildup. It was agreed that after precise evaluation of project ideas in the security field DCAF and Marshall Center will come up with possible proposals for cooperation.

Consultations were also held with the Director for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Partnership Directorate and with representative of Defense Cooperation, Defense Policy and Planning Division of NATO International Staff. The RCC Secretariat presented the activities and project ideas in the security cooperation field. NATO representatives stated their interest in the following project ideas in the implementation of which the RCC Secretariat and NATO can find common field of cooperation – establishing regional cooperation in military education and civilian security experts training, gender issues – role of women in the armed forces a regional forum, build up of civilian expert capacity on security and defense issues in South East Europe. Possible joint organization of a regional conference gathering high-level representatives of the ministries of defense from SEE, representatives of think-tank's and academic community was discussed. The objective of such conference would be to establish a permanent discussion forum for

regional security cooperation issues. NATO project idea for Urban Rescue Team training and certification was thoroughly discussed. The RCC Secretariat offered full support to NATO to organize and carry out this training through DPPI SEE. It was agreed that further the concept will be developed by NATO and a follow up discussion will take place in the beginning of 2009.

Meeting with the Director of Intelligence of the EU Council Military Staff took place and the RCC Secretariat's project idea of establishing a forum of the Heads of Military Intelligence from South East Europe was presented. Further development of the project idea through consultations between the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office and COWEB coordinator in the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU took place. The project idea will now be offered to the relevant institutions of the RCC members from South East Europe for consideration.

Consultations with the representatives of the ministries of defence of the RCC members from South East Europe have commenced in respect of possible organization of the first Meeting of the Defence Directors from South East Europe. One of the aims of the meeting will be to prepare the Conference of the Chiefs of General Staff of South East Europe in the course of 2009.

Working contacts were established with the Head of Security Department of the OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as with the NATO Command in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

5. Building Human Capital and Cross-Cutting Issues

Building human capital

The RCC Secretariat continued its activities regarding development and promotion of the project - the Regional Research Strategy for the Western Balkans. Communication with different stakeholders in the field of research has been strengthened and, in that light, the agreement has been made with the Czech Presidency of the EU Council on the co-organization of the Ministerial Conference - Developing the Regional Research Strategy for the Western Balkans. Conference will be held on 24 April 2009 in Sarajevo.

Experts of the RCC Secretariat had a number of meetings with the representatives of different partner organisations,. The meeting with the Director of the South East Europe Entrepreneurial Learning Center (SEE ELC), held on 28 January 2009, was the opportunity to discuss the modalities for the establishment of the SEE ELC, located in Zagreb, and venturing channels of communication and cooperation with the RCC and its Secretariat, in respect of adequate positioning of the SEE ELC and strengthening future cooperation among the regional stakeholders in the area of entrepreneurial learning.

The meeting with OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina Director of Education Department took place on 30 January 2009, upon the initiative of the OSCE Mission in

Bosnia and Herzegovina, which wanted to present certain ideas on eventual cooperation between the two organizations. The discussion led to defining three main projects of mutual interest which will be jointly developed in the upcoming period: Training of the Education Inspectors, with emphasis on the Bologna Process; Cross-border initiative among parent council and school leaders; Making of the new generation of Joint History Textbooks.

Meeting with the Secretary for the International Co-operation in the Office of the President of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, held on 23 February 2009 was the occasion to define the opportunities for future active involvement of the National Academies of Science in South East Europe in the development and implementation of the RCC projects in the related fields, primarily in the project “Regional Research Strategy for the Western Balkans”.

Representative of the RCC Secretariat participated at the Forum on Research, Development and Innovation in European Cross-Border Areas, held in Vigo on 2 February 2009. The main topic of the conference was the involvement of the scientific society in economic development of the cross-border regions, in the light of current global financial crises.

The representative of the RCC Secretariat took part at the 13th Regional meeting of the National Coordinators of countries of the Western Balkans, held in Zagreb on 10 – 11 February 2009, on the occasion of which the SEE ELC was launched. Establishment of the SEE ELC is a perfect example of a regional, multi-beneficiary institution that brings an added value in terms of developing the entrepreneurial learning in non-business environment and, thus, strengthening the ties of education and economy.

The Head of Building Human Capital Unit in the RCC Secretariat participated in the Roundtable on Student Mobility in the Balkans, organized by the European Policy Centre (EPC) and held in Brussels on 12 February 2009. Following the European Commission’s Communication on the Western Balkans in March 2008, which emphasised visa facilitation and Erasmus Mundus scholarships as important tools for enhancing people-to-people contacts and reconciliation between the peoples of the Western Balkans, the EPC Roundtable was devoted to student mobility and other inclusive policies that offer opportunities to young people, as crucial steps on the path towards closer integration with the EU. In addition to the presentation at this event, the representative of the RCC Secretariat held meetings with the representatives of the Directorate-General for Enlargement as well as Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission. On that occasion, a possibility of financing of some projects, among which regional conferences on Life Long Learning and Quality Assurance, with specific attention to Teachers and Education Inspectors Training, through the regional branch of Tempus programme.

XI. Setting up of the RCC Secretariat

The reporting period was marked by final stage of the process of recruitment of the officials of the RCC Secretariat.

The interviews with the selected candidates for the still vacant post of the Expert on Infrastructure in the RCC Secretariat will be held in Sarajevo on 9 March 2009. Following these interviews the decision on the appointment to this position by the RCC Secretary General is expected in mid-March 2009. Following additional assessment of the scope of work of the Administrator in the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels and the Assistant to the Head of Liaison Office as well as existing budgetary constraints, the RCC Secretary General decided on merging of these two positions in the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels. These two initially envisaged positions will be replaced by a single position of the Administrative Officer/Assistant in the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office. The position has been publicly announced in the course of February 2009 and the interviews with the selected candidates will be held in Brussels on 10 March 2009. The completion of the employment procedure for these positions will mark the end of the overall recruitment process of the officials of the RCC Secretariat.

The Assistant to the Head of Expert Pool, who is taking the maternity leave as of beginning of January 2009, is currently replaced on a temporary basis until return from the leave, in line with the provisions of the Administrative and Staff Regulations of the RCC Secretariat.

As per technical and service staff, the new Receptionist commenced with work in the RCC Secretariat, following the completion of the selection and employment procedure as of 20 January 2009.

The RCC Secretariat currently comprises of a total of 35 staff members, out of which 30 RCC Secretariat's officials and five members of technical and service staff (public affairs assistant, driver/security officer, two drivers/courriers, receptionis). A complete list of the RCC Secretariat's staff is appended in Annex II to the report.

One of the remaining open issues related to the setting-up of the RCC Secretariat Liaison is related to the implementation of the provisions of the Headquarters Agreement between the Kingdom of Belgium and the RCC Secretariat, which regulates the status of the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels. The Kingdom of Belgium has conditioned the implementation of relevant provisions of the Headquarters Agreement between the Kingdom of Belgium and the RCC Secretariat providing for the fiscal privileges and immunities of the Head and Deputy Head of the RCC Secretariat's Liaison Office in Brussels with the issuing of an official authentic interpretation concerning the implementation of Article 17.1.(d) of the Agreement between the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Governments of the other SEECP Participating States, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo on behalf of Kosovo in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244, on the Host Country Arrangements for the Secretariat of the Regional Cooperation Council (Host

Country Agreement) by the Parties to this Agreement in which the principle of taxability of the officials of the RCC Secretariat in their countries/places of origin and/or permanent residence would be explicitly confirmed. After a consultation procedure initiated by the RCC Secretary General in August 2008 it became evident that the adoption of an interpretative declaration amending the Agreement would not be acceptable to some of the Parties to the Host Country Agreement, as they consider that such declaration would run counter to the spirit of the current provisions of the Agreement and would lead to its *de facto* amendment. In light of the principles of general international law, the only recourse in this situation would be to proceed with amending the Host Country Agreement accordingly, in light of the request from the Kingdom of Belgium. This, however, remains subject to the will of the Parties to the Host Country Agreement.

In this view, the RCC Secretary General sent a communication to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in early January 2009, proposing to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a Party to and, at the same time, a depositary of the Host Country Agreement to consider the possibility of initiating the process of amending relevant provisions of the Agreement in order to provide for requested confirmation of taxability. This proposal of the RCC Secretary General is currently under consideration by the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

X. Membership of the RCC and the RCC Board

In the course of the reporting period there were no changes to the membership of the RCC and the RCC Board.

XI. State of financial contributions to the RCC Secretariat's budget

All contributions to the RCC Secretariat's budget for the budgetary year 2008 have been received until the end of budgetary year (15 January 2009). Therefore, all RCC Board members have fulfilled their obligations and commitments as to the financial contributions to the RCC Secretariat's budget.

The RCC Secretariat's budget for 2009 has been adopted by the RCC Board, through written procedure, on 28 January 2009. Following the adoption of the RCC Secretariat's budget and in line with Article 1.2 of the Financial Management Manual of the RCC Secretariat requests for payments of financial contributions to the RCC Secretariat's budget have been sent to the RCC Board members, with the exception of contributors that announced in advance their requirement of previous adoption of the Annual Report and the Audit Report by the RCC Board prior to the payment of their annual contributions as well as the contributors providing contributions on the basis of bilateral agreements with the RCC Secretariat. Request for payment of financial contributions to the RCC Secretariat's budget will be sent to these RCC Board members when relevant requirements will be fulfilled (adoption of the Annual Report and the Audit Report and the entry into force of the new bilateral agreements respectively).

First financial contributions to the RCC Secretariat's budget have already been received by some of the RCC Board members. Current state of contributions to the RCC Secretariat's budget for 2009 is the following:

-Czech Republic – 50.000 EUR – 18 December 2008

-Italy – 50.000 EUR – 17 February 2009

XII. Future activities of the RCC Secretariat

In the coming period, in implementing the Strategic Work Programme 2008 – 2009, the RCC Secretariat will focus on project and result-oriented activities with a view to achieving overall economic and social progress in South East Europe, consolidating the region's European and Euro-Atlantic potential and perspective. The RCC Secretariat will encourage flexibility in order to create a climate and environment conducive to dialogue and cooperation.

In this process close relationship will also be maintained with the Chairmanship-in-Office of the SEECP, currently held by Moldova.

In the period until the next RCC Board meeting the RCC Secretariat will also focus on the elaboration of the draft Annual Report on regional cooperation in South East Europe as well as the Strategic Work Programme of the RCC for the period 2009-2010. These documents will be submitted for consideration and adoption by the RCC Board at its meeting on 14 May 2009. Both the Annual Report and Strategic Work Programme of the RCC will be, after their adoption by the RCC Board, submitted for review and endorsement by the RCC Annual Meeting (Chisinau, 4 June 2009). Strategic aspects of the Annual Report will also be presented to the SEECP Summit (Chisinau, 5 June 2009).

Forthcoming events of particular importance in the period until the next RCC Board meeting are the following:

-6-7 March 2009, Belgrade – Regional Workshop “The Role of Parliaments in Promoting Competitiveness and Economic Growth by Improving the Business Environment in Western Balkans Economies”

-10 March 2009, Sarajevo – visit to the RCC Secretariat by Mr. Gernot Erler, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany including the public lecture by Minister Erler at the premises of the RCC Secretariat

-16-17 March 2009, Sarajevo –Conference regarding the establishment of the SECE-CRIF organized jointly by the World Bank, UN ISDR and the RCC Secretariat

-19 March 2009, Sarajevo – Meeting of the Financial Sub-Committee to the RCC Board

-20-22 March 2009, Brussels – participation of the RCC Secretary General at the Brussels Forum 2009 organized by the German Marshall Fund of the United States

-25 March 2009, Madrid – consultations of the RCC Secretary General with the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain with particular emphasis on possible cooperation in the context of the forthcoming Spanish Presidency of the EU Council in the first half of 2010

-30-31 March 2009, Belgrade – Conference on Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security in South East Europe organized by the UNODC and hosted by the Government of Serbia; on the margins of the Conference the RCC Secretary General will sign the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between the RCC Secretariat and UNODC

-1 April 2009, Oslo – consultations of the RCC Secretary General with the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway

-24 April 2009, Sarajevo – Ministerial Conference – Developing Regional Research Strategy for the Western Balkans organized jointly by the Czech Presidency of the EU Council and the RCC Secretariat

-14 May 2009, Sarajevo – Meeting of the RCC Board

ANNEX I

LIST OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS ATTENDED BY THE RCC SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE RCC SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS IN THE PERIOD FROM 8 DECEMBER 2008 TO 27 FEBRUARY 2009

- Meeting with the Deputy Secretary General of EFTA - Brussels, 8 December 2008 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Meeting with George Marshall European Centre for Security Studies – Garmisch-Partenkirchen, 8 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Security Issues, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Meeting with the Director, DG TREN, European Commission - Brussels, 8 December 2008, (Head of Liaison Office, Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
- Conference: “EU Funding – Regional Development” - Brussels, 8 – 9 December 2008 (Head of Liaison Office, Deputy Head of Liaison Office, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Political consultations in Albania – Tirana, 9 December 2008 (Secretary General, Political Advisor)
- Meeting of the MARRI Center Director with the COWEB Chair during the Czech EU Presidency - Brussels, 9 December 2008 (Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the EU Presidency, Head of Liaison Office, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with the COWEB Chair during the Czech EU Presidency - Brussels, 9 December 2008 (Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the EU Presidency, Senior Expert on Security Issues)
- Meeting with the European Commission’s representatives (DG Enlargement and DG JLS) regarding the MARRI activities - Brussels, 9 December 2008 (Head of Liaison Office, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with the EU officials on security policy for the SEE - Brussels, 9 December 2008 (RCC Senior Expert on Security Cooperation, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with the Director of Euro-Atlantic Integration and Partnership Directorate NATO IS – Brussels, 9 December 2008 (Deputy Head of the Liaison Office, Senior Expert on Security Issues, Advisor in the Liaison Office)

- Meeting with the representatives of Defence Cooperation, Defence Policy and Planning Division NATO IS - Brussels, 9 December 2008 (Deputy Head of the Liaison Office, Senior Expert on Security Issues, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with Director Intelligence RU MS Council of EU – Brussels, 9 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Security Issues, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Anticorruption policies and practices in SEE and International Corruption Day – Sofia, 9 December 2008 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs and Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues)
- Meeting between the Director for Western Balkans in DG Enlargement of the European Commission and the Director of MARRI Regional Centre - Brussels, 9 December 2008 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Cultural Heritage and Local Economic Development Workshop – Budva, 9 – 10 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital)
- ILECU’s Conference and Steering Committee Meeting – Vienna, 9 - 10 December 2008 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool and Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Conference on Visa facilitation, organized by European Citizen Action Service (ECAS) and King Baudouin Foundation (KBF) - Brussels, 10 December 2008 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- International Conference (organized by European Citizen Action Service and King Baudouin Foundation) on the subject “Does it Really Matter? Visa Facilitation in the Western Balkans: Monitoring of the New Agreements” - Brussels, 10 December 2008 (Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the EU Presidency)

Meeting with the representatives of Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU – Brussels, 10 December 2008 (Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the EU Presidency, Senior Expert on Security Issues)

- ISIS Governing Body – Oslo, 10 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
- Meeting with the Head of the Regional Secretariat for the Parliamentary Cooperation in SEE – Sofia, 10 December 2008 (Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues)

- Conference call with Steering Committee of SEE Network of Policy Makers – Sarajevo/Tirana, 10 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Meeting with the Chairman of the Business Advisory Council – Sarajevo, 10 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Meeting with the Director of CEFTA Secretariat – Sarajevo, 10 December 2008 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- International Workshop “Children’s Balkan Police Academy” – Sofia, 10 – 12 December 2008 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Conference „Ownership of Regional Cooperation in the Western Balkan Countries”, Stability Pact/Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation – Sarajevo, 11 December 2008 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Head of Liaison Office, Chief of Staff)
- Meeting with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Moldova – Sarajevo, 11 December 2008 (Secretary General)
- Meeting with RCC National Coordinator of Sweden – Sarajevo, 11 December 2008 (Secretary General, Chief of Staff, Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the EU Presidency, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Meeting with DCAF representatives, Programme Manager of Security Sector Advisory Programme and Project Officer – Operations – Geneva, 11 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Security Issues)
- Regional Seminar on Matura Exams in SEE – Sofia, 11-12 December (Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues)
- RCC Board Meeting – Sarajevo, 12 December 2008 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Head of the Liaison Office, Chief of Staff, Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the EU Council, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Senior Expert on Security Issues, Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Cross-Cutting Issues, Spokesperson, Head of Administration, Political Advisors, Advisor in the Liaison Office, Legal Advisor, Junior Political Advisor)
- SEE Parliamentarians Workshop "Parliaments – support to harmonized energy reforms in SEE" – Sarajevo, 15 December 2008 (Secretary General, Senior Expert

- on Infrastructure and Energy, Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues)
- Meeting with the President of the European Regional Economic Forum - Brussels, 15 December 2008 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the EU Presidency, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
 - Meeting with the Member of the European Commission responsible for the Environment - Brussels - 15 December 2008 (Head of Liaison Office, Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
 - International Financial Institutions Advisory Group Video Conference, European Commission - Brussels, 15 December 2008 (Deputy Secretary General, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
 - SEPCA Annual Coordination Meeting – Opatija, 15-17 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
 - Meeting with ITUC, PERC SEE Office, SEE TU Forum Coordinator – Sarajevo, 16 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
 - OSCE Round Table on Police Reform in Serbia – Belgrade, 16 December 2008 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
 - Meeting with the Heads of diplomatic missions accredited to EU and NATO of the RCC members- Brussels, 16 December 2008 (Head of Liaison Office, Deputy Head of Liaison Office, Advisors in the Liaison Office)
 - Meeting with Ambassador of the Czech Republic in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 17 December 2008 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Chief of Staff)
 - Joint meeting with the EU Troika COWEB Chairs-France/Czech Republic/Sweden – Brussels, 17 December 2008 (Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the EU Presidency)
 - Meeting with Permanent Representative of Greece to the EU - Brussels, 17 December 2008 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
 - OSCE Regional Meeting of Police Strategic Planners – Belgrade, 17 December 2008 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
 - Workshop „Movement of Goods in the Area of the European Union, EFTA, Turkey and CEFTA: Facilitation of Cooperation Potential“ – Istanbul, 17 – 18

- December 2008 (Expert on Economic and Social Development, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Follow-up Meeting on e-Justice with Italian experts - Brussels, 18 December 2008 (Head of Liaison Office, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
 - 1st Regional Dialogue Meeting – wbc-inco.net coordination of research policies with the Western Balkans countries – Paris, 18 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital)
 - Meeting with CEI Environmental, Transport and Energy Experts – Trieste, 18 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
 - Meeting with Chairwoman of the Delegation for relations with the countries of South-East-Europe in the European Parliament – Sarajevo, 19 December 2008 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Political Advisors)
 - Consultations with the Czech EU Presidency officials – Prague, 19 December 2008 (Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the EU Presidency)
 - Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkans – Paris, 19 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital)
 - Meeting with SEESAC Acting Head on Project Implementation and Cooperation – Belgrade, 19 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Security Issues)
 - Meeting with the Head of eSEE Secretariat – Sarajevo, 23 December 2008 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
 - Meeting with Chief Networking Officer, Brainswork GmbH Vienna Office – Sarajevo, 5 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
 - Meeting with the Economic Affairs Counselor at the Embassy of the United States of America – Sarajevo, 9 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
 - Meeting with Director of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Brussels, 13 January 2009 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
 - Meeting with representative of the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 13 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)

- Meeting on finalization of Water Conference Programme and presentation and discussion on feasibility study on rehabilitation and development of Sava River Waterway – Zagreb, 13 – 14 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
- Meeting with Head of Unit ‘Europe (non-EU) and Central Asia’, DG Trade, European Commission and with Head of CEFTA Secretariat – Brussels, 14 January 2009 (Head of Liaison Office)
- Meeting with Policy Unit, Council of the EU, General Secretariat, Western Balkans Task Force- Brussels, 14 January 2009 (Head of Liaison Office, Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the EU Council)
- Meeting with the Director of Hanns Seidel Stiftung – Brussels, 14 January 2009 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Meeting with the Ambassadors of the United States of America in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia and presentation of the RCC activities – Sarajevo, 14 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
- IPA Multi-Beneficiary Programming Coordination Meeting – Brussels, 15 – 16 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Head of Liaison Office, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy, Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- RCC presentation in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 20 January 2009 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Senior Expert on Security Issues, Senior Expert on Building Human Capital)
- Natural Gas Storage for Enhanced Energy Security under Consideration by the UNECE Working Party on Gas – Geneva, 20 – 21 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
- Meeting with the new Commission’s official responsible for the RCC activities within the DG Enlargement – Western Balkans - Brussels, 21 January 2009 (Head of Liaison Office, Deputy Head of Liaison Office, Advisors in the Liaison Office)
- Briefing for Working Group on Western Balkans of the EU Council (COWEB) – Brussels, 22 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Head of Liaison Office, Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the EU Council)
- Meeting with the Deputy Head of Unit and Head of Section for Regional Cooperation and Political Criteria in the DG ELARG of the European

- Commission – Brussels, 22 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with representatives of the Czech Presidency of the EU Council responsible for justice and home affairs issues - Brussels, 23 January 2009 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)
 - IFI Advisory Group Plenary Meeting – Brussels, 26 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
 - Young Leaders XV 2008-2009, Challenges in the Economic and Social Life – Budapest, 22 January 2009 (Spokesperson, Expert on Economic and Social Development)
 - 3rd ILPP Steering Committee meeting and 1st Regional Intelligence Led Policing meeting – Podgorica, 22 – 23 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
 - Lecture on Theory of New Regionalism and Regional Development in South East Europe at the Postgraduate Balkan Studies, Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM) – Vienna, 23 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
 - Meeting with UNDP Montenegro Programme Manager – Sarajevo, 23 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
 - Meeting with the Chair of COWEB - Brussels, 26 January 2009 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
 - Meeting with Head of the DPPI Secretariat – Sarajevo, 26 January 2009 (Secretary General, Senior Expert on Security Issues)
 - Meeting with Project Leader of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 26 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
 - Working Group of the Joint Security and Intelligence Commission for Supervision of work of the Intelligence and Security Agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 27 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Security Issues)
 - Meeting with DG Enlargement, Kosovo Unit- Brussels, 27 January 2009 (Head of Liaison Office)
 - Conference "From economic transition to European Integration: Two decades of change in South East Europe" organized by GTZ – Sarajevo, 27 January 2009 (Secretary General)
 - Sava Commission meeting – Zagreb, 27-28 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)

- eSEE Working Group meeting, bSEE Task Force meeting and CeGD Programme Advisory meeting – Ljubljana, 27 – 29 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Meeting with Western Balkans Policy Unit, Council of the EU – Brussels, 28 January 2009 (Head of Liaison Office, Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the EU Council, Deputy Head of Liaison Office, Advisors in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with International Republican Institute - Brussels, 28 January 2009 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Meeting with Director of the SEE Entrepreneurial Learning Center (SEE ELC) – Sarajevo, 28 January 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues, Legal Adviser)
- Meeting with the representatives of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 29 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital)
- Informal meeting of the SEECP Ministers of Foreign Affairs – Chisinau, 29 – 30 January 2009 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Junior Political Advisor)
- Workshop on the Follow-up of “Joint Statement on Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Sustainability in the Danube River Basin” – Budapest, 29 – 30 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
- Meeting with the Director of Education Department of the OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 30 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues)
- Meeting with Political Advisor in the Delegation of the European Commission in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 30 January 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues)
- Forum on R+D+I in European Cross-Border Areas – Vigo, 2 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital)
- Meeting with NATO, Public Diplomacy Division (PDD) representative – Sarajevo, 2 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Security Issues)
- European Perspective of South East Europe in the time of challenges dealing with Economic and Energy Crisis – Belgrade, 2 – 3 February 2009 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
- Meeting with the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 4 February 2009 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary

- General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Meeting with Assistant Minister of the Ministry of Communication and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 5 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
 - 5th Energy Efficiency Task Force meeting – Vienna, 5 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
 - Expert Seminar on the Western Balkans Czech Presidency of the European Union (Informal COWEB Capital meeting) – Stirin Castle, 5 - 6 February 2009 (Secretary General, Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the EU Council)
 - Consultations regarding SECE-CRIF and SEEFREC – Athens, 9 – 10 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Security Issues)
 - 13th Regional meeting of the National Coordinators of countries of the Western Balkans, Launch of the Regional Center for Entrepreneurial Learning in South East European countries – Zagreb, 9 – 11 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital)
 - 8th European Regional Meeting, International Labour Office – Lisbon, 9 – 13 February 2009 (Expert on Economic and Social Development)
 - Breakfast Policy Briefing by Secretary General, European Policy Centre - Brussels, 10 February 2009 (Secretary General, Head of Liaison Office, Deputy Head of Liaison Office, Spokesperson, Advisors in the Liaison Office)
 - Meeting with Director General, DG Enlargement – Brussels, 10 February 2009 (Secretary General, Head of Liaison Office, Deputy Head of Liaison Office, Advisors in the Liaison Office)
 - Meeting with Rapporteur for Western Balkans in the European Parliament - Brussels, 10 February 2009 (Secretary General, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
 - EPC Policy Briefing "Turkey-EU relations" - Brussels, 10 February 2009 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)
 - Meeting with Director and Program Office of Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) – Sarajevo, 10 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool)
 - Meeting with Embassy of the Netherlands – Regional Balkan Program representatives – Sarajevo, 10 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)

- Political consultations of the RCC Secretary General in The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - Skopje, 11 February 2009 (Secretary General, Chief of Staff)
- Meeting with Director of the European Policy Centre – Brussels, 11 February 2009 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- Briefing of Minister of Justice of Croatia to the European Parliament - Brussels, 11 February 2009 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with UNDP Portfolio Manager – Sarajevo, 11 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- EPC Balkan Forum, presentation on Student Mobility in the Balkans by Senior Expert on Building Human Capital - Brussels, 12 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with the representatives of the DG ELARG of the European Commission - Brussels, 12 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with Tempus Desk Officer in DG Education and Culture of the European Commission - Brussels, 12 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Presentation of the MARRI activities in the COWEB meeting - Brussels, 12 February 2009 (Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the EU Council, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with the Director of the CeGD – Sarajevo, 16 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Consultations of the RCC Secretary General with the officials of Sweden focused in particular on cooperation in the framework of the forthcoming Swedish Presidency of the EU Council – Stockholm, 17 February 2009 (Secretary General, Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the EU Council)
- Meeting with Director of the CeGD and Director of the Austrian Science and Research Liaison Office Ljubljana – Sarajevo, 17 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Senior Expert on Building and Human Capital)
- Meeting with Swiss – SECO representative – Sarajevo, 17 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)

- Participation in the discussions within the EPC Study Group on reinforcing societal security in Europe - Brussels, 17 February 2009 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with Secretary General of the EPP – Brussels, 18 February 2009 (Deputy Head of Liaison Office)
- RCC and UNECE 21 Project representatives meeting with ECS, UNIDO and OSCE - Vienna, 18 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
- Meeting with Ambassador of Norway in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 18 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Meeting with Secretary General of the SEE Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group and representative of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 18 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Meeting with UNODC representatives – Sarajevo, 18 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Meeting of the RCC National Coordinators from South East Europe – Sarajevo, 19 February 2009 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/ Head of Expert Pool, Chief of Staff, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Spokesperson, Expert on Economic and Social Development, Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues, Political Advisors, Junior Political Advisor)
- OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit Coordination Meeting – Podgorica, 19 February 2009 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Meeting with President of the Helsinki Human Rights Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina– Sarajevo, 19 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/ Head of Expert Pool)
- Meeting with the COWEB Coordinator from the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU - Brussels, 19 February 2009 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meetings between with NATO officials and Director of RACVIAC - Brussels, 20 February 2009 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Presentation of RACVIAC activities and the NATO INSARAG training project in the NATO SEEGROUP meeting - Brussels, 20 February 2009 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)

- Meeting with Enlargement Strategy Commission Expert dealing with regional agenda- Brussels, 20 February 2009 (Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with GTZ representatives – Sarajevo, 20 February 2009 (Secretary General, Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
- Meeting with representatives of the Regional Education and Information Centre for Sustainable Development in SEE (REIC) – Sarajevo, 20 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
- Meeting with Minister and Assistant Minister of the Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 20 February 2009 (Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- MARRI Seminar on Citizenship Legislations and Practices – Tirana, 20 February 2009 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- UNODC Project “Enhancing operational capacity to investigate and disrupt Human Trafficking activities in the Western Balkans” – Tirana, 23 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Meeting with Secretary for the International Co-operation in the Office of the President of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences/Executive Director of Balkan Political Club – Sarajevo, 23 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital)
- RCC presentation in Albania – Tirana, 24 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Senior Expert on Security Issues, Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy, Expert on Economic and Social Development, Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues, Junior Political Advisor)
- Meeting with UNDP Portfolio Managers – Sarajevo, 24 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development)
- Meeting with Director of the Centre for Democratization and Reconciliations and Deputy Director of the Education Department of the OSCE in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo, 25 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Building Human Capital and Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues)
- Railway Reform Workshop – Belgrade, 25 – 26 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy)
- Presentation of the activities of the Southeast European Chiefs of Police Association (SEPCA) in the COWEB meeting - Brussels, 26 February 2009 (Special Envoy of the RCC Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the EU Council, Advisor in the Liaison Office)

- Participation in the meeting of the EU Troika – Western Balkans Horizontal Drugs Group - Brussels, 26 February 2009 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Meeting with Head of Policy Coordination Unit, DG Enlargement, European Commission - Brussels, 26 February 2009 (Head of Liaison Office, Advisor in the Liaison Office)
- Future of the European Union’s anti – drug cooperation with the countries of Western Balkans including the review of the EU WB Action Plan on Drugs - Brussels, 26 February 2009 (Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- International conference devoted to the 60th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization ‘Young at 60’ - Brdo kod Kranja, Slovenia – 26 - 27 February 2009 (Secretary General)
- Konrad Adenauer Stiftung prosecutors’ conference in Romania – Bucharest, 26 – 28 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs)
- Presentation of the UNDP Regional Projects by the UNDP Senior Programme Manager and Team Leader for the Western Balkans and his team – Sarajevo, 27 February 2009 (Deputy Secretary General/Head of Expert Pool, Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Senior Expert on Security Issues, Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy, Expert on Economic and Social Development. Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues)
- Conference “The culture and audiovisual communication - Vector of peace and European future in the countries of SEE” – Skopje, 27 February 2009 (Senior Expert on Building Human Capital)

ANNEX II

LIST OF OFFICIALS OF THE REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL (RCC) SECRETARIAT (as of 27 February 2009)

SECRETARY GENERAL

1. Mr. Hido Bišćević- Secretary General of the RCC

EXPERT POOL

1. Ms. Jelica Minić- Deputy Secretary General/ Head of Expert Pool
2. Ms. Emira Tufo- Senior Expert on Economic and Social Development, Head of Economic and Social Development Unit
3. Mr. Miroslav Kukobat- Senior Expert on Infrastructure and Energy, Head of Infrastructure and Energy Unit
4. Mr. Virgil Constantin Ivan Cucu- Senior Expert on Justice and Home Affairs, Head of Justice and Home Affairs Unit
5. Mr. Efreem Radev- Senior Expert on Security Cooperation, Head of Security Cooperation Unit
6. Mr. Mladen Dragašević- Senior Expert on Building Human Capital, Head of Building Human Capital and Cross-Cutting Issues Unit
7. Mr. Nand Shani- Expert on Economic and Social Development
8. Mr. Predrag Vujičić- Expert on Justice and Home Affairs
9. Ms. Mimika Loshi- Expert on Parliamentary Cooperation and Cross-Cutting Issues
10. Ms. Maja Taylor- Assistant to the Head of Expert Pool (currently on maternity leave as of beginning of January 2009 – temporarily replaced by Ms. Svjetlana Radulj)
11. Ms. Elvira Ademović- Assistant to the Expert Pool

FRONT OFFICE

1. Mr. Miroslav Papa- Chief of Staff
2. Ms. Dinka Živalj- Head of Media Unit/ Spokesperson
3. Mr. Alphan Solen- Political Advisor
4. Ms. Alenka Hudek- Political Advisor
5. Ms. Jasna Arsić-Đapo, Legal Advisor
6. Mr. Ivan Bojanić- Junior Political Advisor
7. Ms. Jasna Sinančević- Personal Assistant to the Secretary General
8. Ms. Nataša Mitrović- Assistant to the Chief of Staff

ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

1. Mr. Alexandru Murzac- Head of Administrative Unit
2. Mr. Sead Filipović- Finance Officer
3. Ms. Mirela Mahić- Administrative Officer
4. Mr. Maid Medunjanin- IT Officer
5. Ms. Alma Ganić- Accountant
6. Ms. Dijana Kešelj- Translator

LIAISON OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

1. Mr. Stanislav Daskalov- Head of Office
2. Mr. Basil Coronakis- Deputy Head of Office
3. Mr. Sorin Sterie- Advisor
4. Ms. Lidija Topić- Advisor

**SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL FOR RELATIONS WITH
THE PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

1. Mr. Jovan Tegovski- Special Envoy of the Secretary General for Relations with the Presidency of the Council of the European Union

RCC SECRETARIAT'S TECHNICAL AND SERVICE STAFF

1. Ms. Selma Ahatović- Lihic- Public Affairs Assistant
2. Mr. Siniša Cvetković- Driver/Security
3. Mr. Fikret Kadrić- Driver/ Courier
4. Mr. Denis Sulić- Driver/ Courier
5. Ms. Ena Preljević- Receptionist