



SECRETARIAT

## **Conference on investigative journalism and data protection**

30 May 2012

**Welcome address by Stanislav Daskalov, Deputy Head of the  
Liaison Office Brussels, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)**

Dear participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

- It is my pleasure to be here today in the beautiful Pula and greet you on behalf of the Regional Cooperation Council and its Secretary General Hido Biscevic. We are happy to co-organize this conference together with the RACVIAC, the European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe and the Croatian Radio-Television.
- The RCC mission is to promote 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.
- This is why the strategic goal of the media development work of the RCC Secretariat is to bring about a change which would foster transition and development of the media sector in South East Europe towards free and professional media in the region, which is linked with one of the horizontal issues monitored in the enlargement process – the freedom of expression and of the media.
- The RCC and its Secretariat recognize the indispensable role the public service broadcasters have in building a free, democratic, pluralistic, tolerant and inclusive society, as well as the challenges they face in fulfilling that

role. There can be no healthy democracy without a healthy, pluralistic, professional media sector.

- For this reason, the RCC has strongly backed the establishment of the European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe. It is an important contribution to regional cooperation and promotion of European values.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- The participants of last year's European Commission's conference on freedom of expression and the media in the enlargement countries stressed the need to support investigative journalism efforts in the region.
- Investigative journalism is an important tool through which journalists and media as such foster public interest and contribute to an overall development and democratization of a society including in the field of security.
- This conference strives to promote investigative journalism and to foster journalistic independence, at the same time respecting data protection principles.
- In other words, this conference brings the public service media, the ministries of defence and other security-related institutions around the same table in an effort to improve dialogue and cooperation among them in the interest of their common stakeholder: the citizens of their countries.
- I hope that over the course of the next two days, you will identify new ways to deepen the understanding and the relationship between the public service media and the security institutions, reconcile the need for information with the data protection principles, and promote freedom of expression standards.
- We believe that such efforts would strengthen the independence of public service media in the enlargement countries of South East Europe, improve overall media scene in the region and support further development of democratic, pluralistic open and inclusive societies in South East Europe.
- I wish us a successful conference.

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- Thank you.