

International Conference on South Eastern Europe

Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy

Nov. 12th - 14th 1999, Sofia Bulgaria

**Expert Conference in the framework of the Enhanced Graz Process
Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe - Working Table 1**

Organised on behalf of the Task Force of the Graz Process

**Commission of the European Union: *DG Education and Culture* - *DG External Relations*
Council of Europe - European Training Foundation - OSCE - Royaumont Process
UNESCO/Cepes - World Bank - Austria - Bulgaria - Finland - France - Germany - Portugal**

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Editorial Note

The following pages comprise the responses to the organisers' request for inputs and speeches for the Sofia conference. Final reports on the workshops, recommendations and action plans document the discussions and bear the imprint of an on-going process of further co-operation and activities.

All the papers in this collection are presented without major editorial changes. We would like to thank all the authors for their contributions.

We hope this collection of documents contributes to an important stage in the development of education co-operation in the framework of the Enhanced Graz Process and within the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

**The Editors
Sofia, February 2000**

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INTRODUCTION

Petar Stoyanov
President of the Republic of Bulgaria

ADDRESS TO THE PARTICIPANTS

In the Second International Conference on South Eastern Europe "Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy"

/translation/

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My most sincere congratulations on the opening of the Second International Conference on South Eastern Europe under the motto: "European Education Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy" which is being held within the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. I am happy that this year my country is hosting this important forum.

Today, faced with the challenges of the new information age, we need to consider knowledge and the role it plays from a different perspective. For Bulgaria and for our region this means that, together with the transition from one system to another, we must implement another, no less important transition - to the age of the open knowledge, in other words, the transition to the future.

The young people, our children, tomorrow's citizens of united Europe would never forgive us if we leave them unprepared for the new knowledge of humanity.

Education and science lie at the basis of any economic miracle. To advance and prosper today means to invest in education, in schools, science and technology.

Our countries in this part of the Old Continent are encountering great difficulties but we hold the key to success: it is active European co-operation.

I wish success to all participants in the Conference! To our foreign guests - my best wishes for fruitful and enjoyable days in hospitable democratic Bulgaria!

/s/

Petar Stoyanov
President of the Republic of Bulgaria



Република България
Президент

ДО
УЧАСТНИЦИТЕ ВЪВ ВТОРАТА
МЕЖДУНАРОДНА КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ
ЗА ЮГОИЗТОЧНА ЕВРОПА
“ЕВРОПЕЙСКО ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛНО
СЪТРУДНИЧЕСТВО ЗА МИР,
СТАБИЛНОСТ И ДЕМОКРАЦИЯ”

Уважаеми госпожи и господа,

Позволете ми най-сърдечно да Ви поздравя по случай откриването на Втората международна конференция за Югоизточна Европа под наслов “Европейско образователно сътрудничество за мир, стабилност и демокрация”, която се провежда в рамките на Пакта за стабилност в Югоизточна Европа. Бих желал също да изразя пред Вас радостта си, че домакин на този изключително важен форум през тази година е моята страна.

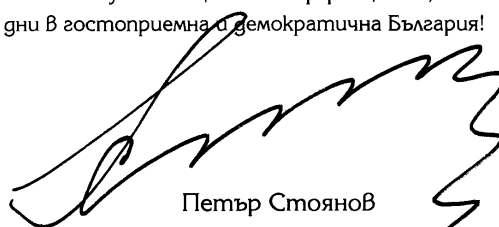
Днес, изправени пред предизвикателствата на новия информационен век, времето ни налага да преосмислим ролята на познанието. За България и за целия наш регион това означава, че ние, редом с прехода от една система към друга, сме призвани да извършим и още един, не по-малко важен преход - прехода към ерата на отвореното познание, което означава преход към бъдещето.

Младите хора, нашите деца, утрешните граждани на обединена Европа, не биха ни простили, ако ние ги оставим неподготвени за новото знание на човечеството.

Образованието, науката са в основата на всяко икономическо чудо. Да се развиваш - днес означава да инвестираш в образование, в училища, в наука и технологии.

Трудностите, които преживяват страните ни в тази част на Стария континент, са големи, но верният ключ към успехите е тъкмо в активното европейско сътрудничество.

Желяя от сърце успех на всички участници в конференцията, а на чуждестранните ни гости - добри дни в гостоприемна и демократична България!



Петър Стоянов
ПРЕЗИДЕНТ НА РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ

CONFERENCE RESULTS

1

Recognising the Recommendations of the Austrian Presidency Conference "European Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy" held in Graz in November 1998;

Recognising the subsequent work of the Graz Process Task Force, and particularly the Recommendations of the five Preparatory Workshops organised in this framework;

Taking into account the Declaration of the European Ministers of Education (Budapest, 24/26 June 1999) on the Kosovo crisis and post war regional development, and the reference made to the work of the Graz Process in this document;

Following the launch of the Stability Pact in June 1999, and the decision taken at the first meeting of Table 1 on Democratisation and Human Rights (Geneva, 18/19 October 1999) to include education among the major priorities for action, for development within the framework of an enhanced Graz Process;

In view of the need to present a co-ordinated, concrete programme of educational reforms to Mr Max van der Stoep, Chair of Table 1, in Budapest, on 24 January 2000;

The participants present in Sofia agreed on the following goals:

Maximising the pivotal role of education in achieving sustainable regional development through its inclusion as a priority within the Stability Pact. Democratisation and respect for human rights needs a widespread understanding of the rights and responsibilities of European citizenship. Good neighbourliness and reconciliation can also be furthered through education.

Furthering the key role of education and training in helping people to cope with change, and to respond flexibly to an uncertain labour market. Sustained economic growth is impossible without a skilled and educated workforce.

Working towards the creation of an inclusive European educational area that extends to all peoples in South Eastern Europe. Integration requires commitment and involves a learning process on all sides.

Ensuring that investment in education and training is recognised as a long-term process, to be considered within a minimum ten year perspective, while recognising that short-term action is also necessary to meet immediate needs. This process requires the active support of national governments, non-governmental organisations and the international community, working together within a common framework to ensure sustainability and change from within.

Taking collective responsibility for ensuring that the high expectations raised by the Stability Pact are met, especially given past experience of being left behind in the European integration process, of suffering the effects of war and inadequate reforms.

Mobilising the necessary financial resources to meet these challenges both through increasing the level of funding from external donors and by encouraging increased expenditure on education at national level.

Better orienting future external support. Action undertaken should be based on a clear identification of needs, be closely monitored and its impact evaluated. Experience has demonstrated that existing mechanisms have made valuable contributions in specific countries/areas/sectors/ or as pilot initiatives, but are not sufficient to bring about sustainable systemic reform in the prevailing conditions of severe economic weakness and political instability.

To reach these goals participants agreed upon the following principles for action:

Ensuring equal access to education for all;

Mainstreaming education for Roma and Sinti populations;

Listening and responding to the needs identified by regional experts rather than offering a donor-driven perspective at all stages of the process (programming, implementation, evaluation etc.): the countries of the region are owners of the process;

Developing mechanisms for systematically reviewing the present situation, as well as for monitoring and evaluating the impact of action undertaken, thus ensuring quality control and learning from past mistakes;

Viewing education as a whole and ensuring links between the different parts of the system, e.g. secondary and higher education, general/vocational, formal/non-formal;

Ensuring sustainability and integration at systemic level of pilot actions undertaken, by building in support for appropriate multiplication mechanisms;

Recognising the current realities and diversity between countries in the region and developing instruments which are sufficiently flexible to respond to rapidly changing needs;

Enabling local actors to take responsibility for and thus ownership of the process.

Priority areas for action identified by participants:

Cross-cutting issues, (cf. Action plans of Thematic Working Groups for specific recommendations):

The improvement of the systematic exchange of information through follow-up of the results of the forthcoming Feasibility Study concerning the establishment of a South Eastern European Education Co-operation Centre (SEE-ECC);

Encouraging policy debate and development which builds upon the results of pilot initiatives, and in turn informs the development of future operational projects;

Strengthening and improving teacher education, both initial and in-service, especially through its development at cross border and at regional level, given the paramount importance of teachers as change agents in the education process;

Fostering mutually beneficial partnerships between educational institutions at all levels and the Community at large in which they are situated;

Encouraging broad public debate on educational matters involving all stakeholders as part of the democratic transition process;

Support to youth and student organisations in the region as key partners with the motivation, creativity and responsibility to carry through the transition process;

The improvement of the management of educational institutions at all levels of the system, and of the capacity to manage change, encourage innovation and provide incentives for qualified staff, especially young staff, to remain within the system;

Promoting language policy and learning, history education and civic education as sources of mutual enrichment enabling citizens to respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by an increasingly inter-connected Europe;

The opening up of EU and other education and training programmes/development of special initiatives to include the countries of South Eastern Europe and which enable the transfer of experience from countries more advanced in the transition process.

Action Plan and Recommendations for major priorities to be addressed for each key theme are included in the following pages.

Vision and Strategy

Recommendations

Follow-up of the results of the Feasibility Study being launched by the European Commission concerning the establishment of a South Eastern European Education Co-operation Centre as recommended in Graz with a view to:

- Improving the systematic exchange of information/Clearing House function
- Supporting networking between existing centres in the region with other European partners
- Furthering inter-sectoral and inter-institutional educational cooperation across Europe
- Providing a co-ordinating mechanism by which countries that have decided upon change can review existing progress as well as plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their further development

Pending the possible creation of a "physical" Centre, the Graz Process should strengthen and expand its already functioning homepage (<http://www.see-educoop.net>) as well as develop other Clearing House functions.

The Recommendations of the Sofia Conference should be taken into account by those responsible for carrying out the Feasibility Study.

Some characteristics of a future South Eastern European Education Co-operation Centre

- Based in the region, networking and supporting individual centres in the region
- Light structure, fostering inter-institutional co-operation, thus avoiding duplication of efforts, and serving the needs of institutions, independent experts and decision makers
- Providing guarantees of excellence and high quality standards, e.g. through standing committees of outstanding experts from the region and beyond
- Provide access to and disseminate up-to-date information on a wide range of educational issues
- Rapid and flexible response mechanism to respond to new needs through the development and implementation of pilot projects
- Ability to support and facilitate review, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

History and History Teaching

Recommendations

1. To develop a range of cross-border and multilateral initiatives in history education. This would be aimed at (a) encouraging greater mutual and comparative understanding of the history of the region from a multiplicity of perspectives; (b) developing the skills and values necessary for the development of civil society.
2. To implement a framework for action which will build on and complement existing expertise and ongoing programmes and initiatives.
3. To facilitate the setting up of a coordinating committee of experts and government officials to manage a coherent strategic framework for the region. Its functions would include identifying priorities for development; establishing networks; cross fertilisation of ideas and experience; and evaluating and disseminating good practice. The Council of Europe is requested to establish this committee on behalf of the Graz Process.
4. The following cross-cutting themes will permeate all of the initiatives:
 - a/ social and cultural diversity;
 - b/ a multi-dimensional approach to history teaching (political, social, cultural and economic):
 - a comparative approach to the history of the region;
 - the development of critical understanding of the media.

Action Plan

Co-ordinating Committee for History and History Teaching

The training of history teachers in new methodologies

- comparative approaches to teaching the history of the region;
- using teaching approaches designed to help students critically analyse and interpret evidence;
- handling controversial and sensitive issues in the classroom;
- using out of school resources, incorporating a multiplicity of historical perspectives; drawing on social, cultural, political and economic approaches to history.

Actions:

Phase 1: Stocktaking activity to establish the current situation and identify gaps

Phase 2: Initiate two pilot projects:

Project 1: A series of unilateral, bilateral and multilateral workshops for potential multipliers in the region on new methodologies.

Project 2: A residential short course drawing together historians, teacher educators and history teachers on comparative approaches to teaching the history of South East Europe

The development of teaching resources

Phase 1. Stocktaking activity to establish the current situation and identify gaps

Phase 2. *Project 1:* Initiate a two year project where groups of teachers and experts cooperate to produce exemplar materials and a guide for teachers on how to use them. This would be followed up by work with publishers to develop a wider range of materials using this approach as a model.

Project 2: Expand upon the work of the Textbook Committee of the ongoing Joint History Project.

Project 3: A pilot project working with primary school pupils drawn from schools across the region to develop resources on historical themes relating to rich social and cultural diversity and the positive mutual influences of South Eastern Europe.

Higher Education

Phase 1. Stocktaking activity to establish the current situation and identify gaps

Phase 2. (1) Provide support for the development of specific networks (e.g. of historians, teacher trainers, history students, etc.); (2) Provide resources and support for the professional development of historians; (3) A cooperative pilot project involving 4 to 6 universities across the region to initiate exchange programmes for historians and postgraduate researchers, joint teaching projects, a pilot scheme for credit transfer for history students between the collaborating universities

Youth

- (1) To extend existing history initiatives and programmes for young people to all the countries of South East Europe. This could include the work of the Korber Foundation, the Socrates Programme, the Europe at School activity of the Council of Europe
- (2) A pilot project involving a network of schools along the lines of the Council of Europe Black Sea Initiative on History
- (3) A pilot project involving the organisation of a youth camp around a historical, archaeological or ecological site of regional significance.

Higher Education and its Role in the Development of Civil Society

Higher education is a long term investment, central to ensuring both the supply of skilled future leaders and a pool of current expertise. Without such measures including necessary reforms of Higher Education the brain drain which has reached dramatic proportions will continue to deprive the region of essential human resources necessary to achieve lasting peace, stability and democracy.

Higher Education institutions play an important role in the on-going European, integration process. Existing EU instruments as well as other instruments should be adapted to include institutions or individuals from countries currently not eligible to participate. Mechanisms should be designed to create synergies between existing programmes, and/or new programmes developed to fill such gaps.

All SEE countries should be included in the follow-up activities to implement the Bologna Declaration, thereby ensuring their belonging to the European Area of Higher Education.

Higher Education and Society

Institution building for civil society

- Support for HE cooperation with business, local communities, government and NGOs
- Promoting HE institutions as resources for life-long learning

Contribution to social cohesion

- Establishment of a regional working group on proactive policies facilitating the participation of minorities in education
- Support for development of policy instruments for social cohesion at system and institutional level
- Introduce measures to ensure equal opportunities
- Supporting student activities to actively participate in civil society and enhancing their professional potential

Strengthening the link between university autonomy and the responsibility of institutions of higher education towards society.

Higher Education Management

New forms of strategic management

- Regional training courses for university leaders
- Experts assistance in legal reform strategic plans, policy and mission statements
- Creating pools of expertise from SEE and other regions

Quality assurance

- Training in self-evaluation techniques
- Creation of a pool of quality assurance reviewers from the region and beyond
- Regional cooperation for the development of joint standards and assessment procedures
- Involvement of all SEE countries in EU Quality Assurance Network

Mutual academic recognition of diplomas and qualifications

- Establishment of credit systems such as ECTS
- Introduction of the Diploma Supplement as a tool for transparency

Curriculum Development

- Offering curricula relevant to the region, with input from the stakeholders
- Developing teacher training to ensure the management of diversity at all levels in education
- Reshaping degree structures in Higher Education along the lines of the Bologna Declaration

Regional cooperation

- Need for Comprehensive Scheme for Cooperation in Higher Education for South East Europe
- Joint efforts to counteract both external and internal brain drain.
- Networking on curriculum development projects, student and staff exchanges, internships, research projects, links with society and stakeholders, students organisations, thematic issues
- Joint training for university administration including international relations and joint degree programmes
- Information / dissemination: Inventory on projects in progress, information on ongoing events, dissemination of best practices, Newsletter on activities of Graz process
- Regional policy concertation as a long-term perspective

Joint approaches built on best governmental and non governmental practice for a policy for widening participation by all minorities, including Roma participation.

Vocational Education and Training and its Role in the Development of Civil Society

Priorities

- Using VET as a tool to move from social exclusion to social inclusion through ensuring equal opportunities and strengthening the role of schools in their communities
- Improving democratic institutional management based in particular on increasing the shared responsibilities of all the actors involved;
- Increasing the empowerment of citizens through provision of lifelong learning opportunities and new social partnerships based upon a culture of dialogue
- Identifying the most effective bridges between VET and citizenship education

Action Plan

1. teachers/trainers training

- curriculum development and teachers/trainers training modules to develop social skills (intercultural thinking, conflict management, media skills, communication skills, entrepreneurial skills, critical thinking, team building)
- inter-active methods
- activities based on the model of training firms
- extracurricula activities

2. development of participatory management

- empowerment of actors: principals, teachers, parents, social partners, local public authorities to participate in decision making processes, assuming responsibilities, and thus contributing to development of ownership
- training for management of key actors (school level, local level, national level)

3. changing schools into community resource centres

- rationalise the use of resources by encouraging joint use of existing infrastructure and expertise
- using schools for promoting social inclusion e.g. second chance for drop outs, unemployed
- using schools for promoting democratic values e.g. adults training for assuming active social roles such as participation in organisation of interest groups

4. networking and twinning

- for promotion of innovation and reform by exchanging expertise and setting up support mechanisms starting with the development of a networking culture at national level
- for regional development which should promote intercultural understanding:

- by cross border co-operation and bi or multilateral co-operation e.g. in business education and administration, tourism and engineering, entrepreneurship and social partnership
- National Observatories of ETF supporting the related developments and the co-operation
- extend Leonardo and Socrates participation in the region for reaching peace and democracy*
- provision of necessary tools for communication (access to communication technology, foreign languages skills and increased mobility).

* The extension of these programmes to additional countries in Southeast Europe beyond Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria is not envisaged; the participation of these three countries is based on the pre-accession strategy of the EU and not on the objectives of the Stabilisation and Association Process of the region (note of the European Commission)

Management of Diversity

1. The concept of diversity should extend beyond ethnicity to include all its aspects (e.g. age, gender, religion, ethnicity, citizen status). It should be based on the respect for human rights, democracy and pluralism and evolve in response to the complex challenges of countries in transition.
2. Management of diversity is an important tool for individual empowerment by promoting inclusive multiple identities based upon the respect for the right to be different, thus contributing to social cohesion and unity.
3. Education for the acceptance, respect and responsibility for diversity includes acquiring competencies such as openness to and interest in others; crosscultural communication and understanding; critical approach to social reality, including to ethnocentrism; democratic citizenship knowledge, values and attitudes. Teachers' competencies should include developing sensitivity to group dynamics and mediation skills.

Actions aiming at the inclusion of diversity into the mainstream culture should include:

- making an inventory of activities and good practices in the region (projects, actions, model schools, etc.)
- identification of local and regional experts and institutions active in and willing to develop models of diversity and intercultural education
- cross curricula analysis and development with a view to integrating the broad concept of diversity
- initial and in-service teacher training based on examples of good practice, and including methods and approaches which deconstruct ethnic and national identity myths, stereotypes, prejudices and ethnocentrism and promote a multicultural perspective in education (language learning, studies in folk cultures, arts, youth lifestyles)
- promotion of regional small scale research (action research and case studies)
- mobilisation of local and regional forces, particularly NGOs as well as regional networking and exchange programmes for experts, teachers and students
- development of support systems including legal provisions, decentralised decision making, closer involvement of local authorities and communities, increase of school autonomy, reorganisation of school administration and promotion of democratic school and classroom climate
- promotion of cooperation among grassroot initiatives, local and national authorities and schools, with a view to linking formal and non formal education in this field.

All activities in this field should be supported by a wide range of international institutions such as: European Commission, Council of Europe, Royaumont process, UNESCO, UNICEF, as well as other international and national foundations and donors and respective governments.

Education for Democratic Citizenship

- Education for democratic citizenship aims to promote a culture of human rights, democratic principles and citizens' participation and responsibilities and is therefore essential in the transition to democracy
- Education for democratic citizenship has political, economic, social, cultural dimensions. It includes formal and non-formal education within a lifelong learning process and needs to focus on the simultaneous acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.
- The promotion of education for democratic citizenship requires parallel actions at policy and institutional levels, as well as at school and civil society levels.
- Actions, needing financial support, should include policy and curriculum development, teacher training, educational material production, support to grassroot initiatives and NGOs, as well as networking, exchanges and partnerships between actors of education for democratic citizenship.

Action Plan

EDC in educational policy

1. Policy development

- comparative study of existing EDC policies and structures in SEE (needs assessment study)
- regional stocktaking conference on EDC policies
- Workshops for policy makers (national, regional)
- study visits of educational administrators, staff teachers

2. Curriculum development

- create a regional group of experts on curriculum development
- organise a regional seminar on curriculum development

EDC in schools

1. Teacher training

- Contents and methods of EDC, including human rights and media education
- The school in the community
- Democratic practices in the classroom

2. Strengthening relations between school and community

- Development of training modules for improving school and community relations
- Regional Trainings for teachers, multipliers, decisions makers
- Support for Dissemination

3. *Democratic school management and autonomy*

- Regional workshops on good practices
- Support structures for dissemination
- Regional trainings for educational staff in schools

4. *Educational materials development*

- Cooperative review of existing and development of new regional educational materials

EDC in civil society (Sites of citizenship and NGOs)

- Collect and disseminate examples of good practice
- Support for site development (project management training, experts visits, exchanges)
- Networking between sites and NGOs through seminars and exchanges
- Comparative action research (analysis and evaluation)

Twinning, networking, and partnerships

- Between schools, sites of citizenship, teachers, pupils, trainers
- Crossborder regional; between SouthEast and Western Europe

Youth

Not unlike gender questions, "youth" is one of those transversal items, difficult to integrate in classical approaches to education policies. Within the Stability Pact and under the active coordination of the Enhanced Graz Process, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, UNICEF and the Dutch Government together with the National Unions of Students in Europe recommend to the Sofia Conference:

- to highlight the important role and vulnerability of children and youth appropriately in each of the Working Groups and in the Final Report, and to point to the necessity of participation and action;
- to foresee, in the planning of any other meeting on education within Working Table 1, a particular Working Group on "youth", involving youth representation committed to educational action in the region, and support staff from agencies, national administrations and European and International Organisations;
- to take stock of the results of intersectoral and interinstitutional meetings between the initiators of this recommendation and others who will join eventually, and make good use of them for the success of the Stability Pact.

OPENING SPEECH

Vesselin Metodiev,
*Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria
and Minister of Education and Science*

EDUCATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE REGION OF SOUTHEAST EUROPE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS: THE BULGARIAN APPROACH

2

Introduction

As a follow-up of the last events concerning Southeast Europe, our region found itself in the center of different initiatives oriented towards lasting peace, reconciliation and stability. Never before has their relevance to the economic and social development in the region been so widely recognised on both international and regional level.

All of us are well aware of our joint responsibility for the material and spiritual reconstruction of the region. The united efforts of all the countries belonging to that region are needed for developing stable peaceful democratic societies.

It's an well-understood necessity for Bulgaria to actively support the ongoing regional activities within the frame of its efforts to become a leading factor in the region. During the last years Bulgaria has been clearly manifesting a constant neighbourhood-oriented policy. In addition to its EU-accession strategy, the country has overcome many historical contradictions thus consolidating its role in the region.

Education has always been one of the key elements in the economic, political and social development. Within that context, educational co-operation can support civic society development and democratic structures establishment in the region, by providing means for mutual trust and understanding. We are convinced in the strength of education, the mission of which is to train young people in the spirit of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

Taking into consideration the key role of education, having in mind its widely recognised importance for the stability and the economic development in the Southeastern European Region and in compliance with the overall European orientation of the country, the Ministry of Education and Science of Bulgaria, in close co-operation with the Task Force of the Graz Process and the Balkan Colleges Foundation, and with the kind assistance and support of a number of international organisations and foundations, has the honour to organise the Second International Expert Conference "*European Education Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy in South Eastern Europe*".

Developments and areas of activities at national level

From the beginning of the democratic changes in Bulgaria, considerable progress has been made in different areas of the economic, political and social development, much experience acquired, important results obtained. Economic and political changes related to the further society democratisation have also had significant impact on the education system. Market-oriented economy conditions, the introduction of the principles of free choice and competition, as well as the priorities linked to the process of the country EU pre-accession called for long-term reforms in the field of education, closely related to the programmes for civic society development.

Within that context, one of the major steps undertaken by Bulgaria for the approximation of the national legislation with that of the European Union is the adoption of the Law on Vocational Education and Training. *The main purpose of the new Law is "to create in compliance with the requirements of the market-oriented economy a qualified and mobile labour force that will be able to be competitive under the conditions of both the national and the European labour market".* The expected changes within the system of vocational education and training are mainly oriented towards achievements of a better mobility and adaptability of the trainees under the new conditions, decentralisation and democratisation of the system, as well as creation of preconditions for long-life learning and qualification up-grading.

The process of reforms within the system of secondary education is closely related to the implementation of the last amendments to the National Education Act. To this end one should mention the adoption of a new Law on Educational Level, Educational Minimum and Syllabus. The document provides the legal grounds for the implementation of the 12-year schooling model, comprising also compulsory matriculation examinations. It provides also for study content optimisation and elaboration of standards concerning the study content and the assessment system. The type of system management is also subject of important changes. Instead of the strongly centralised system, a new model of administration is actually being tested, thus giving the regional structures more freedom and individual character.

In order to improve the existing higher education structure, some amendments to the Higher Education Act became effective recently. On the other hand, the on-going process of higher education institutions network optimisation is closely connected with the requirements of the market economy and the constantly increasing democratisation of the society.

In recent years state institutions in Bulgaria have been seeking effective approaches in establishing close co-operation with non-governmental organisations and foundations at national level. A lot of positive results have already been obtained and the organisation of the Second International Expert Conference in Sofia could be qualified as one of them.

In addition to the achievements at national level, Bulgaria is participating in different European activities and programmes progressively opened up to the countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Starting with the TEMPUS Programme, whose dual objective is to promote higher education quality and support institutional development, Bulgaria is actually fully participating in the SOCRATES, LEONARDO DA VINCI and YOUTH programmes. For Bulgaria these programmes mark the beginning of different European initiatives in the areas of education, training and youth, thus giving the coun-

try the unique chance to gain a better understanding of common educational policies and to gather experience in the respective areas. These initial activities will undoubtedly have strong impact on Bulgarian democratic citizenship and civic education, thus providing reliable basis for sharing at regional level the experience acquired.

Against that background, substantial progress of Bulgaria in the field of the EU pre-accession process, together with competitiveness in the area of economics, have important role to play, thus creating preconditions for active country position in the future infrastructure for South Eastern Europe. Co-operation across national and ethnic borders in the field of education and training can support the overall process of regional reconstruction and development by strengthening civic society establishment in given countries. In line with these priorities, Bulgaria will continue to support the active implementation and effective running of different bi- and multilateral initiatives, which are part of the programmes oriented towards the region of South Eastern Europe.

Constructing the future on the basis of the results achieved in the region so far

From historical point of view, Bulgaria has always maintained close relations with the countries from the region in the field of education. Within that context, different bilateral agreements have always been operative in our region. These agreements have clearly had a dynamic effect especially in supporting cultural and educational diversification in the region. These documents constitute the policy framework of different scholarship schemes development, students reception facilities improvement, co-operation between educational institutions, mutual recognition of qualifications and study periods undertaken abroad.

Within recent years Bulgaria is also engaged in encouraging at regional level exchange of information and experience, studies and research, teacher training, as well as in particular educational projects of regional importance (e.g. the Balkan School - Sofia).

For more than five years the Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies (CEEPUS) has been operating. The nine participating countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia are looking forward to welcoming also other countries from the region. In order to promote co-operation between CEEPUS and Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM and Yugoslavia, a multidisciplinary thematic network initially suggested by the Central CEEPUS Office in Vienna, at the Graz Conference in November 1998 has been recently launched.

Bulgaria, as active member of the programme and in the framework of its current Presidency of the Joint Committee of CEEPUS Ministers of Education, is placing great emphasis on maintaining and developing the common achievements of the programme.

Bulgaria has already acquired a lot of experience in developing educational co-operation with strong regional impact. Among the numerous initiatives one should mention the Project on Ethnic Relations (PER) founded in 1991 in anticipation of the ethnic conflicts. The inauguration meeting initiating the future work with the Ministries of education in the Southeast European region, was held at the Saint Kirik monastery near Plovdiv on 1-3 May 1998. Following the strong opinion of the participants that the Balkan

countries share a common heritage, it was agreed to revive the practice of bilateral meetings and to form a Committee of experts to examine textbooks and to prepare recommendations for their revision for the Council of Europe. The other important decision was the decision concerning the initiation of a curriculum-exchange programme among schools of the region in history, literature, geography and political sciences.

Regional activities concerning European studies also take place in the country. On 26-28 September 1999 Regional Conference on *Education for Democratic Citizenship* took place in Sluntchev briag. A project on European studies for the countries from Southeast Europe has been recently prepared by the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and the Human Resources Development Center (HRDC). The idea of that project is to provide on a regular basis courses for secondary and higher education teachers from the region. Establishment of a Distance Education Center is also foreseen. The forthcoming Conference on European studies for researchers and lecturers from Southeast Europe to be held in January 2000 will also contribute to the enhancement of the regional co-operation. The activities of the Human Resources Development Center are closely related to the Specialized Preparatory Programme for the European Social Fund. Seminars with high level officials from the region, together with experts from the EU, the European Commission and ETF, as well as numerous seminars at national level, have an important place within the working programme of the Center. The Bulgarian National Observatory on vocational education and training and labour market has long traditions in maintaining the regional co-operation in the respective area. The Observatory publishes and disseminates the national reports on the system of vocational education and training in the countries from the region, organises regional seminars and meetings on different topics, co-ordinates different projects with regional importance (e.g. *Active measures for employment and human resources development*, Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania and Slovenia).

As of 1998 in Bulgaria is operating the Balkan Center of the International University Theatres Association (IUTA), providing the international cultural environment with specific regional dimension.

As to the different international programmes and projects, like these of PHARE, UNESCO and other organisations, Bulgaria since years has successfully supported their strands having strong regional impact.

In the context of the activities presented above our main outcomes are more than promising. On the other hand, our efforts towards integration at European level require a large scale of measures oriented towards the mutual understanding of our educational systems. Even more, our common efforts to enhance the importance of our regional co-operation could be considered as possible approach to face the future challenges of the European integration process.

From the initial idea to the Sofia conference

Launched under the Austrian EU-Presidency in 1998 as a follow-up to the First International Conference "*European Education Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy in Southeast Europe*" in Graz 1998, the Graz Process foresees to promote educational co-operation in South Eastern Europe, thus supporting the process of

peace, stability and democracy. The inter-institutional co-operation within the framework of the Graz Process is provided by its Task Force, which brings together a large number of international, European and regional institutions: The European Commission, the Council of Europe, UNESCO/CEPES, the Royamont Process, the Bulgarian, German and Finish Ministries of Education, the Austrian Ministries of Science & Transport and Education & Cultural Affairs. The future EU-presidencies Portugal and France, the OSCE, the World Bank, and ETF have also accepted the invitation to join the Task Force.

Bulgaria as participating country in the Graz Conference and member of the Task Force, welcomes the decisions taken by the Conference and fully supports the activities of the Task Force by offering its human resources potential, as well as its regional knowledge.

- The war in Kosovo led to the rethinking of the existing strategies, thus imposing the development of a new post-war reconstruction perspective.
- In June the German EU-Presidency launched the Stability Pact aiming to provide an area of political stability and economic prosperity, and gave at political level the start of the post-war regional development process.
- The Budapest Conference of European Education Ministers (24-26 June 1999) stressed the considerable role of education in the overall process of democratisation in the region and signed the *Declaration on overcoming the consequences of the Kosovo conflict in the education sector*.
- In the summer of 1999 one of the main activities of the Task Force took its place in the educational area of the region - the networking of international and regional key players within the framework of several thematic workshops addressing history/history teaching, the management of diversity, higher education and learning for citizenship in the field of vocational training. The purpose of the initiative was to assist the next step of the process - the Second International Conference "European Education Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy in Southeast Europe" to be held in Sofia (12-14 November 1999).
- As a result of intensive contacts and additional initiatives, undertaken by the Task Force, following the decision of Working Table 1 of the Stability Pact (18-19 October 1999), the Task Force is entrusted to develop an enhanced Graz Process by means of a strategy for educational co-operation in the South Eastern European region.

Playing an active role in the region for years now, Bulgaria as the hosting country of the Second International Expert Conference has actually the responsibility to further promote the Graz Process in its enhanced form and under the auspices of the Stability Pact, thus giving once again European orientation of its regional activities and initiatives. Based on our common efforts, the Sofia Conference will consolidate the achievements acquired so far, and will aim at making an even more effective contribution to the ongoing process of regional stabilisation.

Educational co-operation in Southeastern Europe - our common future

The Second International Expert Conference for Southeast Europe gives to the key actors in the field of education the unique possibility to rethink, after the crisis in our region, the purposes and the context of the educational co-operation. Positive outcomes of that co-operation could only be expected as a result of the united efforts of the educators from the region itself.

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Education at all its levels not only provides opportunities for personal and professional development, but also educates people to build up a civic society, to accept differences, to share common identities, while in the same time contributes to the enlargement of the European space of education.

Within that context it is our joint responsibility to develop a wide range of activities covering education in all its levels and forms. A completely new approach concerning teaching, teaching means and methodologies in subject areas covering regional features should be centred in our futures activities. Such activities, which in practical terms mean organisation of working seminars, experts meetings, bilateral co-operations, textbooks review etc., will undoubtedly assist our mutual understanding. Among others, The *Balkan Colleges Foundation's* Balkan School Programme is viewed as a strong potential for positive impact on regional developments. However, these activities concerning the institutional level of our educational systems will only be effective with the political support of the officials responsible for education and training in all countries belonging to the South East European region.

Based on the idea that a successful policy for education co-operation enhancement in the region could be the development of different structured forms of inter-institutional exchange at higher educational level, its development on lasting basis could be strongly recommended. Using the existing experience like CEEPUS and TEMPUS, more structural forms of co-operation at higher education level often - in the form of informal networks and different forms of institutional co-operation such as student and staff exchanges, research co-operation, joint curriculum development etc. – could and should be developed. One of the key elements within the overall set of such activities should be, in case it's relevant to the course content, the development of different curricula modules providing regional knowledge in the spirit of democracy, mutual understanding and tolerance. In order to obtain full impact, these activities should involve a high number of higher education institutions and in turn these institutions will need large support in developing the necessary infrastructures, thus being responsive to the challenges of our co-operation. Attention should also be given to the need for institutions to develop well-balanced policies in that regard. Finally, an urgent and substantial improvement in data communication with universities in Southeast Europe is strongly recommended. To this end cost-effective means of communication, like satellite solution, could be envisaged and supported at both regional and international level.

The above mentioned topics could be considered as part of larger scale activities related to the development of the educational co-operation in our region, which by virtue of the common trends in our present day situation could be considered as our common future.

The Sofia dimension of the enhanced Graz Process

Our forum is the right place where the crucial role of education and training in the overall process of peace, stability and democracy building has to be clearly defined. By bringing together regional and international officials, regional and international experts working in the field of education and training, as well as representatives of a number of international organisations and institutions, the Sofia Conference has the real chance to advance and structure the dialogue at regional level, as well as to further develop the inter-institutional co-operation at all educational levels.

The Second International Expert Conference "*European Education Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy in Southeast Europe*" will support our efforts in finding out effective strategies for common actions in the field of education and training. Following the results of the workshops, it will be our common responsibility, using also the expertise of the region, to define well balanced priorities to be covered by the Action Plan that will be prepared also by the Conference, thus giving the region the necessary guidelines for the forthcoming activities.

Against these expected outcomes, and within the framework of our overall reconstruction efforts, the Graz Process in its new phase of development could be strongly supported by means of providing a platform for educational co-operation across borders. From that point of view the establishment of the South East European Educational Co-operation Center, comprising a resource center and an open college, as mentioned in the Commission document *Contribution of the European Commission in the field of education and training* will contribute to the development of the regional dimension of our co-operation within an European context. The activities of that Center, which apart exchange of information and experience could also be oriented towards areas not covered by existing programmes, are the main challenges of our regional development. By using the advantages of the inter-disciplinary approach in different educational areas and at different levels, as well as at their intersections, the operative part of that Center could provide the region with numerous innovative educational initiatives, thus creating the future foundation for new programmes of common interest.

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KEY NOTE SPEECHES

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REMARKS TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE "EDUCATIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR PEACE, STABILITY AND DEMOCRACY"

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Mr. Minister,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to begin by thanking the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and the Graz Process for inviting me to participate in this important conference on "Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy." As the son and grandson of teachers, it is a particular honor and pleasure for me to be in the company of such a distinguished group of professional educators. It gives me reason to reflect upon my years growing up on Long Island, New York in the middle of this century at the height of the Cold War that so sharply divided the two halves of Europe between "us" and "them." I clearly recall how, as an elementary school student, we took part in exercises to protect ourselves in the event of surprise attack by our enemies by getting under our school desks or seeking what we imagined was the relative safety of the windowless school corridor. Happily these days are well behind us and we have just celebrated the 10th anniversary of the momentous collapse of the Berlin Wall, probably the most outstanding symbol of what divided us. Despite the great challenges we continue to face in making the nations of South Eastern Europe full participants in a prosperous and democratic Euro-Atlantic community, the enormous barriers between us that have been dismantled in recent years make me optimistic about our future possibilities.

My particular challenge this morning is to outline our vision of the Stability Pact and how we hope the Graz Process will be able to relate to this initiative. Far too often in the past the conflicts of South Eastern Europe have become the conflicts, even the wars of Europe. At the same time Europe carried out its own proxy wars in the region. In the Kosovo crisis, through a determined joint effort, a very dangerous conflict was successfully limited and isolated. We see this as a great political success that demands an ongoing commitment from all of us to prevent the terrible mistakes of the past from being repeated.

The Stability Pact provides the political framework for maintaining our cooperation. The Pact is a broad based, cooperative enterprise aimed at strengthening countries in South Eastern Europe in their efforts to foster peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity in order to achieve stability and a better future for the entire region. The list of participants is impressive including all the countries of the

region - with one notable and hopefully temporary exception - the fifteen members of the European Union, the U.S., Russia, other members of the G-8, the OSCE, Council of Europe, UN organizations and the key international financial institutions. However, if the list of sponsors is impressive, the challenges to be faced are unquestionably daunting. The consequences of years of political repression, economic mismanagement and overall isolation from Euro-Atlantic institutions must be overcome. These factors have retarded economic development, hindered regional cooperation, and left a political culture that was largely unfamiliar, uncomfortable and understandably impatient with the workings of democracy.

The announcement of the Stability Pact this past summer engendered great expectations in the region. While the Pact's clear aim to raise hopes for a better future, it is also most important that we avoid raising unrealizable expectations of what we can reasonably accomplish, particularly in the short term. The Stability Pact is not Santa Claus, Père Noël or Weihnachtsmann. It is certainly not a magic formula for resolving quickly deep-seated problems with a history of many centuries or producing instantaneous economic prosperity and well being. Nevertheless, as an American who has spent many years of a diplomatic career living in and working with Europe, I continue to be inspired by the legacy of visionaries such as Monnet and Schumann and how the European Union, which they did so much to create half a century ago, has turned old enemies into partners. I am convinced that the nations of this part of Europe can achieve similar success over time with the proper mix of internal motivation and outside support.

As the Stability Pact's Special Coordinator, Bodo Hombach, has pointed out, the Pact should be seen as a kind of Marathon Race. The race began with the July 29 Sarajevo summit attended by 40 heads of state and government who all endorsed this initiative. However, the race remains in its early stages. Nevertheless, we feel that we have had a successful beginning and I would like to take this opportunity to review briefly with you our basic concepts, what we have accomplished thus far and how we hope to proceed.

We believe that the Stability Pact differs from previous initiatives for the region through its vision, through a policy characterized by coherence and preventive diplomacy and through its practical implementing initiatives. In its vision the Pact foresees a South Eastern Europe that will eventually be integrated into the major Euro-Atlantic structures. Our policy is to help accelerate this process by encouraging actions that will directly address the political and economic structural deficits in the region. In doing this we must fully draw in the countries of South Eastern Europe as equal partners and full shareholders in this stabilization process. In addition to developing a full partnership with the EU and other participants from outside the region, the nations of South Eastern Europe must cooperate more effectively together and develop common plans for joint action that the entire Stability Pact can endorse and support. Such cooperation will be an indispensable element for our eventual success. We should envision the Stability Pact as a type of Helsinki process for South Eastern Europe. This is underscored by our basic structure of three working tables: one for democratization and human rights, the second for economic development reconstruction and cooperation, and the third for security, encompassing both defense issues and justice and home affairs. The results of these three tables are to be brought together and endorsed by the Stability Pact's Regional Table, chaired by the coordinator. The Stability Pact is unique in that it brings together all the concerned countries and international organizations, including

the international financial institutions. However, it is important to view the Pact as a process rather than an additional actor on the international stage. Our central task is to find ways to create genuine added value among existing actors for we do not have our own implementing structure or additional funds and are therefore dependent on the participants to carry out initiatives.

In mid-September the Stability Pact's first Regional Table meeting took place in Brussels. This meeting approved the Pact's structure and the distinguished chairpersons of its three working tables. Table I, chaired by the OSCE High Commissioner on Ethnic Minorities, Max van der Stoep, is dealing with Democratization and Human Rights. Table II, headed by the Bank of Italy's Fabrizio Saccomani is responsible for Economic Development, Reconstruction and Co-operation. The Security Table is chaired by Swedish Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Eliasson and has established two specialized sub-tables for Justice and Home Affairs and Defense and Security Affairs. An important action by the Regional Table was to approve a concrete process for taking the overall Stability Pact process to the region by establishing a system of rotating co-chairs. Under this arrangement, as of January 1, 2000, Hungary will co-chair Working Table I, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Table II, and Bosnia-Herzegovina Table III for a six-month period. This means that these countries will host the meetings of their respective working tables and will be intensively involved in the planning of the activity of these tables. In July 2000 these chairs will rotate, respectively, to Romania, Turkey and Bulgaria.

However, we did not want to wait until the new millennium to begin the meetings of the working tables. Each working table held a separate meeting in October at which specific initiatives were considered and a plan of action was endorsed. The economic table is developing an investment charter as a vehicle for encouraging the flow of private investment and creating a mechanism to evaluate the merits of key infrastructure projects. I am personally encouraged by the fact that the countries of the region have gotten together to create their own list of priorities for regional projects. The table on security is developing proposals for defense spending reductions, confidence building measures, demining activity and specific initiatives to fight organized crime and trafficking in human beings. The democratization and human rights working table has endorsed an action plan covering seven specific areas. As the Graz process features prominently in this action plan, and I personally am particularly involved with the developing the agenda of this working table, I would like to use this opportunity to review the major elements of this work plan with you.

At Table 1's initial meeting in Geneva three weeks ago, so ably organized by the Government of Switzerland and particularly Ambassador Ruf who I am very pleased to see is with us today, we identified seven priority areas for our future work. These are the protection of human rights and ethnic minorities, the facilitation of the return of displaced persons, the promotion of good governance initiatives, including the establishment of effective Ombudsman institutions throughout the region, the promotion of parliamentary cooperation, the advancement of gender equality, the support of an independent media and the promotion of education. To advance this work and develop specific proposals, a number of specialized task forces were established. Slovenia agreed to be the lead sponsor for the Task Force on Human Rights and Ethnic Minorities, the Council of Europe for the Task Force on Good Governance, the OSCE for the Task Force of Gender Equality and the UK for the Task Force on Media. Participants agreed

that the Enhanced Graz Process would serve as the Task Force for Education and we very much appreciate the Government of Austria's willingness to take on the responsibility as lead sponsor for this activity.

I hope that the meeting we are beginning today will be able to develop a number of well-focussed initiatives for our future work. The Geneva working table's conclusions noted that the fields of civic education, the teaching of history and youth issues were questions that required special attention. We recognize that there is a remarkably strong social value and demand for education among the people of South Eastern Europe. By international standards participation in the educational process is high. The basis upon which education systems are restructuring is similar across many borders; however, this common ground is not always used as a basis for cooperation on practical issues. The former and current republics of Yugoslavia share a common inheritance in the structure of their education system and in languages that educators have used effectively. Nevertheless, the possibilities that these similarities provide for cross-border and regional cooperation are not fully utilized. To make education more effective we must overcome these barriers.

Educational development must be approached as a long term sustained process where a regional approach will provide benefits for all. To be effective, education policies in individual countries and throughout the region must be well informed, locally rooted, carefully coordinated with donor assistance and consistent. Efforts in the region must begin immediately to draw more upon the considerable professional strength that already exists. There also needs to be more consideration of the creation of regional institutions and projects to meet common needs. Governments of the region as well as the external community must give a higher priority to address the needs of physical infrastructure in education and relate these to the transformation of education. Finally, education, training and economic development efforts need to be better aligned.

The education of the upcoming generation is fundamental if we are to avoid the mistakes of the past. It is also an area where all countries of the region must work more effectively together to develop compatible approaches that will stress the responsibilities as well as the opportunities of citizens in a democratic society. Such work must also create respect for the many diverse cultures of the region and eliminate narrow nationalism from the curriculum. I heartily applaud the many worthy projects such as those sponsored by the Council of Europe, the Royaumont process, UNESCO and a number of non-governmental organizations that have been dealing with these questions. However, the task before us is a very substantial one and will require a coordinated sustained effort if we are to achieve success. I hope that the Graz Process will be the driving force in enabling us to accomplish this. The six-point program that will be considered at this meeting including initiatives on civic education, the management of diversity, vocational training and the establishment of an eminent persons group to consider the presentation of history appear to be an excellent start.

Allow me to use this opportunity to once again emphasize the enormous importance of the efforts of the countries of this region to the work of the Stability Pact. If we are to be successful these governments and their institutions must be proactive and be ready to work together actively to develop proposals on a regional basis that we might implement. As I noted earlier, we have been encouraged to see the development of joint proposals from the region for the economic table. However, we need to have more exam-

ples of such coordinated efforts for all three working tables. And, of course, I would particularly appreciate joint initiatives coming from the region in the field of education.

I would like to use this opportunity to mention Yugoslavia and its relationship to the Stability Pact. Milosevic's government was not invited to Sarajevo, thus making Serbia the major missing element. While we are not able to include a government led by an indicted war criminal in our activity we very much wish to find ways to reach out to the Serbian people who continue to suffer greatly under Milosevic's misrule. With this in mind the Stability Pact co-sponsored with the Government of Hungary an October conference with the democratically elected opposition mayors and other opposition leaders in the Hungarian City of Szeged. The aim of the conference was to see how we might provide some emergency assistance to hard pressed Serbian cities controlled by the opposition. In addition to humanitarian supplies, the provision of educational materials and the establishment of exchange opportunities for young people were also considered. One vehicle for promoting such assistance could be through Sister City and other partnerships between cities in Stability Pact participant countries and those in Serbia. The promotion of partnerships between educational institutions and counterparts in Serbia is an idea that should also be given serious thought. We need to find ways to demonstrate that the Stability Pact is not directed against the people of Yugoslavia and that we wish to make Yugoslavia a full participant in the Pact as soon as Milosevic is replaced by a democratically elected government.

Two months ago I attended an extraordinary event in the Bulgarian City of Plovdiv. Seven nations, each of whom have long histories of fighting one another, initiated the Southeastern Europe Peacekeeping Brigade. Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Romania and Turkey are all contributing units to this brigade whose first commander is a Turkish brigadier. Watching the soldiers dedicated to this operation march in review to the applause of the Bulgarian population and in the presence of the participants' defense ministers was a moving moment for me and was visible proof of a new cooperative spirit in the region. Sadly this very symbolic event received no coverage in the Western press that I am aware of. This is very unfortunate for it is not only a great story but an outstanding example of the type of activity that exemplifies the spirit of the Stability Pact and must be emulated many times over in order for the Pact to realize its potential.

While I realize that there are enormous challenges and difficulties to be overcome in the current transition process, initiatives such as Peacekeeping brigade demonstrate that fundamental, positive change is taking place. There are many other examples one might mention. We must learn to have greater appreciation for this good news and get this information broader public attention.

EDUCATION AS KEY ELEMENT OF STABILITY

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

South Eastern Europe needs stability. Wars in the region, thousands dead (Croatia, Bosnia - Herzegovina, Kosovo), hundreds of thousands of refugees (let me just remind you of the Kosovo crisis and the situation in Macedonia and Albania), destroyed cities (such as Vukovar), atrocities (don't forget Srebrenica), hostilities beyond every imaginable limit - all of this reminds us that it is our duty to do something.

If we were not able to stop the slaughter when it was time to do so – if there are no mechanisms which would have prevented the raging we have witnessed in the last decade – if we arrived and made decisions too late everywhere – it would at least be right for us not to be too late in taking care of the children, of the generation which has faced all of this horror. Too late with respect to what?

We cannot give them back their carefree childhood, playing football, basketball, running through greenery, their first encounter with computers, the carefree attitudes of their classmates and their first love, without at least a fragment of memory of the horror which was part of their past lives. That is all gone!

We should, however, not be too late in helping them to have greater hope for their future! I am aware that this is not a matter of hope only for children, but nevertheless, I shall speak today about what we can do in the area of education to ensure stability of hope for the younger generations. Stability of hope, for them, means hope for long-term stability both in the region and in all of Europe.

I am aware that stability in a region, in a specific society, is something which never depends on only one element - even such an important element as education!

It depends on a number of things and for sure on:

- safety in the region,
- political stability,
- the economy.

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Nevertheless, allow me to concentrate only on education. This is even more necessary, because education is again a marginal topic in the framework of the Stability Pact.

Declaring that "we will strive to achieve the objective of lasting peace, prosperity and stability for South Eastern Europe" means, between the lines, that we are supposed to re-think the place and space of Education in the activities of the Pact. If the Stability

Pact is going to strengthen "countries in South Eastern Europe in their efforts to foster peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity", like it or not, for the sake of its own success it should put additional importance on education.

I hope that we will be able to rethink the position of education in the region – we are supposed to favour education, above all other possible activities, as an important tool for better lives and stability in the region. If we are able to demonstrate the importance of education, I hope the key players will be able to accept it as such.

We are here to discuss and agree on what we can offer them and to what we should draw their attention – in other words, what we might do to help them in considering their further steps with respect to allocations of attention, funds and power.

In recent years Europe has markedly declared its awareness about the importance of education in the formation of a common arena of European culture, etc.

A number of programmes have been prepared for Europe and for the countries wishing to join it, enabling:

- faster approximation,
- improvement of the quality of the educational process.

The purpose is simple: to make possible the establishment of stable educational systems, and with this the space for transfer and formation of:

- common values
- social integration
- competitive ability of the economy

Briefly stated:

Europe knows that we need quality, we need inclusion (basic equality); we need basic values incorporated in knowledge and in the way of life of the younger generations.

Although it is frequently not entirely obvious, it is becoming clear that only these three approaches produce valuable results. Aiming for only one means loss of energy and forsaking that which is valuable within European principles.

I am not sure about rights, but if there is a "must" then it has to do with assuring opportunities for younger generations. This is the task of the countries themselves, and this is the role of the EU and various organisations involved in the area of education. Listing the aforementioned goals, then making the opportunity possible is simply an obligation from one fellow human being to another.

The European Union, member states, and the states applying for membership are aware of the importance of education for the future of a greater Europe.

The Union, the Council of Europe, donors like Mr Soros and many others are going to demonstrate to what extent they are aware that the same is supposed to apply to South Eastern Europe.

If we want stability – even more so, if we are to demonstrate that we are adhering to our European humanism, to the values of equality, justice and solidarity – we should help

to prepare opportunities for adults, and above all, for the younger generations in the form of good education.

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One thing is for sure: South Eastern Europe needs solid educational systems. Without them there is no future for the region, nor for the citizens of Albania, Yugoslavia (Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo), Macedonia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of us are facing a huge question, namely, are we going to be able to cope with all the opportunities and dangers that life confronts us with. Without a proper educational system, this question has only one answer: NO! And this "no" is getting bigger by the day. With this "no", dreams about democracy, human rights, liberty, prosperity and so on will not even be able to stay dreams.

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Imagine what we would be without solid education. Destroyed facilities without heating, poorly educated teachers without proper teaching materials and means, this is reality for a number of places in SEE. This is the reality we are supposed to cope with.

Whether the younger generations are going to accept and promote the values of liberal democracies, or are going to become slaves to vivid nationalism and totalitarian attitudes is not only a question of education, but one without which the chances for liberal democracies are extremely weak.

We are going to see greater investments in police forces, and quite possible in military interventions and the like, if we do not take seriously enough the opportunity and duty that is in front of us.

I am convinced that we are going to invest in education inside the Stability Pact:

- because of the younger generations – through which we will demonstrate how serious we are when we claim how important they are and how important is education for the future.
- because it is cost-effective – the strength of the economy and the capability of the region to manage its own destiny will be much greater with an educated population.
- and even because of a short-term rationale: Stability in the region, the perception of a possible future in times of a lack of confidence in institutions and the state, and when there is great unemployment, is far brighter when my children are in safe hands, in a warm place and with the opportunity to prepare themselves for life!

The same goes for the education of adults. Despite the fact that you are not doing the best at the moment, you have to believe that there is a way to go on. Re-qualifications, additional education, and so on enable an unemployed person to find a job, and to find perspective again.

I am coming from Slovenia, and believe me, I know how important education has been as an element of stability in our rapidly changing society.

There is another reason why South Eastern Europe needs stable educational systems.

Political systems in these countries will need a lot of time to become stable. The election of democratic governments, where this is needed (e.g. in Serbia), for their own sake does not assure stable democratic development. In the so-called golden scenario

it can be maintained, from the Central European perspective of establishing democratic systems, that if nothing else, the change of governments and ministers will be relatively frequent; there will be plenty of demagogic promises.

The same holds true for the area of the economy – it will remain unstable for quite some time.

With stabilisation of private companies, and reducing the percentage of unemployed, the uncertainty of the majority of companies will be considerably higher than normal for quite some time too.

How to achieve stability at the field of education?

The consolidation and building up of institutions in the system is an essential key to a stable educational system. If education is supposed to be an element of certainty, then by definition it has to be stable and comparably well-organised.

- European Union
- United Nations
- Council of Europe
- Open Society Institute
- Bilateral initiatives
- World Bank
- Some other initiatives

have already done a great deal of what is necessary for beginnings in this respect.

Planned assistance in institution-building is evident, for example, in the official documents of the Council of Europe and European Union.

What is missing is a considerably better co-ordination of efforts and, of course, additional financial support, partially at the level of expertise and more so in the area of the material conditions in which schools function.

Speaking of co-ordination, I have in mind a systematic approach of the Stability Pact partners in the region. In this co-ordination I personally see a role for the European Commission with a number of well-organised programmes, which will hopefully include countries in need in the region but which have not yet been admitted to the programmes. The central role of the European Union should also be seen in the light of expectations of the countries in the region, in relation to the EU. In case of co-ordination, considerably greater effects are possible since the region is small and the size of systems can be managed. Let us not forget that the countries we have in mind when discussing urgent, organised assistance lasting at least for several years (Albania, Macedonia, Serbia, and particularly Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to a lesser extent Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia) are countries whose populations do not exceed ten million inhabitants apiece (in particular, those in the first group). These are manageable systems. Co-ordination, of course, does not mean centralisation.

The objective is the review of the whole and, if possible, a co-ordinated approach within the Stability Pact.

The Austrian idea regarding the Educational Centre for SEE seems to me suitable to be classified, at this point, as a site where the review of the events and co-ordination of the activities of the active entities linked via the Stability Pact should be placed.

Where, and in which areas is assistance needed the most?

First, at the level of expert assistance and then also material and financial aid

With respect to the first item, it is my opinion that it needs to be considered again, and if it can be conducted in a co-ordinated and systematic way, financially strengthened only to a minimum extent.

With respect to the second item, it is obvious that it needs a several-year plan of:

a) co-ordinated non-returnable financial aid:

- immediate aid is needed in those places which need help urgently (Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia);
- gradual aid is needed in those areas which will change the philosophy of work in schools (foreign languages, ICT – with the preceding training of teachers, educating teachers in service and undergraduate studies). Open and financially supported programmes within Leonardo and Socrates (or programmes similar to them) are suitable for exactly that.

b) co-ordinated favourable loans designated specifically for the area of education (similar to the Council of Europe's Social Fund). The loans must be conditional to the share of domestic investment.

The aid should be systematic and conditional to priority treatment of education in the country, and to the taking into account of the solutions drawn up by the multiple groups of domestic and foreign experts, and verification among teachers. Finances are a mechanism which is considerably under-utilised for maintaining the course and tempo of adapting educational systems.

Re-thinking of expert assistance calls for the examination of the assistance which has been given thus far (it had not been that low), and a co-ordinated plan for further assistance. A co-ordinated approach would make possible a focus on the already existing activities for that item, among those enumerated below, which needs special expert attention in an individual country. Some countries will need a beginning from scratch; others will be able to skip or pay only brief attention to certain stages. The approach to expert assistance should, in my opinion, be systematic and consistent.

We have to begin by establishing whether the state possesses a valid assessment of the situation of the educational system. In the case of the absence of such an assessment, domestic and foreign experts in the work group appointed at the national level and working similar to OECD review groups will prepare such an assessment, and will establish the strengths and the weaknesses of the system. If possible, light should be thrown on the system via the approach used by Eurydice.

The Eurydice approach also makes the next step easier. Parallel to performing an assessment of the system, the domestic experts aided by foreign ones examine the

solutions rendered by foreign systems, particularly with respect to the items for which it has been jointly judged that changes are needed. For this a detailed review of the specific solutions in the foreign systems is required (the context of the solutions, etc.), particularly with respect to those items including the essential elements of the system. An electronic information exchange between the Eurydice unit of a specific country and the group working on the project would be very welcome.

The assessment of the system and the review of the solutions in other systems with respect to weak items should be supplemented by the expert group with the proposals of (alternative) solutions. The proposal must be drawn up jointly with the ministry responsible for education.

The group of experts is supposed to conduct a discussion about the proposals among teachers and parents.

The discussion should be broad, thorough and well-prepared. The discussion materials should be published. It is important that the experts and the representatives of the ministry are well prepared for the discussion. The discussion must include different regions of the country; it should, as a rule, take place in schools. This stage forms a consensus on the changes needed in the system. The consensus will never be 100 per cent; it should, however, reach a high level. At this stage it is often appropriate to conduct discussions with political party leaders and appropriate governmental and parliamentary committees.

Upon reaching a sufficient level of consensus between the experts and the parents, legal texts introducing the new system are drawn up.

In proposing the acts and amendments, the proposers should realise that there is no need to change those parts of the system which function well. There are more than enough work and obstacles inherent in the process of introducing the most urgent changes.

In preparing new solutions it is advisable to take into account:

- that the educational systems are different in every country, and that they need to be upgraded and not destroyed. Robespierre's and Lenin's ideas on new schools which would create a new man were proven to be wrong, and those who still believe that radical intervention into schools could prevent future disputes, wars, etc., do not eliminate intolerance and radicalism but, on the contrary, stimulate it.
- that it is advisable to justify the systems of public education by human rights and by common values acceptable to all, and in so doing pay particular attention to the special rights of national and other recognisable minorities in an individual society.
- it seems to be fitting that alongside justifying public schools by common values, that they should be established as "ideologically" neutral.
- that it is necessary to provide, alongside public schools, for the possibility of private schools, which should be substantially publicly funded and in which at least minimum standards should be required.

Private schools enable everywhere, and in the regions of SEE in particular, the realisation of special rights and interests of parents and children, and reduce the tensions

which occur naturally in a system of unified public schools. It should, however not be permitted that the introduction of private schools result in making the public ones second-class. The quality in public schools must however be at least comparable to that in private ones.

- that the transition between the levels of schools and between schools must be simple and such as to enable, by achieving the basic standards, as many young people as possible to receive the highest possible education.

Already at the time of beginning to examine the functioning of the existing system, the mechanisms examining the content of the educational process, i.e. the curriculum, need to be established.

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- a) groups consisting of teachers and professors from the university and the institutes will examine the existing curriculum and make proposals for amendments. In so doing, every group dealing with individual subjects will obtain the syllabi from at least three countries with stable democracies. It will also obtain textbooks, collections of exercises, etc., from these countries for the relevant subjects.
- b) the changes in the curriculum must be dealt with by the teachers – as many as possible. In countries with up to five million inhabitants it will be possible for all teachers to participate in supplementing the curricula. The proposed approach is exacting, but it enables an effective supplementation of solutions (the commissions must take into account the proposals made by teachers, or explain by arguments why they did not take them into account), education and mobilisation as a support to the curricula and reform as a whole.
- c) foreign experts will participate only in terms of expert assistance at the seminars where the representatives of the commissions familiarise themselves with the methodology of preparing and conducting similar curricula renewal in other countries. (For the approach, see the example of Slovenia)

The introduction and implementation of subjects such as civic culture (education) is very welcome, and special attention should be paid to history lessons. The conviction to change people in this part of the world is, however, wrong. The normalisation of the system as a whole will have much larger consequences than 'special' subjects. The best civic education is a normal functioning of a school, the lowest possible extent of violence in a school, mixed classes, open conversation – teachers who do not bite because they are threatened themselves.

The countries of the former Yugoslavia experienced a type of civic education (self-management and Marxism) and attempts at forming common contents in the areas of literature, history, etc. All of that may perhaps only remind people in these places that something similar is doomed to failure.

More work with historians and the opportunity of teachers to get in touch with historical science, which has already discovered that the world does not begin or end with wars and politics (despite the fact that both are realities of this world), will be considerably more effective than abundant persuading as to the necessity for a different history. It is, in other words, becoming reconciled to the fact that the struggle for the interpretation of what happened is more beneficial than harmful.

The introduction of changes, both in terms of the system and in terms of the curriculum, must be gradual. The political structures and domestic experts must assess how many areas of change can be borne by the system at the same time. What is the willingness of teachers and citizens to accept changes, how large is the circle of experts needed, and how many are actually available – these are the essential questions.

The introduction must be monitored by a professionally correct evaluation. The methodologies of monitoring and the scope must be adopted by domestic experts assisted by foreign experts.

Let me, going to concluding remarks, state some general observations with respect to foreign expert assistance:

If we are able to put together teams which will monitor the changes in the educational system in a certain country for a longer period and in a mutually coordinated way, this will have positive effects on the quality and responsibility of the work. For a group monitoring an area and thus becoming familiar with it, it is easier to invite for co-operation, through its own judgement, teams of experts for individual special tasks. The constant flow of the basic list of experts offering assistance will increase the mutual connection of the domestic and foreign experts, and of course the responsibility of the ones and the others will also be mutual. Such a list will also increase the longevity of the projects in cases of possible changes in political structures.

It needs to be considered whether it is possible to reach agreements with the countries benefiting from such assistance in the formation of expert groups (foreign and domestic experts) which will carry out a project in participation with the existing political structure. Upon a change in politics, certain parts of the work of these groups will include new people under the new minister. Perhaps it would be advisable to write into the assistance contracts that a group can change for example a maximum of one-fourth of its experts, from one side or the other, during its operation. The argument in this point is not a political one – the majority of teams undertake education, acquire experience and know the logic of change, and fast replacements result in starting from scratch and slowing down the course of changes. This item is extremely important, since we justifiably expect that individual projects regarding the stabilisation of educational systems will last longer than individual ministers, who are, according to experience in Central Europe, replaced every two years.

Alongside the aforementioned element, we should take into consideration the solution in accordance with which the decisions on the content of the curriculum would be left to the councils of experts appointed by the government for six years. This would bring an additional element of certainty.

A stable system of education and upbringing is never established merely by:

- 3.1 assessing the system
- 3.2 designing the system
- 3.3 legislation
- 3.4 curricular renewal
- 3.5 evaluation and provision of material conditions for work
 - premises
 - equipment.

At least a few more elements are required.

Among all this, the most difficult thing is to ensure suitable wages for teachers. The position of a teacher in a society depends, after all, on the evaluation of his/her work. If the educational strategy did in reality place emphasis on education as one of the basic elements of stabilisation, the position of teachers would have to be raised to the level reached, for example, in Switzerland. Since this is quite expensive, it is much more likely that efforts need to be made to position them around the middle of the middle class.

A teacher must earn at least enough to be able to devote himself/herself to the profession, so it will not be necessary for him/her to seek earnings outside teaching in order to pay for his/her life and the basic literature and education of his/her children. At any rate, wages must be comparable to those of state officials employed in the areas of science, public medical services, culture, etc.

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Training of teachers – in particular, in-service training and undergraduate studies, which need to be established as a university study in all systems.

The same holds true for preparing principals for their role in the process of change and stabilisation.

First, a suitable level of independence from politics must be provided for. Appointments by the school councils, in which in addition to parents and the local community, an important role must be played by teachers, but neither part may form a majority by itself and decide on their appointments. What also has to be considered is the training of principals for so-called management in education. Foreign assistance will also be welcome also in this area. Slovenia has, for example, established a school for principals and educated abroad to the level of a master's degree 13 lecturers, five of whom will obtain a doctorate within six months.

Formation of competent expert services which, in connection with the university and the institutes, establish an expert environment for stability of the system, etc.

Assistance to the teams of those ministers who at a certain point represent the authority in the area of education. Given the frequent replacements, and the great problems which they face, they require good equipment and qualified workers. The support in expert circles and in the larger educational community is of benefit both for them and for the system.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

A. The impact of recent political developments on education policy and strategy

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Madlen Serban,
*General Director of the National Center
for Technical and Vocational Education Development,
Romanian Ministry of National Education*

PANEL SPEECH

Madame Chair,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Romanian minister of education, Prof. Andrei Marga, please allow me to express our gratitude and special thanks to the organizers of this Conference. This event is perceived from Romania as a major step.

Speaking about the process of stability, democracy and peace I am unfortunately bound to express my worries about the evolution of events since the Graz Conference. Such a complex process of peacemaking was broken by war. And I wonder, what was wrong? What should be reconsidered in order not to ever repeat such an experience?

The Graz Conference pointed the attention of decision-makers on the role of education in this process.

While trying to answer these questions myself, I decided that the most suitable way to continue to keep on looking for solutions is to stay in the process, to take part, and here I am. I count it a great privilege to have been invited.

I am confident that the expertise, the experiences and the willingness of all of us will lead at the end of the Conference to a realistic diagnose, to a set of priorities and a package of possible actions, which will be implemented in the near future.

Please allow me, Ladies and Gentlemen, to thank the members of the Task Force of the Graz Process, especially the Austrian authorities and to the decision-makers of the Stability Pact for the recognition of the education contribution, even if it is the 7th mentioned area.

I think it is crucial to take into consideration the role of education in the personal development of a citizen and, by consequences, of the society as a whole. If decision-makers in any country will continue to neglect education, training and human resources, then nothing will change in the direction the Conference means to.

The region belongs to a continent, it is a corner on Earth. Concentrating on a region while bypassing the European affiliation turns out to be inappropriate and misleading. Building mutual trust in Europe is not to be neglected and is even crucial for the sustainable development.

On the one hand, people living in this region might take the attention they are subject to as pointing to some heading plan. So much focusing on the region might give feel-

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ings of artificial treatment like some poor and problematic relative, but never as a member of the family. It looks like the "Berlin wall" was moved somewhere in the South-East.

On the other hand, my strong belief is that the situation in the Southeast of Europe, specific as it is now and then different from the rest of the continent, has not to be expected to be solved exclusively from outside the region.

Recent history shows that an external solution is a short term one. The same will happen if people in the region will place the responsibilities for their future only outside their borders. There already exists a mentality that somebody else is responsible for everything bad in her/his life.

I would like to add to the last statement that the development of a sustainable stability, peace and democracy should become action, facts and not only words used in public speeches. The national budget allocation for education, vocational training and human resources development should prove the political will to consider and support the domains as national priorities.

Madame Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen, please, allow me to share with you, in this respect, the Romanian experience in the educational field and the recent developments concerning the human capital role in the country development.

I will try to be short, because, I would like to give myself the chance that you might remember me at least for this reason. Therefore I shall not present you a country report. I will point out only some of our main action priorities, which I consider as being relevant to the topic of our Conference.

We consider the practice of the educational policy analysis and development, the related strategic planning and implementation as crucial. I mentioned these issues because, I think, in this part of Europe, we confront with an inconsistency between policy development and its implementation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the World Bank, the European Union, the European Training Foundation and other donors' representatives who are supporting our efforts and are contributing to our successful development.

As any organization, the state needs clear targets and a concrete mission. It is very important that the majority of the citizens share the ownership of the society values, and in this respect they actively participate in these values' defense and fulfillment.

Therefore we decided that education has to contribute to the development of an inclusive and prosperous society. We pay a careful attention to give everybody access to education, to individualise the carrier pathways according to the individual interests. In the same time, according to our educational strategies, the contribution of the personal development to the community development is considered a major goal.

We developed special programmes for quality and equity, for lifelong learning, for social inclusion, e.g. "second chance" type programmes for those already socially out-placed. We have a national programme "Values and means for today education" by which a package of values is presented in a very explanatory manner in order to let participants in education to understand: what tradition means, what future should be like, what national identity is, what European citizen is, what commitment should represent, what "to work" and "to participate" should be, why civic education, why democracy, why market economy.

The National Strategy for Human Resources Development, enclosed in the National Plan for Development, gives clear strategic orientations for the role of human capital,

education included, in the sustainable development. The economic development together with the human resources development is considered an essential field of the country development.

The higher education, the vocational education, the primary and secondary education, all of them undergoing deep reforms are mustering to support the self reliance of graduates as citizens, able and available to participate in the community development programmes, able to cope with a changeable environment, ready to contribute to a stakeholders society development, owners of their own learning life.

Our educational system is oriented to guide young people to tolerance and good neighbourliness, to understanding and mutual respect.

The new orientations are supposed to give a major attention to the institutional development and arrangements. Within this process, in education at least, we are trying to develop the partnership of the state with the civil society.

The social dialogue and partnership has to take place and more according to the new distribution of power and influences where multiple actors are involved. All these actors should have a common vision of development and shared responsibilities.

Based on the answers to the question "Why people don't trust Government" [a reference title offered by Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Philip D. Zelikow and David C. King from John F. Kennedy School of Government – Harvard University] and on the conclusions of other researches, the Government and the civil society seem to have, to some extent, a different agenda. The Government is usually interested in short and medium term developments while the citizens need safety and welfare on long term too. The investment in education has a slow visibility of the return rate. Politicians prefer investments with short term visibility and, as part of the game, with electoral benefits.

Romania is not an exception from this point of view if I have to refer to the budget allocation for education. But in the educational policy development we involved implementation actors and non-government organisation representatives.

In this respect we progress considerably in the decentralisation process. We consider the decision should be closer to the beneficiaries, and in this way the accountability could increase.

I can not say everything has been done and is functioning perfectly. We do not have yet everybody's agreement on what we are doing because mentalities are the most difficult matter to change and needs time. However we have clear objectives, mechanisms in place and an institutional and legal framework.

The recent developments in Romania, I am sure, legitimate us to act, not as a leading factor, because it is not in our view to make hierarchies in the region, but as a facilitator, as an active partner, in order to make everybody feel at home in her/his country. I said that because there is an important common positive memory inside borders that could be used for the positive development, for the cross-border co-operation too.

So, at the end what I am expecting everybody to remember:

1. International donors:

- to include education, human resources development, not only on paper but also by programmes and projects;
- to reach the synergy of their investments in order to obtain an efficient and effective impact;

- to care of sustainable development, based on well known local needs;
- not to create expectations above their will and possibilities to get involved.

2. National representatives from the region:

- to proceed to a policy development process based on their values and resources and to treat the external support as a temporary participation;
- not to complain about unsolved problems so far as they place the responsibility somewhere outside their own one;
- to support and facilitate individuals in their being at place with themselves and with others.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to remind you that Romania will host very important European and international events in 2000, and I hope many of you will honour us with your participation.

I would like now to end by giving my special thanks to the Bulgarian authorities for hosting this Conference, which made it possible for us to contribute to this region's development.

Let's build together bridges of co-operation although this is a sensitive word in the region.

Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen.

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*Anna-Maria Totomanova,
Deputy Minister of Education and Science
of the Republic of Bulgaria*

PANEL SPEECH

Recent events in Kosovo raised the awareness of European countries of the problems caused by the isolation of the region. Now a lot of efforts are needed to cure the harms of the war. But we are obliged to use the moment and stand up together for the stability and future prosperity of the region.

The war is a lesson for all of us to learn and now we all begin to become conscious of the fact that the only instrument to prevent such conflicts is education. That is why the education policy should aim at encouraging the educational co-operation in the countries of the region by establishing common civic and human values. The education has always been an essential economic, political and social development factor. So, the educational co-operation in the region can support the development of civil societies and the establishment of democratic structures. In this respect the trust and common understanding are of great priority for the successful European integration process.

To achieve this we should reread our common history, a history that I would say we should be proud of. We must stop tearing it into pieces and start anew by overcoming our previous conflicts and misunderstandings by working together for democracy, stability and peace in our countries and in this way to show the true face of the region as a part of Europe. We must raise awareness of our historical and cultural heritage and introduce it to the world in order to avoid repeating the Kosovo mistakes.

Our region has always been famous for its rich cultural history. At the same time the geographical situation creates excellent opportunities for the economic development and co-operation. On the other hand the economic strengthening of the region could not be achieved without skilled and educated people. Education as a tool for enhancement of good-neighbourliness is essential for the long-term stability in the region. Higher education and higher education institutions make significant contribution to the overall development and rebuilding of the region in terms of renewal of the social, politic and economic life.

The promotion of networking of universities in the field of research, teaching and learning is a step towards the establishment of good co-operation practices.

We believe that the future development of the region could not be achieved without the active involvement of different partner organisations, NGOs, local and national education authorities and institutions. The active dialogue between individuals, communities and stakeholders at regional level should involve education institutions and use their capacity for developing and supporting democratic norms and values.

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Promotion of exchange in the field of research of political and social history of the region in compliance to the civic values adopted by the EU will decrease the diversities and break down the boundaries between our countries, peoples and ethnic groups.

In this respect we need to identify and develop a common strategy and elaborate an effective policy to face the existing problem of diversity (associated with ethnicity) and to find out appropriate ways and management approaches to overcome the social separation.

Using the advantages of our common history and education for establishment of stable cooperation in all spheres of our life we are going to enhance the European integration process and help the Balkans become a peaceful and secure region.

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*Giuseppe Massangioli,
Acting Director for Education, European Commission,
Directorate General for Education and Culture*

THE IMPACT OF RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS ON EDUCATION POLICY AND STRATEGY

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the European Commission I would first like to thank the Bulgarian Ministry of Education, the Balkan Colleges Foundation and Kulturkontakt for organising this conference.

The conference agenda demonstrates that the Graz Process, created at the initiative of the Austrian Government, has come a long way in developing a coherent response to education and training needs in South-East Europe.

When we met in Graz one year ago we all agreed on the pivotal role that education and training have to play for overcoming conflicts in the region, strengthening civil society and democratic structures, and for laying the basis for long-term economic development.

The Kosovo war and its economic and political repercussions on the region as a whole have not questioned this basic analysis. The war has, however, underlined the urgency of joint and coordinated action for the stabilisation of the Balkan region.

Demonstrating its commitment to the reconstruction of South-East Europe the European Commission proposed on May 26, 1999, the creation of a Stabilisation and Association Process for the successor states of the former Yugoslavia, Albania and the wider region of South-East Europe. Increased assistance for democratisation, civil society, education and institution-building were identified as important elements of this process.

In June 1999, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was launched. In the framework of this Pact, the EU committed itself to focus on the development of programmes to underpin democracy, stimulate the economy and foster contractual relations within the region. The launching of the Stability Pact was followed up by a summit with the Heads of States of the region in Sarajevo on the 30th of July.

The special importance of education for the reconstruction of the region was underlined by a joint declaration of the Commission and the participating education ministers during their meeting in Budapest in June 1999.

The increased commitment of the international community to the stability and development of the region in the aftermath of the Kosovo war further strengthened the political impetus behind the Graz Process. The Commission welcomes the decision to make the Graz process an integral part of Working Table I of the Stability Pact and to enhance it through the participation of new members.

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The European Commission will continue to give its fullest support to the enhanced Graz process. We have just launched a call for tender for a study on the feasibility of the establishment of an Educational Cooperation Center for South East Europe.

I would like to congratulate all those who have participated in the Graz process for the excellent work in identifying the main priority areas for education policy and in starting to outline a coherent education strategy for the region of South-East Europe.

I think that it is a special achievement of the five workshops already implemented in the framework of the Graz Process that short and medium term needs were formulated on the basis of an analysis of the long term interests of the region as a whole. There is no doubt in my mind that all countries of South East European region must become an integral part of the developing common European education area.

By focusing on the development of civic society, the strengthening of democracy and human rights, and increased regional cooperation we are creating the conditions for the full participation of the countries of the region in European structures in the future. Education and training must play a catalytic role in bringing about this development.

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Through its existing programmes, the European Commission is well prepared to make a major contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the enhanced Graz process. The main instruments are the TEMPUS programme for higher education, the activities of the European Training Foundation in the field of vocational education and training, as well as the Youth for Europe programme and the European Voluntary Service.

Many of the priority activities identified by the workshop participants may be implemented under these European Commission programmes as their structure is in line with identified needs: The project cooperation on educational reforms, the promotion of the mobility of students, young people, trainers and academic staff, and the establishment of networks contribute to the re-establishment of institutional links across national and ethnic boundaries and the compatibility of education and training systems across the region.

Confidence and institution building, partnerships, regional structures and cooperation, and joint definition of priorities are the key elements to be developed. These elements are crucial for the implementation of any instruments or projects, as they are in the Tempus programme.

In a long term perspective, the cooperation with partners from the European Union and other countries helps to develop and maintain education and training systems which are in line with highest international standards of quality and long term economic development needs. Clear priorities, concentration of projects, and dialogue with the actors in the region should be our common reference criteria.

The European Commission will assure the fullest possible synergy with the objectives of the Graz process through a flexible implementation of its programmes. Through its own programmes as well as its participation in the enhanced Graz process, the Commission will put special emphasis on the principle of regional ownership of planned activities.

I am also confident that support in the framework of the above programmes will eventually be available for all countries of the former Yugoslavia. The inclusion of Croatia in the Tempus programme is already planned for next year.

THE ROYAUMONT PROCESS

The Royaumont Process has been involved in the "Graz Process" from an early stage and has consistently supported its evolution and progress. It participates in the Task Force and has contributed significantly to the financing of the Conference in Sofia. It intends to continue its cooperation with the Graz Process in the context of the Stability Pact.

The Royaumont Process focuses on building civil society networks across the region of Southeastern Europe. The Royaumont Initiative, focusing on human contact and the strengthening of civic structures, can help provide the means for opening up the channels of interaction on the important issue of education in the region. At the same time, it can use the help of the experience acquired by educators, academics and non-governmental organizations who have already worked for cooperation and exchange of messages on stability and good neighborliness in the region.

The Royaumont Process strongly supports the democratization of the educational systems, in all the countries of the region, with a view to eliminate prejudices and distorted images of the other religion, culture, language, school textbooks, etc.

The Royaumont Process has directed its activities towards identifying projects which could give meaning and sense to this idea by including the issue of education as a principle heading for discussion in the NGO Conferences organized within the framework of the Process. It is very promising that many non-governmental organizations that Royaumont Process has encountered through regional meetings or projects submitted are concerned and eager for reformation in the field of education.

- A.** The First Royaumont NGO Conference in Thessaloniki (10-11 July 1998)
Working Group A: Education. The NGOs have proposed ideas for cooperation in the field of education
- B.** The Second Royaumont NGO Conference in Budapest (26-27 June 1999);
Working Group B was engaged in evaluating the progress made on the proposed ideas on education, culture and scientific research.

The Royaumont Process has also joined efforts with UNESCO for introducing ways of cooperation in the field of textbooks and literature.

There are two projects on education being implemented within the Process:

1. South East European Joint History Project;
2. U/South-Eastern Europe Project: Network of Southeastern European Universities (U/South-Eastern Europe project).

SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN JOINT HISTORY PROJECT

30th September, 1999

A. National Memory in Southeastern Europe

As an inaugural event of the project, the Center held an international interdisciplinary conference on "National Memory in Southeastern Europe" on the island of Halki, Greece, 16-20 June 1999. Participants included around forty-five leading historians and textbook scholars from twelve countries in the region, Europe and the United States. The Center had planned to host up to sixty participants at the conference but numerous last minute cancellations reduced the final attendance figure. The conference was organized in association with the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Affairs (ELIAMEP) and overseen by Professor Maria Todorova (author of 'Imagining the Balkans', OUP, 1997) of the University of Florida, USA. Costa Carras, Board Member of the Center responsible for overseeing the Joint History Project, opened the conference.

The principle aims of the conference were:

- To analyze different facets of national / ethnic identity formation with particular attention to concrete techniques of this process.
- To consider practical approaches of how to regulate and moderate its most extreme manifestations.

The papers delivered at the conference gravitated around three main themes:

- The production of national memory: hero worship and commemorations.
- The application of national memory: ethnic, national and other social identities.
- The transmission of national memory (focusing on education and, specifically, textbooks).

The schedule of the conference, with full list of paper titles, speakers and attendees is attached (see Appendix A and B).

In order to facilitate discussion at the conference a booklet containing copies of all abstracts and papers received by the Center prior to a 30 April 1999 deadline was distributed by post to all participants well in advance of the conference. (Booklet printed by Paratiritis, attached).

The atmosphere at the conference, and the quality of the papers, were outstanding.

The Academic Committee, chaired by Professor Todorova, requested that participants should submit to her by 30 September 1999 fully revised papers from the conference. The Academic Committee will decide which papers will be selected with a view to publication in book form. Professor Todorova asserted that she believed she would be able to secure a publishing deal with a respected company.

It was the Center's intention to compile a set of papers concerning strictly textbook-related matters that were delivered at the conference into a separate book. It was envisaged that this book would be printed in Thessaloniki. However, leading textbook scholars at the conference said they did not wish to have their papers published in a strictly textbook-related publication and would instead submit their papers to Professor Todorova for possible publication in her proposed book. It is possible that some textbook-related papers will be printed in Thessaloniki together with papers from the Textbook Workshops (see C below).

B. Academic Network of Trans-National Co-operation and Exchange

An Academic Committee of seven leading academics of different national backgrounds had been established prior to the Halki conference to supervise and evaluate the academic part of the project. The committee is composed of the following scholars: Fikret Adanir, Halil Berktaş (until 01/10/99), Slobodan Curcic, Karl Kaser, Paschalis Kitromilides, Ioannis Koliopoulos and Maria Todorova (chair).

Four members of the Committee (Adanir, Kaser, Kitromilides and Todorova) attended the Halki Conference.

A plan for the first wave of activities related to the network was established at a meeting of the Academic Committee in Athens, 15 June 1999. A second meeting was held during the Halki Conference.

The Committee agreed to establish a series of exchange programs for outstanding research students (at Ph.D. or equivalent level) who have either recently completed or are nearing completion of their studies / original research. The announcement to candidates has since been drafted, and is attached.

Academic exchanges have been cost on a module basis, providing for travel, accommodation and board. Fifteen institutions in the region have been identified as candidates for the program. They are:

- Albania: University of Tirana
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: University of Sarajevo
- Bulgaria: Sofia University
- Croatia: Zagreb University
- Cyprus: University of Cyprus
- Greece: University of Athens; Aristotle University Thessaloniki
- FYR of Macedonia: St. Cyril and Methodios University Skopje
- Romania: University of Bucharest; University of Jassy
- Turkey: Sabanci University, Istanbul; Bosphorus University, Istanbul
Bilikent University, Ankara
- Yugoslavia: University of Pristina; University of Belgrade

Note: Hungary, Moldova, and Slovenia are not included in the first wave of the Academic Network.

The Academic Committee also approved the holding of an International seminar on 'Patterns of Migration in the Balkans during the Modern Period'. Funding for this seminar has been ensured.

It is envisaged that the seminar, provisionally scheduled for Spring 2000, will consist of up to 20 of the most outstanding Ph.D. level research students from across the Balkan Peninsular together with experts in the field of migration.

Each participant will write a specific paper on a migration-related topic. This may focus on social and economic factors or other elements such as nomadism, forced exchanges, partition, ethnic cleansing, etc – Papers will be published.

Additionally, the Academic Committee will determine whether to recommend that any of the research students would benefit from a Center-sponsored research program in a neighboring or regional country. Criteria similar to that used in identifying participants for the Cross-Border exchange visits will be used.

Pending developments during the first phase of the Academic network the Committee intends to work with the Center in expanding the networks activities. The activities are in the following directions:

- A) guest lectures
- B) visiting professorships / lecture tours
- C) exchange visits and co-ordination of university curricula
- D) enhance existing summer schools
- E) improved access to libraries, especially hitherto access archives
- F) roundtables
- G) field work



C. Textbook Committee / Workshops

The textbook committee was formally established at two meetings, attended by around fifteen participants, held during the Halki conference.

Those present agreed that Professor Christina Koulouri (Komotini University, Greece) was to chair the Steering Committee; Dubravka Stojanovic (Belgrade University, Yugoslavia) would be alternate chair and Hanna Schissler (Georg Eckert Institute, Germany) advisor. Citing professional reasons, Busra Ersanli (Turkey) declined the offer of the fourth position on the Steering Committee.

The full textbook committee now consists of:

• Albania	Valentina Duka	University of Tirana
• Bosnia and Herzegovina	Vera Kac	Historical Institute, Sarajevo
• Bulgaria	Kaloyan Fol Aleksy Kalyonski	Balkan Colleges Foundation Sofia University
• Croatia	Nevan Budak	Central European University, Budapest

• Cyprus	Nyazi Kizilyurek	University of Cyprus
• FYR of Macedonia	Emilija Simoska	Institute for Sociological, Political & Legal Research, Center for Ethnic Relations, Skopje
• Greece	Thalia Dragonas Anna Frangoudaki	University of Athens University of Athens
• Romania	Mirela-Luminita Murgescu	University of Bucharest
• Slovenia	Bozo Repe	University of Ljubljana
• Turkey	Halil Berktaç	Sabancı University, Istanbul
• Yugoslavia	Dubravka Stojanovic	University of Belgrade

Joint History Project Rapporteur Costa Carras and Executive Director Liam McDowall, presented the fledgling Committee with information concerning the envisaged role of the Committee and the overall project, including details relating to budgetary constraints.

Specifically, it was stated that the Center is looking to the Committee to work with the Center to address practical and immediate problems of history and history teaching in primary and secondary schools in the region.

Center representatives outlined the proposed schedule of the seven textbook workshops (currently) scheduled to take place between the period December 1999 - January 2001. It was stressed that the Center wishes to see these workshops examine specific areas where academic scholarship and other research can be used to improve existing methods of teaching history.

The following provisional line-up has emerged:

Croatia - Romania - Hungary - Yugoslavia (17-18 December 1999, Budapest)

Cyprus - Greece - Turkey (28-29 February 2000, Pyla, Cyprus)

Bulgaria - FYROM - Greece - Yugoslavia (April 2000, Skopje)

Albania - FYROM - Yugoslavia - Greece (June 2000, Ioannina)

The Byzantine and Ottoman Heritage in the region: Albania - Bosnia and Herzegovina - Bulgaria - FYR of Macedonia - Greece - Turkey - Yugoslavia - To include Republics of Serbia and Montenegro together with Kosovo, (October 2000, Istanbul)

Religious Education in the Balkans (December 2000, Thessaloniki)

Details concerning the timing of the workshops - included above - was later agreed at a meeting of Carras, Koulouri and McDowall.

It was further proposed that each workshop be attended by around ten to twelve textbook scholars, historians, Ministry of Education personnel, publishers and others where appropriate. They will be assisted and tracked throughout by the Textbook Committee. Christina Koulouri intends to attend each of the workshops.

D. Balkan Colleges Foundation

On the 30th of August a contract was signed with the Balkan Colleges Foundation, Sofia, for the production of a secondary school regional history textbook in Bulgarian. This is also to be translated into English for comment and criticism by historians and textbook scholars in the region. The English language version will be available by September 2000. It is hoped this textbook may prove useful beyond the Balkan School - Sofia, and will in any event lead to a wider discussion on the development of suitable textbooks in the region.

COOPERATION OF UNIVERSITIES FOR THE PROMOTION OF STABILITY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

(U/SEE PROJECT)

4

Project goals

Under the auspices of the European Union's Royaumont Process, the Project aims at raising public awareness, stimulating discussion and facilitating cross-border academic and scientific cooperation between the participating Universities, for the promotion of common understanding, good neighbourly relations, respect for human rights, economic and social development and sustainable peace in Southeastern Europe (SEE).

Participating institutions

The following Universities have agreed to participate in the Project: University of Tirana (Albania), University of Sarajevo (Bosnia & Herzegovina), "St. Kliment Ohridski" Sofia University (Bulgaria), University of Zagreb (Croatia), University of Belgrade (FR Yugoslavia), "Sts. Cyril and Methodius" University of Skopje (FYROM), National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece), "Eötvös Loránd" University of Budapest (Hungary), University of Bucharest (Romania), University of Maribor (Slovenia), University of Ankara (Turkey).

Project activities

Through the Network of Universities of Southeastern Europe, which is in the process of being established, the partners to this project engage in a broad range of joint activities, including:

i. MA in Southeast European Studies

It is a postgraduate course bringing together students and faculty from all participating Universities. It is hosted by the University of Athens on behalf of the Network

of Southeast European Universities (first year of application: academic year 1999-2000). English is the language of instruction and the subjects covered include Southeast European History and Culture; Politics, Economics & Society in a Democratic Setting; European Integration and Southeastern Europe; Conflict Resolution and Regional Cooperation.

ii. Intensive language courses

To be offered by each participating University in the working language of the University.

iii. Staff and student exchanges

For the purpose of teaching, research, study abroad, etc.

A first meeting of Rectors of Southeast European Universities took place in Athens, in June 1998. The second in this series of regular meetings took place in Bucharest in June 1999, where a comprehensive Cooperation Agreement was concluded.

[rev. September 1999]

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For further information you may contact

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PANEL SPEECH

4

The educational challenges presented in South East Europe are, as has been widely noted, on a scale which has not been witnessed in the last fifty years, and considerable efforts have already been made to ensure that our collective response is adequate and appropriate. However, it is important that action now follows the rhetoric and that activities are both well-conceived and take proper account of the realities that they are designed to address. Many mistakes have been made in responding to crisis situations in post-conflict reconstruction, and Bosnia provides ample examples which can be instructive in this respect. One of the main challenges for the Stability Pact will be to see to what extent states and institutions are able to adapt their traditional responses to conflict to ensure that in this case the kind of support required for sustainable societal development is really provided.

A number of phrases seem to be particularly fashionable in the current discussion about reconstructing South East Europe. "Responding to the needs of the region" is now a common refrain, but how seriously are these needs ever assessed? Sometimes it appears as if the answers have been found before the problems are really understood. We also hear a lot about the crucial importance of "long-term sustainable development", but again the reality often seems to be in contradiction with this goal. Most institutions conceive their programmes and projects in a short-term perspective, with this year's priorities being replaced by new ones the following year.

At this Conference this morning, a number of speakers have talked about the crucial role of coordination. Certainly the Graz Process has played a very important role in coordinating organisations and institutions involved in education matters, and in raising awareness among the decision-makers of the Stability Pact that their task cannot be achieved unless attention is paid to education. The initial omission of education from the Stability Pact has now been corrected, largely as a result of this collective lobbying, and this is already a very significant result of co-ordinated action. We also have very clear evidence of what happens when post-conflict activities are not coordinated - post-Dayton Bosnia was awash with international governmental and non-governmental organisations all setting up their own projects without talking to each other. So successful was this model in Bosnia that the Bosnians themselves decided to follow it and base their whole society upon this system of complex non-coordination.

While lack of coordination is clearly a recipe for disaster, we should be aware that both good and bad forms of coordination are possible. The bad variety is when coordination ceases to be a means to effect change, but becomes instead the objective in itself - and with the number of meetings that have already taken place under the umbrella of the Stability Pact, this is indeed a very real danger in this context. The other risk from bad coordination is that a framework is set which doesn't really cover all dimensions

that need to be addressed. For example if a framework for South East Europe asks only for "projects", some of the key political issues and roles may be by-passed.

Good coordination, on the other hand, would allow us to develop the mutually reinforcing strengths of different partners. For the Council of Europe, this would mean a recognition that, while we may have a significant role in facilitating innovative educational practices, and creating the conditions for large-scale projects to emerge, we do not have the same capacity to manage major projects as certain other organisations represented here today. On the other hand, particularly with regard to States which are not yet members of the European Union, an organisation such as the Council of Europe which exists to promote and safeguard human rights - of which educational and cultural rights are a fundamental element - can play a very significant political role to advance systemic change and policy development.

The heritage of work which has been developed in the education sector - with respect to lifelong education, access and equal opportunities to education, history teaching, language policy, youth and non-formal education - are just a few examples of foundations of great relevance in South East Europe today and tomorrow.

The Council of Europe can only succeed in playing this role if participation of civil society as well as governmental actors is ensured. In the same way, positive cooperation and coordination with other international partners is essential. Through good cooperation and coordination the impact of our work can be strengthened, for the benefit not only of the peoples in the countries of South East Europe, but for people throughout the continent.



4

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

B. The role of education for the stability of the region and the European integration

4

REPORT ON KOSOVO EDUCATION

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first of all to thank deeply the organizer that made it possible for me to take part in this conference.

I am taking this opportunity to say a few words about education in Kosovo, and in particular about the university education in that region. In this respect I have to say a few words about the near past in order to make the point clear.

The justification of recommendations and actions of the Graz Process may be well proved in the case of Kosovo in general and in its education in particular.

Before 1990 education in Kosovo was offered mainly in two languages, in Albanian and Serbian languages, and in some places in Turkish as well. However, immediately after the Albanian students' demonstrations in 1981 the Serbian regime began to develop a special strategy against the Albanians' rights and freedoms and especially against their university education.

On the one hand, Serbian policy was led by nationalism. Political and "scientific" conferences were organized, newspapers kept writing abundantly about the danger coming from Albanian nationalism, books were written and published on this subject. Political party programs were compiled on this theme.

The Albanians, on the other hand, wanted to have more freedom than that of a small minority (and they did not enjoy minority rights either). But nationalism was also disseminated among the Albanians by some forces as a reaction to Serbian nationalism, since one nationalism in general generates another. However, nationalism that is protected by state is more dangerous. In this way, in every day life people became all the more euphoric. The Serbs believed that they had the right to rule over the others since they had the state. Everything was connected to statehood and it was also based on Serbian hegemony. The well-known "Memorandum" of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts served as a basic platform for such inspiration and strategy.

In Serbian education prevailed the idea of Serbian domination in every field of life in society and there was an intention to impose that education system to the Albanians as well. They glorified Serbian history on the one hand, and did not provide sufficient data about other peoples' history around them. The slogan "Don't give the pencil to them!" used at a Serbian students demonstration in mass in Prishtina was inspired from such a way of education.

Accordingly, proper education at all levels may have a great role for prevention of national and ethnic frictions and for solution to or smoothing of such frictions and con-

flicts. Conflicts usually occur between ethnic, national or religious groups living in the same area or in neighbourhood. If history teaches only one's past, if literature treats only one culture, in isolation from others, and particularly if it glorifies one's role singly, it may well be one of the prerequisites for causing inter-group confrontations and conflicts, as it did in Kosovo in the past.

In these circumstances came the year of 1989 when the autonomy of Kosova was abrogated by the Serbian government, against the still effective Constitution of the former Yugoslavia, after it had been respected for 15 years.

Consequently, in 1991 the Albanian teachers and students were expelled from their official buildings by police forces, so that only the Serbian students and teaches remained in the buildings.

The Albanians, nevertheless, did not break their educational activity. They made the best decision they could at that time, and it was to continue education in the Albanian language in private houses. For more than eight years, Albanian schoolchildren and students and their teachers continued their education in that way.

4

The present situation

Since education in Kosovo was outside the normal school life for almost a decade, in that time it was almost completely cut off from the world. As a consequence of all that, education there now needs support from international institutions. Apart from material-physical reconstruction that is underway supported by different governmental and non-governmental organizations, education in Kosovo needs great support in its academic reconstruction aspect as well.

There were some reforms made in the meantime, but due to the lack of information, experience and knowledge, education remained behind, if compared to some other countries.

The Albanian population in average is fairly young, and as a result the number of schoolchildren and students is quite large compared to the number of population – almost half a million pupils and students. This means that a large portion of the population, that is almost one-third, is in schools and universities. Therefore, they deserve to be paid great attention by the society.

The readiness of teachers and students for work is at a fairly high level. Over 95% of former teachers are at the University now, working even without salaries.

More than 150 schools were totally or partially damaged during the war. Their construction is underway by different government and non-governmental organizations.

Naturally, schools are equipped with very elementary things and teaching is performed by using pieces of chalk and blackboards. Computers have not yet entered these schools.

The financial aspect of education in Kosovo is still very difficult. The teachers and personnel in primary and secondary schools have received only one month stipend of 200 DM for September 1999. The same will continue to the end of this year. Accordingly, their financial situation is very critical. What is worse in this respect, there is no clear prospective in the future. UNMIK and other international organizations seem to have come

across difficulties in providing education and other non-productive activities with regular salaries. This fact has caused some concern on part of education authorities in Kosovo.

The University of Prishtina is the only one in Kosovo. It is determined to be unique, free and democratic, and open to everyone, irrespective of national, language, religion or any other background. This university is willing to embrace the new ways of university life that have been proved successful in Europe, despite the difficulties it has faced for quite a long time. This university, similar to education in general, has quite highly qualified staffs and accordingly it is competent to accept and implement new reforms that may lead to more progressive forms of studying.

Measures to be taken

We feel that new approaches have to be made on the occasion of new changes and reforms that we have to do as soon as possible. Educational authorities in Kosovo and the UP in particular have been recently seeking information from different countries and educational institutions and universities of Europe and particular from universities in SEE. Education authorities are aware of the necessity for new reforms in the broader field of education. We are conscious that despite some changes we made in our curricula in the past years, it is not sufficient to embrace the new trends of education that are present in Europe. That is why additional information, experience as well as general academic assistance is needed.

Until now we have had different groups of experts coming to Kosovo and they have made a great contribution to our experience for further developments in the field of education. We, however, feel that more work in this respect has to be done in the future.

Modern curricula should be worked out, including the possibility for optional courses, credit system, modern methods, European studies where possible, especially in social sciences, economic studies, foreign languages, history, etc.

Some other measures would be:

- Several European universities have offered to twin with the University of Prishtina. This initiative should be encouraged by international institutions and it is supported by the University of Prishtina itself.
- It is necessary for Kosovo education to be included into different already established funds in Europe in order to accelerate its overall development.

Therefore, the idea of having an independent Kosovo education centre, as it is in a proposal draft prepared by Kosovo Open Foundation, may be welcome and useful for preparation of new education reforms in the region.

We think the Graz Process will make its great contribution to stability in Kosovo, through its various forms of activity, particularly in education.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND ITS ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY¹

I. THE SEE CONTEXT:

URGENT NEED FOR RECONSTRUCTION, DEMOCRACY AND STABILITY

The importance of strengthening the link between education and training and the development of civil society in South Eastern Europe unfortunately proved to be well founded by human tragedy in the region over the last year. As an active member of the Graz Process, the European Training Foundation welcomes both the recognition of the importance accorded to education as a priority within the Stability Pact, and the key role the enhanced Graz Process will play in preparing and implementing reform in this area.

- ETF experience in the region would suggest that three simultaneous processes must be taken into account, each with its own goals and constraints. They are **political transition, post-war reconstruction and stability building**. Obviously, apart from some economic, cultural, social and geopolitical problems, shared by the entire region, countries included in the South-Eastern Europe are at different stages of development from the point of view of the three processes.
- Human Resource Development, and in particular Vocational Education and Training have a critical role to play in the reconstruction process, towards the development of democracy and regional stability. In the short term, investment in education and training will enable the countries most affected by the crisis to provide their citizens with one of the basic services of a civil society. In the longer term, investment in education and training will be vital to underpin the socio-economic development of the countries and the region towards full integration in Europe and the world. **As the development of a market economy and political democracy are intricately interrelated, vocational education and training, on the one hand, and citizenship education, on the other, have to be seen as related aspects of the same process.**
- As a contribution to the Graz process, and specifically to the preparation of the Sofia Conference, ETF organised together with Kulturkontakt a workshop on "**Civil society and VET. The Role of Democratic Citizenship and Diversity education**" in Mavrovo, FYROM, 9-11 September. This preparatory workshop raised a number of issues, among which the importance of the grass-roots development. To better support the regional actions in education and training, ETF is currently involved in the activities of the Democratisation and Human Rights Working Table of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

¹ This presentation put forward different views already expressed in a number of position papers of ETF related to the topic.

II. RECONSTRUCTION AND REVIVAL OF DEMOCRACY THROUGH VET. INTEGRATION OF VET INTO COMMUNITY LIFE

The Mavrovo meeting was an opportunity to explore the potential for bottom up, community based strategies. This approach was supported by a number of case studies presented by experts and micro projects led by schools and civil society actors in the region. These examples showed very innovative ways out of crisis. During this presentation you will find references and illustrations of this approach, above all from the micro projects.

Based on this approach and the lessons learned, the main themes/issues to be addressed as regards a pro-active, bottom-up policy needed for VET to anticipate and support economic and social changes would be :

- **building learning communities**
- **overcoming the skills gap**
- **encouraging social partnership and social dialogue**
- **fostering intercultural learning**
- **helping people help themselves**

The role of VET in building learning communities

The objectives of historical transition towards democracy and modernity, plus a gradual accession to EU, can be attained only through a strategy of intensive learning and involvement of all citizens. This includes the promotion of VET institutional development through new forms of management based on shared responsibilities of multiple actors. With a view of actively promoting these developments, it will be necessary to:

- **Develop vocational education and training policies in perspective of lifelong learning**

The development towards a Europe of knowledge has been stressed by several documents. A recent appeal of the Ministers of Education in Firenze (30 September 1999) reinforces that "*due consideration be paid to policies promoting the Europe of Knowledge, which is of fundamental importance for fostering **development and employment** as well as for the consideration of the identity of Europe in the world*".

- **Transform vocational education and training institutions into resource centres for the community**

The "**Proposals for an action framework: How VET can contribute to the development of democratic citizenship in South Eastern Europe**" of the Mavrovo workshop draw special attention to the role of VET institutions in community building. Acting as a community resource centre places any VET institution in a stronger position face to the individual and collective values of a given community.

- **Diversify institutions to broaden the delivery of vocational education and training to include non-formal and virtual vocational education and training**

As part of the general policies to improve equal opportunities for all and encourage diversity learning, VET should tackle alternative ways, especially non-formal and virtual

(distance) training, to allow individuals to access and tailor information according to their own needs.

Example of good practice

- *"Be my guest, be my partner" (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia / Kosovo region). Partnership between schools of economics and business, exchange of curricula, new didactics, teacher training, small provision equipment to the Kosovo partner. The project is co-ordinated by the Economic Secondary School "Arseni Jovkov" in Skopje, and aims at enhancing intercultural understanding, multi-ethnic tolerance and regional co-operation in the field of business education. The activities are directed towards mutual understanding of the school management and didactics, as well as of the community life of both Pristina and Skopje.*

Skills for economic development and democratic life

In South-Eastern European countries, unemployment reaches variable levels from one country to another but in general, it is above the EU average. The danger of a skills gap is even bigger due to the fundamental changes taking place in the employment system, and the slow pace of changes in the vocational education and training system. Consequently some of the following practices must be instrumented:

- **networks and coaching instruments for SMEs and micro enterprises**

SMEs and micro-enterprises seem to be flexible instruments for the economic reconstruction at the local and regional level. They also tend to be more ethical partners in response to the community needs.

- **responsive structure and content of vocational training to the emerging needs of the market economy**

Building national concepts of VET in SEE will require less bureaucratic mechanisms and pro-active methodologies. Experience shows that some of the Phare VET programmes in the candidate countries were not flexible enough to include emergent needs of the market.

- **self-employment competencies, together with career information and guidance provision**

As the SEE markets' evolution is highly unpredictable, individuals should learn to make the best use of their skills in an ad-hoc manner. Individual capacities to face risk environment and unstable labour market offers should be developed.

Example of good practice

- *"Improvement of service and vocational education and training in Agriculture" (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Bulgaria, Albania). Collaboration between vocational schools in agriculture aiming to share different professional specialisations and to improve the role of enterprises in education and counselling. The project is co-ordinated by the Secondary Agriculture School "Dimitar Vlahov" in Strumica and aims at improving the training in the culture of soil for specialised teachers, students, ethnic groups and individual producers in the region. The activities carried out by teach-*

ers together with specialists and small entrepreneurs cover both didactics improvement and upgrading of teachers in new technologies.

Social partnership and social dialogue

In the present situation of South Eastern Europe social partners are insufficiently autonomous and have not yet given high priority to issues related to human resource development. However, a fundamental change in further promoting social partnership can be obtained by:

- **Appropriate legislation to frame social dialogue and participation in decision making**

Given the unstable context and fragile civil society institutions, the role of State is still important in framing the collective decision-making process that follows the public interests. Institution building both for national institutions and civil society is a key for success in this area.

- **Employment and job creation policies**

The initiative of the social partners, as well as the State policies should follow the requirements of the market, which is vastly moving from planned employment to dynamic, free market oriented employment. Individuals, as well as institutions should invest in multi-path careers, and be open to quick re-conversion.

- **Associative life pluralism and diversity as prerequisites of a democratic society**

"Democracy" carries certain connotations in the post-communist countries. Moreover, the SEE countries, ravaged by the consequences of ethnic conflicts, need more than ever to redefine democracy in respect to pluralistic society.

Example of good practice

- *"Seminars for independent craftsmen" (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). Seminars in all regions of the country in vocational education and training regulations, social awareness and development of skills. The project is co-ordinated by the Economic Chamber of Macedonia – Association of Craftsmen. It aims at raising awareness of the management of human resources in small business and helps the understanding of the current legislation affecting the small business activities.*

Intercultural learning

Learning together will contribute to being able to work together. This will contribute to moving from social exclusion to inclusion in South Eastern Europe, ensuring equal opportunities for all members of society. Intercultural learning therefore should be promoted by:

- **Developing curricula that foster intercultural learning**

Curriculum content and the organisation of the learning process can prevent ethno-centrism, and enhance civil participation through teamwork and shared responsibilities. Curriculum development is a key to the reconstruction process.

- **Facilitating mutual labour force mobility**

To help the extension of a regional SEE market, exchanges and regional mobility of the human resources should be highly recognised and promoted by both policy makers and entrepreneurs.

- **Providing equal access and active participation in vocational education and training for all groups**

Aborting social exclusion, as a pre-requisite for building social cohesion and ensuring participation of all in the social and economic exchanges can be better helped at the local level. "Living together" is a bottom up process, starting from basic respect paid to individual and communal properties.

Examples of good practice

- *"Bridges" (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina). Production of multilingual newspaper in Tetovo region in FYROM. The project is co-ordinated by the Agriculture Secondary School "Mosa Pijade" in Tetovo, and aims at improving the intercultural communication and multi-ethnic understanding by means of media production. The activities focus mainly on acquainting students with media technology, by news processing, editing, printing, and getting multi-cultural coverage.*
- *"Multicultural collaboration and democracy" (Ethnic/national collaboration Albanians, Bosnians, Macedonians, Croats and Serbs). Collaboration, joint visits, training in civics and democracy. Production of booklets. The project is co-ordinated by the Secondary Technical Schools "Gjorgji Naumov" in Bitola, and aims at sharing cultural/ethnic understanding and building activities of common interest. The activities concentrate on developing competencies of teachers and students for promoting the multi-cultural aspects of their communities.*

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Helping people to help themselves

The main challenge, as experience has already shown, will be to provide assistance that will allow South Eastern European countries to build up their own resources and capacities and to avoid continued dependence of foreign aid. Empowerment of citizens is the key challenge and vocational education and training has always and everywhere been an important vehicle to reach that aim. In this context, support should continue to be given to the micro project approach which enable local schools and communities to take initiative in the innovation process.

Thus it will be important to:

- **Encourage ownership and empowerment through vocational education and training**

Taking responsibility and having social influence (learning how to use rights and responsibilities), these are two basic behaviours through which VET can enhance democratic citizenship development.

- **Invest in skills as a prime factor for social integration, competition and development of employment**

The use of core skills represents an elementary factor of social integration. Individuals need to be encouraged to improve their skills and capacities, as the most effective way to achieve employment, economic benefits and social recognition. In this context, support for teacher and trainer training will also be a critical factor in the reconstruction process.

- **Include education and training as a centrepiece of all economic investment projects, also by allocating substantial part of international assistance to education and training**

The prime concerns and efforts for reconstruction are sometimes directed to physical reconstruction, namely roads, buildings and investments in major industries. Nevertheless, a weak labour force can not face the reconstruction, and the social and cultural reconstruction is more difficult unless an early investment in education and training is made.

Example of good practice

- *"Vocational education and training courses in communication" (Albania). IT and management for middle managers in NGO's and local governments. The project is co-ordinated by Hilswerk Austria in Albania, Gjergji Center, Tirana. It aims at developing cross-border co-operation of the above mentioned organisations and the improvement of the managerial skills, as well as at increasing the awareness of the optimum use of communication technologies in the organisational setting.*

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Final remarks

In concluding, I would emphasise the Foundation's commitment to supporting the future work of the Graz Process in the context of the Stability Pact in the field of vocational education and training reform as a vehicle for the socio-economic reconstruction in South Eastern Europe. I look forward above all to the confirmation of the needs and priorities for the reconstruction process which will result from this Conference, from the intensive discussions between representatives and practitioners from the countries of the region, from other European countries as well as experts and representatives from professional and donor organisations. This combined experience and expertise will lead us to a better understanding above all of the practical steps which should now be taken.

The Foundation is ready and willing to take an active role in this process and to use its capacities in partnership with representatives from the region and outside to contribute to the reconstruction of South Eastern Europe. In particular, given its experience in the region and the approach outlined above, the Foundation is ready to support reconstruction in the fields of institution building, teacher and trainer training, curriculum development and the development of appropriate teaching materials. In addition, the Foundation is willing to support measures at a regional level based on its experience with the micro-projects. In particular, the Foundation is interested in development of regional networks among key players and stakeholders from institutions and civil society as well as schools and local communities to create the conditions for better understanding and innovation both top-down and bottom up.

SHOULD AN ENTREPRENEURIAL UNIVERSITY EMERGE IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE?

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It is important to mention, from the very start, that the Stability Pact provides real opportunities for the inclusion of Southeast Europe (SEE) into the wider European civil order. However, Southeast Europe is not as homogenous in all respects as it may seem. Some countries are well on the road towards accession to the European Union. Others are expected to undertake important reforms in their societies, economies, and political systems in line with the principles of democracy, human rights, and market economy. Education in general, and particularly higher education, can play a key role in supporting the search for sustainable peace, reconciliation, and development of civil society and liberal economies in the countries of SEE. By virtue of their specific functions, higher education institutions have the responsibility, indeed the potential, to shape democratic discourses, to generate "social capital" in terms of trust, norms, civic society networks, knowledge, skills, and competencies, thus contributing to overall societal development.

A group of experts, particularly academics, convened in a working group on the role of higher education in the development of SEE societies, identified several areas in which higher education may bring real contributions.

Let me list some of these possible contributions:

- Promoting links to civil society and local communities, by disseminating norms and values of trust, reciprocity, and inclusiveness in a knowledge society;
- Stimulating an active dialogue and reconciliation between individuals and between communities;
- Shaping the intellectual discourses in this region, thus assuming a responsibility for developing and supporting democratic values;
- Encouraging participatory learning, thus enabling graduates to disseminate, in society at large, the skills, competencies, and knowledge already acquired in higher education;
- Playing a pioneering role in European integration as a function of its international mission;
- Maximizing the potential to promote transformations in society in addition to their roles as a source of continuity, by means of exercising to the full their autonomy and academic freedom.

By all accounts, this list is very impressive. The problem is the extent to which they are expressions of "wishful thinking", that is, of fundamental expectations that may or may not be fulfilled. The question is then: "Why and how universities may contribute to achieving such objectives?"

In order to respond to the above question, it is first necessary to notice the occurrence of two gaps manifested, on the one hand, within the SEE universities (referring to their internal structure and regulations), and between the SEE universities and the Western European universities, on the other hand. The first type of gap relates to the difference between what SEE universities should be and what they actually represent at the moment. The indicators of the first gap are revealed by the differences between the salaries of teachers when compared to those of some of their students that exceed them, sometimes owing to the student's external commitments as well as to the increasing average age of teachers owing to the low and unattractive salaries offered to young teachers by the academic sector. Low salaries have also determined the accumulation of teaching positions by individual teacher both within and outside their universities.

The second gap between SEE universities and Western European universities has its origins in various differences regarding the processing of knowledge in Western Europe as compared to this activity in SEE. With regard to this problem, it is necessary to mention the "brain-drain" phenomenon that proves that students have discovered the existence of a more appealing perspective of knowledge processing in Western Europe. Moreover, there are clear differences between the democratic values and the considerable experience of university in Western Europe and the abuses of university autonomy encountered in certain SEE universities resulting from the inherent difficulties of the reform process. In this respect, two detrimental tendencies are apparent among SEE academics: "conservative reformism" and "reformist conservatism". While the conservative reformists prefer to change for the sake of changing, at the same time, disregarding the traditions of the system under giving change, the reformist conservatives live in the past while pretending to be future oriented.

I consider that both these approaches should be disregarded. We, the people of SEE, look to ultimate European integration for a more positive future, but we must strive for it.

There are two sides to this objective:

- the **potential** of Europe - specifically Western Europe - to offer inclusive policies, as well as institutional and financial resources;
- the **needs** of our different states and communities and the **resources** they intend to make available for the development of education.

When considering needs and resources, we all know that while the needs are expanding, resources are shrinking. The way out of such a situation is difficult.

The view that I hold is that the ways of defining the needs and of identifying the resources must be changed so that:

- institutions should define their needs realistically;
- the sources of resources must be identified not only in the state budget but also within the higher education institutions themselves that should become producers of resources.

For this to happen, we should look at universities from three perspectives, considering them as:

- knowledge production and dissemination institutions;
- contributors to economic development, particularly in entrepreneurial terms;
- enhanced contributors to societal institution-building, mainly with regard to: democracy, human rights, and minorities rights.

From the first perspective, universities have been traditionally seen as *cultural organizations* that contribute to the enhancement of social cohesion and cultural development. This perspective dominated European educational policies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, but particularly during the 1960s and 1970s. We should not totally abandon this perspective today, but we also should overcome its limitations.

The second perspective is influenced by a new approach that gained importance in the 1980s as *public service institutions* accountable to the public for achieving concrete, social, political, and economic goals.

The third perspective relies on what Burton Clarks calls "entrepreneurial universities" of the 1990s. "Entrepreneurial" is taken as a characteristic of whole universities and of their internal departments, research centers, faculties, and schools. According to Clark, the concept carries the overtones of "enterprise" - a wilful effort in institution-building that requires much special activity and energy. An entrepreneurial university, on its own, actively seeks to innovate in regard to how it goes about its business. Institutional entrepreneurship can be seen as both process and outcome.

Entrepreneurial action may be the solution for closing the two gaps mentioned above. How can SEE universities, by means of entrepreneurial action, go about transforming themselves? Burton R. Clark mentioned five elements that constitute an irreducible minimum for such transformation: a strengthened steering core; an expanded developmental periphery; a diversified funding base; a stimulated academic heartland; and an integrated entrepreneurial culture (cf., **Creating Entrepreneurial Universities, Organizational Pathways of Transformation**, IAU Press, Pergamon, 1998).

For these reasons, higher education systems should urgently become more:

- open and inclusive;
- flexible;
- responsive to the demands of individuals and communities.

While preserving their own specificity, they should become fully integrated into and part of the wider European Higher Education Area. Existing in local communities, higher education institutions should at the same time be able to respond to the growing challenges of internationalization and globalization, and involve all stakeholders, especially students, in their decision-making processes.

In order, however, for higher education institutions to fulfill their responsibilities, they themselves should clearly demonstrate a democratic functioning based on modern managerial and administrative structures and principles. New systems and institutional policies should be developed, and new governance and managerial structures and practices should be put in place. At the same time, the issues related to academic quality assurance and reintegration into the larger "European Higher Education Area" should be the objects of special preoccupation. Some countries of SEE (e.g., Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovenia) have already undertaken reforms and have acquired experience in these respects. Some others are in great need of initiating and implementing necessary transformations, both at systemic and institutional level, relating to governance, management, administration, and policy making. In order to develop the relevant European practices in these fields, a programme focused on governance and management of higher education should be launched.

*Sonja Licht,
President of the Executive Board,
Fund For an Open Society, Belgrade*

THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION IN THE BALKANS DEPENDS ON THE FUTURE OF THE STABILITY PACT

The Sofia conference should hopefully be an important step in strengthening the status of education in the plans related to the implementation of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. In the workshop devoted to vision and strategy we had a very serious and, I would say, outstanding discussion which has underlined the specific dynamics of educational processes, the fact that investment in education implies a long term and firm commitment. However, this investment can not achieve genuine results without economic development as well as development of all aspects of civil society. I strongly believe that this simple truth has to be repeated over and over again in the context of the future of the Stability Pact, since its main purpose is to achieve peace and democracy in our region. It can not be achieved without development and strong regional cooperation, and education is one of the main preconditions for both.

The question we are faced with is what kind of education. It is not enough that we improve the very quality of teaching and quality of educational facilities, though it is absolutely necessary. We must achieve a much more complex task. Education should play a crucial role in promoting mutual understanding and tolerance, which in the case of former Yugoslavia, also implies a serious search for truth and reconciliation. Even this process is unthinkable without cross boarder cooperation, since new borders often divide the victims and perpetrators. Education has to develop a critical approach toward one's own history, but also to contribute to the process of returning the feeling of dignity to the Balkan people. The Balkans became recently a dirty word all over the globe. To be honest it was a pretty undignified concept for quite a while. In all the important dictionaries the term Balkanization is explained as a process of ugly disintegration, where small nations turn one against the other fighting for territories in a bloody way. Unfortunately, the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia just added to and confirmed this notion. What is usually not mentioned in those dictionaries is that the great powers used to understand this region as a playground for their own strategic interests, and often encouraged nationalist disputes instead of regional cooperation.

The Stability Pact seems to be the first serious attempt of the international community to encourage and help the Balkan people and states to enter into a different paradigm, to combine economic and political development with an intensive regional cooperation. This is why it raised such high hopes all over the peninsula, and this is why it would be a real tragedy if the Stability Pact would remain an empty shell, as many still see it. Its failure would both cause further disturbances and even major conflicts in the region. It would also result in deep disappointment among all those people who believe that the

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Balkans have to become part and parcel of a united Europe and who have been in strong opposition to authoritarian, nationalist, autistic policies often advocated by the majority of their national elites. Even if the educational system could, by a miracle, achieve a real breakthrough toward tolerance, reconciliation, peace and democracy, without economic growth and genuine regional development it is impossible to believe that young educated people would remain in the region. The ongoing brain drain from almost all the Balkan countries proves that if there is no real hope that this region has a perspective for a descent life, the main agents of social change and economic development would permanently leave these countries searching for a better, more dignified future.

The Stability Pact for South Eeastern Europe is not only an opportunity to turn this region into a constructive and peaceful part of Europe, it is a must both for the Balkans and for Europe in order to restore confidence in principles and ideals of an open and just society throughout the world. If it is successful it will prove to the whole world that the developed, democratic nations care for those who were less fortunate and really believe that all the people should share the same values and the same rights. Successful implementation of the Stability Pact would bring a new, genuine confidence in the processes of globalization. If not, the people of the Balkans and other regions faced with similar problems, would resist globalization through further disintegration, often accompanied by violent conflicts, ethnic hatred and ethnic cleansing (as in the cases of Kosovo, East Timor, Rwanda to mention just a few). Education might prove an excellent tool in returning their feeling of dignity as well as their confidence in universal values only if economic interventions and genuine incentives for regional cooperation seriously back it up.

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PANEL DISCUSSIONS

C. A feasible strategy, work programme and schedule for strengthening reform and regional/European educational co-operation in the framework of the Stability Pact

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*Prof. Ass. Dr. Milika Dhamo,
Head of Department of Psychology and Education,
University of Tirana*

PANEL SPEECH

Mr. Chairman,

Let me, please, join you in your congratulations for Ms Lesley Willson and her team for the hard work of coming up with this list of recommendations.

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

We have now a set of recommendations to serve the cause of peace, stability and democracy in Southeast Europe. What I am going to share with you is the way I see them. Going through the lines, I bear in mind the question: What makes democracy in our region? Looking at the recommendations, I try to find an answer to everybody's concern of where to hang our hopes on for a more stable region. I cannot say too much right now, but what I think is crucial is the fact that educators are trying to share with the rest of the world the fact they hold dear: that education helps people change, and the changed people can change the region. I would really like to share with you the fact that I see these recommendations as a departing point from the myths people in the region have raised about democracy, Stability Pact myth being the latest.

These recommendations are, in fact, a divorcing act from the myth that democracy is more or less a Western good that can be imported. I see this set of recommendations as a point of departure from the myth the countries in the region have nourished that democracy can be imported, just like the used cars, some color and spare parts and can be driven everywhere! Democracy is not and cannot be a Christmas present in an attractive box; it is and should be the fruit of hard work of every country and citizen. Ideas of democracy travel, the steps and strives can be similar, but it is and remains home-grown fruit. This set of recommendations challenges any camouflaged smuggler of democracy and peace. It lays the burden of making democracy on the shoulders of the citizens of the region.

What can be easily seen is the fact that the establishment of political institutions in the region is not enough. Political institutions, new constitutions, ratification of the International Conventions by SEE local governments, are but a step towards democracy. They cannot make democracy. It is peace and democracy that asks for these institutions. Political institutions remain pure rhetoric unless determined steps towards citizenship education for democracy are taken. Democracy is impossible outside citizenship and civil society. Democracy is not only form of governing and political running. It is the way of living peacefully together. I find an important message in these recommendations: Democracy is the business of the citizen. People are not born citizens or democrats. Schools and society at large have a mission to bear: to educate citizens.

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There is another clearly expressed message in these recommendations: that the steps the region is taking towards free market economy are insufficient. Privatization and free market cannot ensure freedom and democracy. Freedom to wear "Versace" design and have "McDonald's" is not yet freedom to live together in peace. Free market individualizes people; citizenship education for democracy joins them. We, in the region, are using privatization acts as milestones towards democracy and capitalist development. Neither privatization nor free market is democratization: free markets and private property asks for the educated mind to develop. Without education, free market economy and privatization will not reach the goal everyone expects them to: employment, public order, peace and stability in the region.

I consider these recommendations as a point of departure from the myths about heroes that the region has historically developed. SEE seems to be the cradle of charismatic heroes. Totalitarianism in the region has "survived" due to strong leaders. The message underpinned in these recommendations is that democracy is not the work of the leaders. It asks for rank and file citizens to do extraordinary things daily. SEE is really too tired of misleading heroes.

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Coming from the region, sometimes I do feel pessimistic. A reason for that is the fact that pessimism is the easiest way to view the Southeast reality where myths for democracy are growing day by day. The Stability Pact is a chance for everybody to grab. None should allow myths grow about it. Sofia conference recommendations provide a chance to divorce with the epoch of myths. If used as action guidelines, they may put to motion education, the healing escape from the situation of civil indigestion SEE is actually suffering from.

Thank you!

PANEL SPEECH

As student representatives our task is often to bring up/remind/fight for student participation in decision and policy making concerning higher education and students. In events that we attend we often get three main kinds of responses: 1) recognition of students as catalysts of change in times of transition, by people "young in their hearts" willing to include student always when there is a question of higher education; 2) agreement that students are important but students' involvement isn't a priority or even a necessity; and 3) numerous arguments against students' involvement in decision making based on different (mainly) personal experiences.

I was happy to realize that the International Conference on South Eastern Europe: Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy within the framework of the Enhanced Graz Process, Stability Pact for SEE - Working Table 1 has been organized in the spirit of inclusion of students representatives in the process of educational cooperation and willingness to recognize and support the students' point of view. We see the need for building up a students' and youth position within the Stability Pact just as much as highlighting the need for support of education. Along this line, in ESIB we will certainly try to make useful contributions as new partner in the Task Force of the Enhanced Graz Process, responsible for Education within the Stability Pact.

My concrete comments on Sofia recommendations lie in line with the appreciation of the marvelous work done by all of the working groups, their chairs and rapporteurs and especially the general rapporteur Ms Lesley Wilson. In the recommendations the role of youth and student organizations as partners in the transition process as well as the need for support of their activities have been clearly stated, and I am very much happy about it. My hope, however, still remains in implementation of those recommendations. The Stability Pact has raised big expectations within the region of SEE. When meeting with students from the region the issue comes up often; in discussions a clearly expressed hope for receiving better education in the future is felt; and therefore an explicit quest for financial and other material support for education institutions, governments educational departments and last but not least student and youth organizations. I worry what message the partners within the Stability Pact and especially EU governments and institutions will send to young people in SEE if not keeping the promises of the Stability Pact. The worst that can happen is if young people from the region feel that "Europe" has given up on them which would lead to even more passivity than we face today.

There are already numerous great initiatives supporting students in the region which can serve as an example of concrete support and raising motivation among young people from SEE: Austrian government's support for travel of students to international events; Council of Europe's support for student projects and youth initiatives;

European Commission with the extension of domain of their Youth-for-Europe, EVS, Tempus projects; CRE with promoting student exchanges and opening the door for student participation in decision making; CEEPUS with student mobility grants even in non-CEEPUS member countries; Open Society Institutes with support to student and youth initiatives; WUS-Austria with support for small scale projects as well as technical support, OSCE technical support in projects, etc. There are surely many more initiatives that I am not aware of that are worth mentioning for expressing the sincere appreciation on behalf of the side of the students.

ESIB-The National Unions of Students in Europe will continue to support student organizations in the region. Our involvement will certainly remain on the grass-root level (as organizing student projects in Macedonia and Kosovo/a); coordination and assistance to activities of SEE Student Organizations Working Group established within ESIB; as well as represent student interest on political level such as within the Stability Pact. We will certainly continue to promote that there is NO true educational co-operation for peace, stability and democracy in SEE region without full recognition of students' and youth organizations as partners in the process.

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COMMENTS DURING CONCLUDING PANEL

Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is an old saying, "Be careful what you wish for you may get it." I believe that saying is particularly relevant to our work here at this conference as we articulate our recommendations for assistance from the international community for the education systems of the countries of South Eastern Europe (SEE). As I listened to the presentation of the draft recommendations, I was especially pleased to hear the strong assertion of the crucial link between education and economic development. That is a link that is not only fully accurate and appropriate to stress, but is also a key to getting attention from Treasury and Ministry of Finance officials. I fully support as well the emphasis on the strengthening of civics education, history teaching, celebration of diversity, and more generally the enhancement of an active role for civil society in the education processes of the countries of SEE. However, I do not believe that the efforts to strengthen these latter dimensions of education systems should be advocated in such a way that the world community could feel that its responsibilities have been carried out if assistance is provided only for a few pilot projects in civics education, history teaching, and tolerance of diversity.

In making the case to the international assistance community in the context of the Stability Pact, I suggest that we may wish to stress the need for 3 Rs for education and training systems in SEE:

- **Re-alignment** of objectives and governance structures;
- **Rehabilitation** of facilities and other physical resources; and
- **Re-generation** of institutional and human resources capacities to manage and operate the re-aligned education systems.

In all of the SEE countries, education systems must re-align to meet the needs of market economies and open societies, and all must reform their governance structures to involve the stakeholders in the processes of providing and financing educational services. In virtually all of the SEE countries, the needs for physical rehabilitation of school building and the provision of furniture, equipment and learning materials are daunting. For example, in Albania alone, an estimated \$270 million of schooling facilities repairs are required. But even more importantly for the quality of education over the medium and longer term, the development of institutions and capacities to manage and operate the education systems so that they can fulfill their re-articulated objectives will be a long and not inexpensive process. We will do the countries of South Eastern Europe a

disservice if we brush lightly over the dimensions of these challenges and the resource requirements to tackle these challenges. And frankly, we will be letting the international community off the hook too easily if we do not articulate clearly the needs that should underpin legitimate expectations of international assistance for education systems in South Eastern Europe.

Experts in the management of change stress the need *for convergence of objectives*, a supportive authorizing environment, and appropriate capacity as a condition for successful change in an organization or system. If we consider this principle and its application to the education systems of the SEE countries, it is clear that the participants in this conference have identified better civics education and revised history courses and learning materials as among the priority objectives to be pursued. Let us assume that the education sector officials of the SEE countries share that view. The question remains as to whether the stakeholders (members of parliament, school directors, teachers, parents and general population, all of whom are critical elements of the "authorizing environment") in the various countries have, or can be encouraged to buy into those objectives. That may be a significant challenge in itself. But even if that challenge is met, there remains the need to equip the education systems of SEE with the capacities to implement the new objectives of the education system. For example, to have a new curriculum which includes history and civics that would meet the expectations of the participants of this conference, would only be the first step. The new curriculum would need to be translated into appropriate teaching and learning materials, teachers would need to be trained in appropriate in-service and pre-service courses, and the new curriculum objectives would need to be incorporated into the examination and assessment systems or the new curriculum objectives very likely may be ignored by the teachers in their classroom practices (teachers tend to teach to the exams). And for the medium to longer term, unless the processes of curriculum revision, teacher training, textbook and learning materials provision, and examination and assessment system development are institutionalized, the education systems of the SEE countries will not evolve and adapt as conditions in the countries, region and world change. For the SEE education systems to be able to carry out such responsibilities requires major capacity development and institutional development.

One of the key lessons from experience of international development assistance is that institutional development and capacity development are long-term processes which are likely to require ten to fifteen years of sustained support to produce significant impact. Lasting change is highly unlikely to result from attempts at quick fixes and fleeting attention to a few symptoms of the underlying pathologies of the systems. What that means for this conference, I believe, is that the recommendations should be clear to the international assistance community that the SEE countries' education systems need systemic realignment and development; that the processes of institutional and capacity development are long term needs; and that these institutional and capacity development needs are not inexpensive. When these costs of re-generation of institutional and human resources capacity development are added to the costs of rehabilitation of schooling facilities, equipment and physical resources, the financial resources requirements are very substantial. I believe that the report from this conference should be explicit on this point.

Because systemic re-alignment, rehabilitation and re-generation is the challenge, in my opinion, I strongly endorse the proposal for OECD country reviews, possibly to be car-

ried out by teams with enhanced participation by regional experts, in all SEE countries that have not yet benefited from such reviews. In addition, I would strongly support making an explicit recommendation for international assistance to enable the SEE countries to participate in the World Education Indicators (WEI) program and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) of the OECD. Both of these interventions would enable the SEE countries to benchmark and monitor their educational performance, and to compare it with that of other European and OECD countries. These three specific activities would be an excellent start in assisting the systemic development of the education systems of SEE countries.

Let me close by returning to my opening concern: "Be careful what you wish for you may get it." I have stressed that, in my opinion at least, there are no quick fixes that will have lasting impact. Instead, there is need for international financial assistance on a very substantial scale for a significant period of time to carry out the systemic "3 R" process. However, a word of caution is necessary. Worldwide, international financial assistance to education amounts to only about 3% of total education expenditures. Thus, it is clear that the adequacy of domestic financial resources mobilized to support a country's education system and a wise and productive pattern of expenditure of those resources are crucial keys to sustainable quality of education. I believe that the implication is obvious that the most valuable use of international financial assistance is that which strengthens the institutional and human resources capacities of countries (and this certainly includes the SEE countries with we are concerned at this conference) so that their education systems produce high quality graduates who are able to contribute to the economic development of the country and the civic processes of democracy.

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SHORT, MEDIUM AND LONG TERM STEPS OF A FEASIBLE STRATEGY FOR THE EDUCATIONAL DOMAIN IN THE REGION

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would first like to compliment the rapporteurs and the moderators of the workshops for their excellent work during the last two days. I think that the document which summarizes the discussions in the workshops on recommendations, priorities and action plans demonstrates the substantial progress which has been achieved by the Graz Process since last year. This progress is not only a result of the excellent organisation of this conference by the Balkan Colleges Foundation and the Austrian Agency Kulturkontakt, but also due to the thorough preparation of the Conference topics through the series of workshops implemented in the framework of the Graz Process during the last year.

The Sofia Conference marked an important step not only in regard to the stronger involvement of non-governmental organisations in the Graz process, but – most importantly – in regard to the central role played by education experts from the region of South East Europe. In my mind, there can be no doubt that the success of the Stability Pact and the Graz Process will depend on the sense of ownership of the countries of the regions themselves.

As other speakers before me I would like to underline the fact that education is a long term investment. Given that the Graz Process cannot yield instant results, a long term commitment of the institutions cooperating with the region is needed, which should be based on a systemic and consistent approach and not affected by changing political priorities.

Admitting that results are only obtainable over the long run does not of course decrease the sense of urgency of taking immediate action. I think that there was a consensus expressed in the workshops and the panel discussions that we need to move beyond the establishment of working groups and the discussion of priorities to concrete action. I would hope that the Sofia Conference will also mark a decisive step in this direction. While we have not arrived at establishing concrete action plans in all areas, the recommendations and the priorities established during this conference will allow us to do so in the very near future. The Conference permitted all participating institutions to take stock of existing activities, and on this basis, to determine what their concrete contribution to the recommendations of the Sofia Conference can be.

There are two main objectives for the Graz Process shared by all Conference participants. The first is the inclusion of the region of South East Europe as a whole in the

developing common European education area. The second one is the strengthening of regional cooperation.

It seems that the first objective can best be met by a determined and flexible use of the existing instruments, as well as their adaptation or geographical extension. The second objective, however, requires new initiatives to be taken. With regard to such new initiatives we have to check very carefully whether they will be sustainable over the long run and whether they avoid duplication of efforts. This concerns in particular the establishment of *institutions* focusing on regional cooperation.

As the overall Commission strategy for cooperation with South East Europe has already been outlined to you earlier, I would now like to concentrate on giving a first outline of the planned concrete contributions of the European Commission to the Graz Process.

The most important instrument for cooperation with the region in the field of higher education will remain the TEMPUS programme, which can reach a critical mass of higher education institutions in the region.

The priorities of the TEMPUS programme are in line with the priority needs identified in this conference. The new TEMPUS programme, which starts in the year 2000, focuses not only on curriculum development and university management, but it also emphasizes the institution-building role of higher education institutions. Through short training courses for staff of public administrations, social partners, professional organisations, media or private enterprises, universities are encouraged to take an active role in promoting democracy and the rule of law.

TEMPUS also promotes regional cooperation across national and ethnic boundaries through joint project cooperation, the establishment of networks and the support for individual mobility. The cooperation on topics such as curricula reform, credit transfer systems or quality assurance systems strengthens the compatibility of higher education in South East Europe.

The National Tempus Offices in the countries of South East Europe - their representatives are with us today - will continue to actively promote the development of these priority areas through seminars and general information activities.

The Commission will also aim to enlarge the geographic scope of the TEMPUS programme. The participation of Croatia is planned for next year. The new programme of the European Commission for assistance to the states of the former Yugoslavia and Albania, which will replace the existing Phare and Obnova programmes for these countries, will certainly facilitate a common approach for the West Balkans.

In line with the recommendations of this conference, the Commission recognizes the need to increase links between the existing programme instruments targeting the candidate countries on the one hand and the non-associated countries on the other hand. Let me, nevertheless, take this opportunity to also recall the existing links: The TEMPUS programme encourages project participation of experts from the candidate countries as well as the self-financed participation of institutions. Experts from TEMPUS countries can also, on an individual basis, participate in the Thematic Networks established under Erasmus, such as the Thematic Networks on Teacher Education, History and University Management and Administration. Let me also mention the support provided

by Erasmus for European academic and student associations which include members from all countries of South East Europe.

The main instruments of the European Commission outside the area of higher education are the activities of the European Training Foundation and the Youth programme. As representatives of the European Training Foundation have already had the opportunity to outline their activities in the field of vocational education and training, I will confine my remarks to the Youth Programme.

The future Youth programme, which comprises the former programmes Youth for Europe and the European Voluntary Service, aims at the promotion of the non-formal education of young people. Its objectives are to promote civic society by encouraging the development of youth associative life and the strengthening of the role of youth associations. Programme activities aim at intercultural learning, the raising of awareness for equal opportunities, the fight against racism and exclusion, and the promotion of active citizenship. Through the European Youth Forum, the establishment of a network of youth organisations is encouraged which will cover the entire region.

4 Considering the importance of non-formal education in the Balkan countries, the European Commission strongly supports the initiative, taken at this conference, that a youth working group be established along the other working groups of the Graz Process. We will actively participate in the work of this group.

Finally, I would like to mention the support of the Commission for the South East European Education Cooperation Centre. The feasibility study for this centre is currently being launched by the Commission services.

I would like to close my speech by assuring you of the continued active participation of the Commission in the Graz Process and of our close cooperation with all other actors concerned. I think that the constructive and cooperative spirit of this conference bodes well for the success of our joint efforts for concrete action.

Thank you for your attention.

PANEL SPEECH (response to recommendations)

The recommendations which we have before us certainly form a coherent framework with which all the organisations represented here can identify, and from which we can develop appropriate educational action in the region.

For the Council of Europe, the areas where we can continue to play a particularly important role seem clear. We have been prominent in the workshop discussions of vision and strategy, as well as leading the groups on history and education for democratic citizenship. In addition, we have highlighted the importance of developing youth issues, and within the Youth Directorate we certainly have an existing infrastructure which has already responded quickly, flexibly and admirably to the immediate post-conflict challenges in the region. Our role in higher education is also very clear and the cooperation with other organisations in the various task forces set up for the region provides a strong basis upon which to build.

These recommendations succeed in being both comprehensive and succinct, and this is certainly no mean achievement. Inevitably the structure of the document reflects the structure of our discussions over the past few days, and perhaps there are some issues of balance which could be improved in a revised version. I would like to see more emphasis on the key questions of overall education policy development, for example, as this is one key area where it is clear that the Council of Europe, as an intergovernmental player with specific expertise in mediating complex questions of educational and cultural rights, has a vital role to play in the region.

In two weeks time, the Ministers of Education from the region will have an opportunity to come to Strasbourg to discuss how they see this process of educational development taking place. This will be an opportunity to gauge the first political reactions to these recommendations, and is itself an important example of inter-governmental regional cooperation.

Our planning of activities in the region is already and necessarily well developed, and we aim to use the strengths and experience of the Council of Europe to build sustainable programmes of educational development. In recent years, the Education Department has acquired considerable experience in working directly in post-conflict areas in former Yugoslavia on highly complex and problematic issues, as well as upon school and community-based projects to enhance democratic development in countries in the region. The organisation has also developed a major role in legal and policy advice to countries in transition. All this work now provides the basis for an evolution of coherent projects and policy development.

This conference has discussed in some detail the need for both initial and in-service teacher-training reform. The moment is opportune for a fresh approach to creating modern, dynamic education systems which are in accordance with best European practice, and which draw inspiration from positive experience throughout the continent. Expertise in the reform of teacher training will be essential, and again the experience of the Council of Europe in developing teacher training programmes in human rights and citizenship education, particularly in post-conflict environments, can be fruitfully drawn upon. In parallel with teacher-training reform, a system for curriculum development and innovation which meets the changing needs of twenty-first century society must be established. European expertise and cooperation in this area can also be facilitated by the Council of Europe.

The importance of history teaching has been clearly recognised here, and problems with the uses and misuses of history will undoubtedly have widespread political implications - particularly with regard to sensitive and controversial issues of modern national history. The Council of Europe has long experience addressing such questions, and it is therefore appropriate that we should make a positive contribution to the process through coordinating work in this particular field.

4

Education for Democratic Citizenship is also a key priority for our organisation as well as for the countries in the region, and thematic links, focussing upon crucial notions of citizenship, belonging and identity could unify a new regional approach. The prototype for this type of action could be the sites of citizenship which have been developed in our current project on citizenship education, so that sites in the region could become sources of trust, confidence-building and hopefully reconciliation between peoples.

Language learning is an area which has suffered under makeshift education systems in the region over the past years. Programmes of the Council of Europe are currently being re-focussed to assist the particular needs of South Eastern European societies, and forthcoming activities, to be conducted through cooperation between the specialised language sections of the Department in Strasbourg and Graz, will deal both with the most urgent problems - the lack of qualified teachers, high staff-student ratios and out-dated methodology - and with issues of long-term renewal and system development.

As well as recognising the importance of languages in the twenty-first century world, this conference has also highlighted the particular support which should be given to the young people in this region, as they will be the main agents of societal change. Again, I have no doubt that the efforts of the Council of Europe in this field will continue to be both pioneering, innovative and complementary to our other educational endeavours. I believe we can look forward with some considerable optimism to our work contributing to the development of more enlightened societies in the region, and this challenge is both enormous and inspiring. To achieve our vision, considerable realism and sound judgement will be required to respond to the needs of countries which have witnessed so much suffering as this century draws to a close.

CLOSING SPEECHES

5

THE "ENHANCED GRAZ PROCESS"

In November, 1998, during the Austrian Presidency of the European Union, an international conference on Southeast Europe "European Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy" was organised in Graz. On the background of Austria's particular geopolitical situation, it was an important aim of the Graz-Conference to put Southeast Europe on the EU-Agenda and to draw the attention of EU-Member States on the situation and needs of these countries.

This conference created a wide platform for international and regional experts, government officials and representatives of various European institutions to take stock of existing initiatives and focus on ways to strengthen and widen educational co-operation with and within the region.

Due to the success of this inter-institutional co-operation, an international Task Force was launched under the label "Graz Process", with the aim to increase the co-ordination of mid- and long-term educational co-operation and to support regional empowerment. This Task Force was chaired by Austria and the following countries and institutions were represented: Bulgaria, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the European Training Foundation, Finland, France, Germany, the OSCE, Portugal, the Royaumont Process, UNESCO/CEPES and the World Bank.

As an established basis for sustained inter-institutional co-operation at European level, this Task Force has been able to bring together a network of international and regional key players, such as the major organizations active in Southeast Europe, the respective EU-Presidencies and experts from Southeast Europe.

The co-operation in the framework of the Task Force was based on the following principles:

- inter-institutional co-operation
- regional approach (close co-operation with experts from the region)
- promotion of networking of experts and institutions
- linking a top-down with a bottom-up approach

In this context, the use of Information and Communication Technologies was encouraged: a homepage (www.see-educoop.net) was created as a platform to facilitate the flow of information and to strengthen links between grass root initiatives, regional educational policy makers and European and International Institutions. This homepage provides comprehensive data on Southeast Europe, such as educational co-operation projects, useful links and addresses, news and a forum for discussion. It was also planned in a mid-term perspective as a first step to the establishment of a Southeast European Educational Co-operation Centre (SEE-ECC).

In the framework of their Conference in Budapest in June 1999, the European Education Ministers stated in the declaration on Kosovo that "existing initiatives for cross-frontier regional and international educational co-operation for Southeast Europe such as the Royaumont initiative and the "Graz Process" are an important basis and should be strengthened."

In Budapest, interested countries were invited to send experts to extended Task Force meetings. At these meetings, experts from the other EU-Member States and States concerned from the region were informed about the work, and the possibilities for co-operation were studied.

The Task Force also established close co-operation with NGOs and relevant foundations and organizations, such as the Open Society Institute or the CRE (Association of European Universities). Furthermore, it also co-operated closely with experts from the region. In particular this took the form of preparatory thematic workshops in different areas, such as education for democratic citizenship, history teaching and higher education, for implementing the recommendations and action plan of the Graz-Conference and for preparing the follow-up conference in Sofia from 12 to 14 November 1999.

After the Kosovo crisis and the adoption of the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe in June 1999, the background of the Task Force has fundamentally changed. In the framework of the Stability Pact, the first meeting of Working Table 1 on Democratisation and Human Rights took place in Geneva on 18 and 19 October 1999. It was a big success for the Task Force that the Austrian proposal to entrust the existing "Graz Process" Task Force with co-ordination in the field of education was approved. The "Graz Process", which is open to all of the signatory States and organizations to the Stability Pact, was anchored in the Stability Pact as the "Enhanced Graz Process".

The task of the "Enhanced Graz Process" is to draft a well-coordinated practical work programme with priorities and key projects for education reforms. In this context, history teaching and history management are particularly important. Further topics are the role of higher education in developing a civil society, education for democratic citizenship, education and management of diversity, the role of vocational training in developing a civil society. The "Enhanced Graz Process" was also invited to study the scope for taking youth issues on board.

On 3 November 1999, the constituting meeting of the Task Force of the "Enhanced Graz Process" took place in Brussels. In the framework of this meeting, the new role of the imminent Sofia Conference was discussed.

The first major event of the Task Force of the "Enhanced Graz Process" is this Conference in Sofia. The recommendations and the action plan of this conference will be the basis for the strategy in the educational sector in the framework of the Stability Pact. These recommendations will also be presented at the OSCE summit in Istanbul.

At the Council meeting of Education Ministers on 26 November 1999, the EU-Education Ministers will be informed on the new role of the "Enhanced Graz Process" and on the results of the Sofia Conference.

On 16 December, the second meeting of the Task Force of the "Enhanced Graz Process" will take place in Brussels. In the framework of this meeting, an inventory of

existing projects will be presented and criteria for the selection of projects and a structure of work will be discussed.

On 24 January 2000, a meeting of the Task Forces of Working Table 1 will take place in Budapest. The second meeting of Working Table 1 of the Stability Pact is planned for March 2000. A Donor's Conference for education will possibly take place in the first quarter of 2000.

With a medium-term perspective, the European Commission's OBNOVA programme is funding a feasibility study to explore the potential for a Southeast European Educational Co-operation Centre (SEE-ECC).

Vesselin Metodiev,
*Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria
and Minister of Education and Science*

CLOSING SPEECH

Dear conference participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

After this address of mine, the Second International Expert Conference for Peace, Stability and Democracy will be a history. Not the history, however, that has served so far to separate us but the history which all of us responsible for the future will make and write for our children so they live in a better world without wars, hatred and ethnic conflicts.

I am convinced that the three-day forum with its plenary sessions and workshop discussions has contributed in making the educational co-operation richer and more diversified – this same educational co-operation that is destined to reinforce our European belonging. I am convinced also that the conference participants' expert estimate of the role and significance of education in our region will enjoy political support both on national and international level and will serve to encourage specific initiatives to facilitate the practical realisation of the ideal of peace, stability and democracy. An ideal that each of us cherishes and whose accomplishment will require the united efforts and commitment equally of the pupil and of the teacher, of the student and of the professor, of the whole civil society. The future of the generations to come, their ability to live in tolerance and mutual understanding - all depend on our expertise. We are the ones who must keep alive and carry through the spirit of this conference so that we may convince the international community that the Balkans is not only a place for rousing ethnic conflicts. It is our mutual responsibility to detect those issues that will strengthen the uniting processes set already in motion where education is deservedly assigned primary importance. I can assure you that the Bulgarian government will support all measures to this end.

The priorities which the conference singled out and which have entered its Action Plan require no doubt, sources of funding provided mostly by the international organisations but also by the national budgets. It is a condition *sine qua non* for realising, in real terms, the specific ideas this forum gave birth to and that have to be made come true in the name of peace, stability and democracy in the region.

I would like to underline that I and my colleagues - the education ministers from South Eastern Europe who will meet in the beginning of December this year in Strasbourg with the kind co-operation of the Council of Europe, will do everything necessary to provide our political support to the enhanced Graz Process which found its rightful place within the Stability Pact. I hope we'll be able to single out a packet of necessary measures to encourage the initiative "from below" and look for possibilities of mobilising all financial resources on national level for its practical realisation.

Allow me to express my gratitude to all conference participants for their active contribution to the development of the enhanced Graz Process - their efforts constitute the basis of the main conference documents of the Second International Expert Conference (recommendations and Action Plan).

I would like also to thank all workshop participants for their interesting ideas and innovative approach towards the regional education co-operation.

Allow me also to extend my gratitude to the rapporteurs and moderators for their expertise and professionalism.

In the end, let us express our mutual gratitude to the translators' team whose professional help added doubtlessly to the conference success.

5

WORKSHOPS DOCUMENTATION

6

STRATEGY AND VISION

PROPOSALS FOR AN ACTION FRAMEWORK

Under the auspices of the Graz Process, Task Force South East Europe, the following proposals for an action framework were agreed by the participants in the Sinaia workshop "Building an Education Strategy for Southeast Europe – Vision for the Future", held 3-6 July 1999, organised jointly by Kulturkontakt and UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES).

Preamble

Southeast Europe as a region has the specific problem of being left behind in the European integration process, and suffers among other things from the consequences of war and inadequate reforms. Recent events have now made the rest of Europe fully aware of the extreme dangers of continued neglect and/or exclusion of this region. The Stability Pact launched on June 10th represents the first step in a more concerted and comprehensive approach to the region on behalf of the international community as a whole.

The issue of education, and more broadly of human resource development, is clearly central to the success of all activities of the Stability Pact. The future of democratisation and human rights cannot be assured without a widespread understanding of the rights and obligations of European citizenship. Sustained economic growth across the region is unthinkable without a skilled and educated workforce. A sustained improvement will not be achieved without the essential contribution of education to enhanced good-neighbourliness and reconciliation.

Therefore, developing the region's human resources will be essential to its long-term stability and prosperity, in addition to providing solutions to short-term problems. The international community and national governments in the region and elsewhere in Europe should therefore make substantial investment in all forms of education as an urgent priority. This will require the commitment of considerable funds over a long period of time.

Action Framework

1. The creation of an inclusive European educational area which:

- Extends to all in Southeast Europe – past and recent exclusions have proved to be counter-productive, as in cases of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia;
- Demands educational systems in the region to initiate, continue and implement sustainable reforms aiming at increasing compatibility across Europe;

- Promotes the respect for human rights, mutual understanding, democratic processes and minority participation;
- Favours exchanges and partnerships between individuals, institutions and organisations within and beyond South East Europe;
- Promotes access and equal opportunities to all levels of education, including both formal and non-formal programmes;
- Facilitates communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries;
- Encourages synergies between governmental and non-governmental organisations, both national and international, in facilitating the development of this process;
- Actively overcomes the misconceptions about the region which have arisen across Europe.

2. The promotion of economic development through education and training, involving:

- The promotion of entrepreneurship, in the framework of an open society;
- The development of a culture of participation and self-help;
- A change of emphasis towards student-centred learning;
- The promotion of cross-border collaboration in vocational education and training, in search for solutions for common problems;
- The joint development of new standards and curricula focussing on improved employability and adaptability, along with improved skills for participating in democratic society;
- The fostering of life-long learning and continuous education for the upgrading of skills and qualifications;
- Increasing the opportunities for rural populations across the region;
- The close involvement of social partners and other civil society actors in the education and training process;
- An increase in the share of GDP to the education sector as the best long-term investment by governments in national economic development.

3. The promotion of intra-regional co-operation in formal and informal education and training as a vehicle for positive change by:

- The development of joint training programmes and schemes for teachers, trainers and administrators across the region as a capacity building measure;
- Ensuring improved knowledge and understanding of local and neighbouring cultures and history through the reform of curricula, text books, media education and training;
- Promoting cross-border exchange of pupils, students, teachers, scientists and administrators;
- The use of targeted funding mechanisms which would encourage regional mobility and networking between professional bodies and other groups.

4. The empowerment of local actors by:

- Drawing on the knowledge and expertise of local and regional experts in the design and implementation of all programmes;
- Large-scale investment in teacher training and retraining, to include participative and democratic methodologies, thus also boosting the social status of the teaching professions in the region;
- Improved opportunities for training, research and employment which would help move from brain drain to brain gain;
- Strengthening the role of women in civil society, the political decision making process and economic life;
- Promoting schools and educational institutions as community resource learning centres, to bring the community closer to education and education closer to the community;
- Rethinking the relationship between government actors and non-governmental organisations, including teachers' unions and other professional bodies, in order to bring about long-lasting change and sustainable results.

Implementation

- 10 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a new inclusive approach is necessary. Based on the success of the Phare Programme, a comparable effort is now necessary to integrate South East Europe. This requires the contribution not only of the European Union, but also of other international organisations, national governments and private foundations.
- This will necessitate the provision of significant financial resources which, learning from past experiences, should be handled with maximum flexibility. Such assistance should include the possibility of cooperation between individuals, professional associations, non-governmental organisations and institutions.
- We recommend that human resources development be integrated as part of the remit of each of the three Working Tables of the Stability Pact, and that a specific Sub-Table for Education be introduced.
- Strategic human resources development will require closer cooperation between the Ministries of Education, Labour and Social Protection and, at international level, the Ministries for Foreign Affairs.
- In a long-term perspective, research on the needs and impact of such programmes will be essential. This should encourage adaptation to changing circumstances.
- Efficient implementation of this action framework will need to draw on the experience of existing institutions and at the same time take into consideration the results of the feasibility study being carried out by the European Commission (DG1A) for the establishment of a South East European Education Cooperation Centre.

STRATEGY AND VISION

REPORT

Rapporteur: *David Croseir, Council of Europe*

The group felt that its two key tasks were to describe as clearly as possible their vision for educational development in the region, and to elaborate a strategy or strategies for how this could be achieved.

Vision

One key element of this vision, in countries which have been so dramatically affected by conflict in the past few years, is "normality". Although the notion is problematic and perhaps impossible to define fully, participants felt that it was nevertheless worth asserting this from the outset. To reach this situation of normality, close attention should be paid to:

- the role of education for peace, stability and democracy;
- the integration of the countries of South East Europe within European cooperation structures;
- the relationship of interdependence between education and social and economic development;
- the universal values of human rights which should underpin and be reflected in all dimensions of education;
- ensuring equal opportunities for access to education at all levels.

This vision is not being constructed from point zero. The current realities and diversity of situations within the countries of the region must be recognised.

It would not be enough if this vision were to rest within a group such as the current conference. Rather it must be appropriated and developed by citizens in the countries of the region, as well as by supporting agencies and donors. The need for public debate and coalition building – including with businesses and corporate donors – is therefore of paramount importance. The group stressed that people in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should also be included within this framework – even when the government is excluded.

Two principle objectives would be:

- that regional actors are empowered to take control of the process of transition, and not be dependent upon external assistance;
- that the current brain drain from the region should be reversed.

Strategy or Strategies

Firstly, the strategy or strategies should make full use of the possibilities offered within the Stability Pact. As the Stability Pact is a political process, it is vital that full political commitment and support from the Stability Pact is given to the proposals of the partners operating within the Enhanced Graz Process.

Although responding to the short-term political demands of the Stability Pact is essential, the regeneration of education systems in the region is a long-term process, which will require commitment over many years. In this context, political leaders also need to be involved in a learning process – in particular to recognise that the effects of changing direction to meet new short-term political objectives could have catastrophic consequences in the region.

Strategic development must involve re-thinking of the role of international assistance. Co-operation needs to be strengthened and developed to enable sustainability and innovation from within, rather than domination from outside.

There is a particular need for:

1. New methods of evaluation and monitoring for two purposes:
 - Strengths and weaknesses of current systems should be recognised through evaluation, and efforts targeted upon weaker aspects. Existing institutions should be reformed and strengthened, before new institutions are created. Donor duplication should be avoided, and local and regional expertise used and developed;
 - To assess the impact of assistance. Not only the receivers but also the donors should be evaluated within this process, and a longitudinal dimension ensured to measure longer term change processes.
2. There is also a need for agreement among different partners on common standards. Within this context, consideration should be given to the elaboration of a code of conduct regarding external assistance.
3. Improvements of information flow, both within the region, and between external support organisations is essential. Attention should be paid to translation issues, to the effective use of new information technologies and media, and also to communication between civil society and governmental organisations.
4. As one of the primary change agents in the education process, particular attention must also be given to initial and in-service training of teachers. Investment in teacher training institutions and pedagogical institutes is therefore required, as is adequate funding by national governments of education systems (particularly for salaries).
5. Particular support must be given to youth organisations and student unions in the region, as they are among the partners who have the motivation, creativity, energy and responsibility to carry forward the transition process.
6. While appropriate provision for all minority groups is vital, and should be done with a view to promoting inter-cultural understanding, gender issues and the mainstreaming of Roma education require the most urgent and general attention.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS ROLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

PROPOSALS FOR AN ACTION FRAMEWORK

Agreed upon at the workshop on higher education organised jointly by the Austrian Ministry of Science and Transport and UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES) under the auspices of the Graz Process, in Sinaia, Romania, 1-3 July, 1999.

1. Role of higher education in Southeast Europe

Given the present circumstances, higher education systems and institutions, by virtue of their inherent functions, have a very special role to play in societal development in Southeast Europe.

They are fully aware of their responsibility in this respect, in particular in shaping the intellectual democratic discourses in the region, in preventing a potential abuse of ethnic and/or nationalistic mobilizing power, in promoting the principles of mutual understanding and respect, and in enhancing regional cooperation. Higher education teachers themselves have already made a significant contribution to the renewal of political life over the last decade in many of the countries of the region.

Higher education institutions are also an important source of generating 'social capital', in terms of trust, norms, and civic society networks, new knowledge, skills and competencies as well as human and cultural capital, all of which can be seen as key factors contributing to societal development.

Higher education institutions also shape specific processes of development in various domains of society, in particular through:

- promoting links to civic society and local communities, by disseminating norms and values of trust, reciprocity and inclusiveness in a knowledge society;
- stimulating an active dialogue and reconciliation between individuals and between communities;
- shaping the intellectual discourses in this region, thus assuming a responsibility for developing and supporting democratic values;
- encouraging participatory learning, thus enabling graduates to disseminate in society at large the skills, competencies and knowledge already acquired in higher education;
- playing a pioneering role in European integration as a function of its international mission;

- maximising their potential to promote transformations in society in addition to their role as a source of continuity, by means of exercising to the full their autonomy and academic freedoms.

For these reasons, higher education has the potential to play an ever more important role in ensuring stability and prosperity in the countries of Southeast Europe. In order to fulfill this potential, a number of key areas for reform are suggested.

2. What kind of Higher Education systems and institutions for Southeast Europe

Higher education systems and institutions should urgently become more:

- open and inclusive,
- flexible,
- responsive to the demands of individuals and communities.

While preserving their own specificities, they should become fully integrated into and part of the wider European Higher Education Area. Existing in local communities, higher education institutions should at the same time be able to respond to the growing challenges of internationalization and globalization, and involve all stakeholders, especially students, in their decision-making processes.

3. Objectives

In order for higher education to enhance its contribution to peace, stability and democracy in Southeast Europe, the following objectives should be taken as a frame of reference for directing its policies of development and cooperation:

- to increase participation in higher education and ensure equal opportunities in life-long education and training;
- to increase diversification of the system in terms of institutions, staff, students, financial resources;
- to innovate and radically improve the management of higher education institutions in line with the principles and values of academic freedom of teachers and the autonomy of the institution as a whole;
- to identify ways and means for improving the quality of study programmes and for facilitating the recognition of academic qualifications within the wider European context;
- to promote a wide exchange in the field of research as well as of teaching and learning materials between higher education institutions within SEE and between SEE and Western Europe through those thematic networks which are of interest;
- to encourage higher education institutions to build up close relationships with their stakeholders, particularly with partners in the communities where they are located, in order to contribute to the promotion and development of civic communities based on the values of multiculturalism.

4. Priorities for Action

For these objectives to be attained, following Action Framework is proposed:

a/ Transformation and development of Higher Education

At the level of the system:

- to widen access and increase participation rates with special reference to minorities,
- to encourage institutional diversification to meet growing demand.
- to encourage institutional diversification to meet growing demand.

At the level of the institution:

- defining institutional missions and formulating strategic plans for their implementation;
- reconstructing and/or consolidating institutional autonomy and academic freedom accepting the principle of accountability;
- re-thinking university management through increased involvement of stakeholders, especially of the students;
- professionalisation of Academic Management and Administration □ including International Relations Offices;
- recognition of Qualifications and Diplomas;
- establishment of Credit Systems such as ECTS;
- promotion the Diploma Supplement;
- curricular reform.

b/ Quality Assessment and Assurance

- quality assessment and assurance mechanisms and procedures to be developed in each institution;
- quality assessment/assurance to be used as an incentive to improve performance and not as an obstacle to institutional development;
- standards for quality assessment should combine contextual and general standards thus ensuring quality for relevance and quality for excellence;
- institutional self-assessment should be combined with external evaluation.

c/ Public Service Function of the Higher Education Institution

- responsibility of higher education towards the development of the whole educational system should be enhanced through participation in curriculum design, teacher training, developing examination criteria, lifelong learning;
- partnerships of mutual benefit with business/industry and local communities, government and NGOs should be encouraged through projects of joint interest and consultancy;
- higher education institutions acting as unbiased institutions for mediation, dialogue and reconciliation, particularly in multicultural environments;
- involvement of students in the provision of services to the community.

5. Instruments and modalities

Taking into account existing instruments and modalities of cooperation, the following are considered to be of particular relevance for Southeast Europe:

- institutional twinning, in the framework of overall institutional policy and the common interests of academic staff;
- funding for gifted scientists in all disciplines for individual research projects in an institutional framework, also as a means of mitigating brain drain and attracting new, young scientists;
- extension and adaptation of existing bilateral, regional and multilateral instruments to the specific needs of Southeast Europe, e.g. SOCRATES/Thematic Networks, TEMPUS, CEEPUS, PHARE Multi-Country Programme;
- development of policy instruments at institutional level to support integration of minorities;
- support for regional Cooperation Networks, e.g. Networks of universities, South-East European Studies etc., involving teachers and students;
- creating a pool of international quality assurance reviewers, including those from the region, upon which individual systems can draw;
- substantial development in student and staff exchanges as a key means of encouraging openness and mutual understanding, and promoting change and development in Southeast Europe.

6. Funding and other framework conditions

The implementation of these measures requires, as an urgent priority, substantial investment by both the international community and national governments. Significant financial resources will be needed to make the necessary impact both at system and institutional level in this disadvantaged region. Learning from past experience, funds made available should be handled with maximum flexibility.

Furthermore, for the successful implementation of the proposed Action Framework, certain more general conditions have to be fulfilled, including the removal of obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement of students and teachers as mentioned in the Joint Declaration of Ministers in Bologna in June 1999.

Sinaia, 3 July 1999

HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS ROLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

REPORT

Rapporteurs: *Lewis Purser, CRE - Association of European Universities*
Wolfgang Benedek, University of Graz, WUS

Taking account of the results of the Graz Conference and the Sinaia Workshop, the Higher Education working group identified the following priority areas.

It was stressed that South East Europe is an integral part of Europe, with many common cultural and historical elements. Higher Education institutions play an important role in the on-going European integration process. All countries in the region and higher education institutions should therefore be included in this process, and instruments/processes should be adapted accordingly or designed to ensure such cooperation and the necessary funding.

Higher Education institutions have the responsibility to stimulate an active dialogue in the region, developing and supporting democratic values.

It should be remembered that higher education is a long term investment, which is central to ensuring both the supply of skilled future leaders and a pool of current expertise. Without such measures including necessary reforms of Higher Education, the brain drain, which has reached dramatic proportions will continue to deprive the region of essential human resources necessary to achieve lasting peace, stability and democracy.

We propose three priority areas, with accompanying proposals for further concrete action:

1. Higher Education and Society

a/ Institution building for civil society:

- support for cooperation between Higher Education and business/industry, local communities, government and NGOs;
- promoting Higher Education institutions as resources for life-long learning and continuous education opportunities, with a focus on developing training courses, especially teacher training.

b/ Contribution to social cohesion:

- establishment of a regional working group on proactive policies facilitating the participation of minorities in education;
- support for development of policy instruments for social cohesion at system and institutional level;

- introduction of measures to ensure equal opportunities.

c/ Supporting student activities, esp. student organizations to actively participate in civil society and enhancing their professional potential.

2. Higher Education Management

a/ New forms of strategic management:

- regional training courses for university leaders, including participatory and transparent management models;
- expert assistance in legal reform, strategic plans, policy and mission statements;
- creating pools of expertise from SEE and other regions, including widening access to already existing pools.

b/ Quality assurance:

- training in self-evaluation techniques;
- creation of a pool of quality assurance reviewers from the region and beyond, on which individual institutions and systems can draw;
- regional cooperation for the development of joint standards and assessment procedures;
- involvement of all SEE countries in EU Quality Assurance Network.

c/ Academic Recognition and Diplomas:

- mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications based on bilateral and/or multi-lateral agreements;
- establishment of credit systems such as ECTS;
- introduction of the Diploma Supplement as a tool for transparency to promote mobility and employability.

d/ Curriculum Development:

- offering curricula relevant to the region and which ensure graduates are equipped with skills and knowledge for active citizenship and employment;
- setting up mechanisms for the involvement of stakeholders in curriculum development processes;
- developing shared modular degree courses between institutions across the region;
- developing teacher training to ensure the management of diversity at all levels in education;
- reshaping degree structures in Higher Education along the lines of the Bologna Declaration.

e/ Strengthening the link between university autonomy and the responsibility of institutions of Higher Education towards society.

f/ Commitment by Higher Education institutions and governmental administrations to implementation of reform proposals jointly elaborated.

3. Regional cooperation

- a/ Need for Comprehensive Scheme for Cooperation in Higher Education for South East Europe drawing on existing instruments with a view to complementarity and synergy as well as developing support measures for activities not currently covered.
- b/ Joint efforts to counteract both external and internal brain drain c including special career development programmes, support to projects of young academics, and incentives for students, graduates and scientists abroad to return.
- c/ The concept of centres of excellence needs further discussion in a workshop with regional experts.
- d/ Networking:
 - Representatives of higher education institutions and existing initiatives should meet to work on identifying priorities and strategies: curriculum development projects, student and staff exchanges (including non-academic staff), internships, research projects, links with society and stakeholders, students organisations, thematic issues, such as European studies, peace studies and human rights education as well as medicine, teacher training, esp. language teachers.
- e/ Joint training for university administration including international relations and joint degree programmes in academic disciplines.
- f/ Information / dissemination:
 - Inventory of projects in progress, information on ongoing events, dissemination of best practices, Newsletter on activities of Graz process, further development of the SEE Education Cooperation website, progress towards the SEE Education Cooperation Centre.
- g/ Regional policy concertation as a long-term perspective:
 - Multilateral and bilateral agreements on recognition of diplomas;
 - Joint approaches, built on best governmental and non-governmental practice, for a policy for widening participation by all minorities, including Roma participation.

In order to support the three priority areas outlined above existing EU instruments as well as other instruments should be adapted to include institutions or individuals from countries currently not eligible to participate. Mechanisms should be designed to create synergies between existing programmes, and/or new programmes developed to fill such gaps.

All SEE countries should be included in the follow-up activities to implement the Bologna Declaration, thereby ensuring their belonging to the European Area of Higher Education.

HISTORY AND HISTORY TEACHING

PROPOSALS FOR AN ACTION FRAMEWORK

Preamble

On October 1/2, 1999, under the auspices of the Graz Process, Task Force South East Europe, a workshop on "*History and history teaching in SEE*" was held in Graz. This was organised jointly by Kulturkontakt, the Council of Europe and the Centre for the Study of Balkan Societies and Cultures (CSBSC) at the University of Graz. The main aims of this workshop were:

- to take stock of recent and ongoing bilateral and multilateral initiatives within South East Europe which had particular relevance for history and history teaching;
- to assess the potential for building on these initiatives and incorporating them into future developments;
- to identify the potential scope for and direction of new regional initiatives and projects in history teaching across all educational levels;
- to identify the potential constraints on future developments;
- to develop a strategic framework for action, including feasible short-, mid- and long-term objectives;
- to begin the process of establishing a network of organisations and individuals across the region able and willing to co-operate in initiating and implementing future proposals.

6

The Need for Action

Within the general context of greater European integration and co-operation and, more specifically, within the context of the "Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe" and the "Graz Process" for educational co-operation in the region to promote peace, stability and democracy, there is scope for a range of new regional educational initiatives, within the broad field of history and history teaching, which are aimed at:

- encouraging greater mutual understanding;
- providing more knowledge of the history of the region as a whole;
- providing a wider range of perspectives on the history of the region;
- providing academic historians and postgraduate researchers with opportunities to

do historical research in other countries within the region and to collaborate with colleagues from other countries in developing joint teaching and research activities;

- encouraging bilateral and multilateral co-operation in the development of new teaching materials and resources;
- providing training for history teachers (and those responsible for their professional education) in teaching regional history, teaching history from a comparative perspective, incorporating a multiplicity of historical perspectives on significant events and developments in the region into their teaching; using pedagogical approaches designed to help students adopt a critical attitude to historical facts and evidence and to apply those thinking processes which are central to historical awareness and interpretation.

General Principles for future development

Given the specific context of the Graz Process, future initiatives and activities related to educational co-operation in the field of history and history teaching should be guided by the following principles:

- the action framework needs to be flexible so that it can be responsive to a diversity of local needs and circumstances;
- the approach should be an inclusive one which facilitates the active involvement of all the countries of South East Europe and all the linguistic, cultural and national minorities living in the region;
- new developments should seek to co-operate with or complement those programmes which have already been initiated within the region
- priority should be given to activities, projects and other initiatives based on cross-border, other bilateral and multilateral co-operation and to co-operation between communities within national borders;
- whilst it is vital that future initiatives are responsive to local needs, are managed locally and make extensive use of local experts and expertise it is also recognised that co-operation with experts and organisations from outside the region can be useful, cost effective and help to broaden the range of options and choices open to local teams and organisations;
- regional initiatives in the teaching and learning of history are needed at all levels of education. It is also important that steps are taken to ensure the sharing and cross-fertilisation of ideas, expertise and experience across these educational levels and not just within them;
- within the action framework efforts need to be made to encourage co-operation and synergy between initiatives and projects. This will necessitate a structure for networking and the exchange of information and experience;
- to maximise the long-term impact of the action framework it will be necessary to incorporate an evaluation and dissemination strategy from the outset.

Framework for Action

The following proposals were formulated during the Graz Workshop:

1. The development of a flexible Framework for Action through which a wide range of projects, initiatives and other activities associated with history and history teaching in the region could be identified, supported and implemented.

A flexible framework will respond effectively to the diversity of circumstances and educational systems and practices across the region and will also provide enhanced opportunities for cross-fertilisation of ideas and pooling of expertise and experience between projects and activities which may be individually supported by different intra-governmental institutions, international organisations, NGOs, foundations, national governments, locally and regionally-based institutions and private bodies. The workshop identified four priority areas for development and support:

- a/ The pre-service and in-service training of history teachers.** Essentially there are two related aims here. First, to explore ways of effectively broadening history teachers' knowledge of the history of the region as a whole, the histories of neighbouring countries and the histories of ethnic, cultural and linguistic minorities within nation states. Second, to explore ways of introducing history teachers to new thinking about the pedagogy of their subject, including teaching from a comparative perspective, using multiple perspectives on the same event, using active learning and enquiry-based approaches and helping students to use primary and secondary source material.

Possibilities for action here could include:

- Seminars and workshops for potential 'multipliers', i.e. teachers, teacher educators and textbook writers who could then play a key role in disseminating the outcomes of these seminars and workshops to other groups of history teachers using a 'cascade' model of dissemination;
- Resource packs on history teaching for the pre-service and in-service training of teachers;
- Exchange programmes for history teachers and teacher trainers.

- b/ The development of teaching resources for history teachers.** Although there is some interest in the possibility of initiating multilateral co-operation to develop a textbook on Balkan history, the preference at the Graz Workshop was for packs or units, developed by bilateral and multilateral teams which would focus on specific themes and issues.

Discussion identified four main focal points for such packs:

- Experiences, problems and aspects of everyday life shared by most communities across the region, e.g. the history of the family, childhood, education, agricultural life, common cultural traditions, etc. (this is the approach adopted by the Banskó Workshop);
- Sensitive and controversial issues examined from a cross-border, bilateral or multilateral perspective, e.g. the Cyprus question, the Macedonian question, the

Ottoman legacy in Southeast Europe, etc. (this is the approach adopted by the Southeast European Joint History Project);

- Specific events and developments which have or have had significance for different countries within the region, e.g. the Balkan Wars, the reconstruction of Europe in 1918, the break-up of the Soviet Union, etc.;
- Periods of peaceful coexistence in the region.

In the short-to-medium term priority ought to be given to the development of materials which might serve as exemplars which groups of history teachers could use for developing resources on other themes and topics. In the long-term there is a strong case for developing a resources bank relating to the history of the region which teachers could access.

c/ The Development of a support infrastructure for history teaching. This could involve, for example, the expansion of national, regional and local associations of history teachers into all countries in the region; the extension of links between these associations and EUROCLIO; the development of specific measures to disseminate new ideas and examples of good practice to history teachers located in the more remote rural areas; the development of a periodical tailored to the specific needs of history teachers and history students in Southeast Europe to disseminate new thinking; and the greater use of new technologies to facilitate networking of historians, researchers, textbook writers, publishers, teacher trainers and history teachers.

d/ Developments in history teaching in Higher Education.

Possibilities discussed at Graz included:

- Exchange programmes for historians and postgraduate research students to work for a fixed period of time in the history department of a university located in another country within the region;
- Joint teaching projects which could take the form of identical history courses taught in two or more universities in different parts of the region, or team teaching of specific topics and themes by historians drawn from different parts of the region, or a carousel approach in which the same historian teaches the same topic or theme in two or more universities across the region;
- To explore the potential for credit transfer for history students and future history teachers who choose to take all or part of their history degree or teaching qualification in another country.

2. The establishing, under the auspices of Task Force South East Europe, of a co-ordinating group of experts drawn from across the region with additional representation from bodies directly involved in supporting or implementing initiatives on history and history teaching.

The co-ordinating group would have the following functions:

- to identify priorities for the development of pilot initiatives within the Framework for Action;

- to establish a network of individuals and organisations across the region;
- to provide a mechanism for liaison between project teams and supporting intra-governmental institutions, international and regional organisations and NGOs, and potential donor organisations;
- to facilitate cross-fertilisation of ideas and the pooling of expertise and experience across the different initiatives and projects;
- to ensure that each pilot initiative is evaluated;
- to facilitate the wider dissemination of information and good practice.

Strategy for implementing the Framework for Action

It is recognised that changes of the kind envisaged in the "Graz Process" are profound, fundamental and far-reaching. It will take a considerable time before the kinds of changes outlined above could be embedded in the educational systems and practices of all of the countries of Southeast Europe.

It is proposed therefore that the most appropriate, and cost effective, strategy would be for the co-ordinating group to:

- Select a range of relatively small-scale pilot initiatives within each of the four areas for action (teacher training, resource development, support infrastructure and history teaching in higher education);
- Establish with each project team the aims, objectives, intended outcomes and timescales for each pilot initiative;
- Put in place a system of peer evaluation for each pilot to appraise the outcomes of each initiative, identify any problems and constraints encountered, assess the solutions adopted and evaluate the likely transferability of the approach or project to other groups, circumstances and educational contexts;
- Ensure that steps are taken to disseminate good practice emerging from the pilots;
- Ensure that project teams make provision for initiatives to become self-sustaining if it is intended that they should continue beyond the pilot phase.

6

Short-, medium and long-term objectives for the Framework

Immediate objectives:

- Set up the co-ordinating group under the auspices of the Task Force
- Begin the networking process
- Identify priorities for development
- Identify project groups and pilot initiatives within each of the four areas for action.

Short to medium term objectives:

- Develop a peer evaluation strategy
- Initiate selected bilateral and multilateral pilot projects
- Establish mechanisms for ensuring cross-fertilisation between pilot initiatives and bridge building between the different educational levels
- Develop and implement appropriate dissemination strategies
- Develop a strategy for mobilising the agents of change who can help to ensure that good practice emerging from the pilots and subsequent developments can be embedded into curriculum planning, teacher training and textbook development across the region.

Medium to long term objectives:

- Assess the results of peer evaluations
- Examine the potential transferability of pilot initiatives
- Implement strategy for mobilising agents of change

Graz, 2 October, 1999

HISTORY AND HISTORY TEACHING

REPORT

Rapporteur: *Zarko Puhovski, University of Zagreb*

The point of departure for the work of 28 participants in the workshop was the meeting held in Graz on October 1-2 1999 where the flexible Framework for the activity was set. The workshop discussed four priority areas already identified in Graz.

- 1) In the area of pre-service and in-service training of history teachers in discussion it was accepted that there is a need for training in:
 - new methodologies and technologies,
 - developing of critical skills,
 - comparative approaches to history,
 - using out of school resources,
 - dealing with controversial and sensitive issues.

To achieve this, stocktaking activity is necessary to establish the current situation and identify gaps. The initiation of the two pilot projects should then follow:

- a series of unilateral, bilateral and multilateral workshops for potential multipliers in the region on new methodologies - the approaches tried and tested by the Council of Europe, EUROCLIO and KulturKontakt should be used;
 - a residential short course drawing together historians, teacher educators and history teachers on comparative approaches to teaching history of South East Europe.
- 2) In the area of development of teaching resources for history teachers there is also a need for stocktaking activity after which a two-year project should be introduced where groups of teachers and experts cooperate to produce exemplar materials and a guide on how to use them. This would be followed up by the work with publishers to develop a wider range of materials using this approach as a model.

In this context, as well as in the context of higher education, the workshop recommends fund raising activity to help the translation and publication of these materials so that they could be used all over the region.

- 3) In the higher education the workshop came to the conclusion that at least the *backbone* of a hopefully growing network of "good practice" institutions should be introduced. Such institutions are those that have already moved beyond the confines of a "grand narrative" type of curriculum and/or those that are already fostering broad, enlightened contacts with comparable institutions in other SEE countries, and are those that are already implementing anti-ethnocentrist research projects by drawing such networks. In concrete elaboration this would mean:
 - to start with four or five institutions, without an attempt to be all-inclusive at the outset;

- to entrust this nucleus with the task of connecting among themselves and network-building from there on.

In the meantime a stocktaking conference should be organised with policy recommendations as its crucial task. The content of such a conference should involve:

- reports on undergraduate and graduate degree programs in History;
- scope for comparative history;
- scope for non-state historical practices: history from below, micro-history, cultural history, history of everyday life, etc.

After that a team-taught courses for instance on interacting construction of "national memory" of different countries should be started with group of specialists from all the countries in question rotating in all the countries.

- 4) Existing history initiatives and programmes for young people should be extend to all the countries of South-East Europe. This could include the work of the Korber Foundation, The Socrates Programme, the Europe at School activity of the Council of Europe. It is in this context vital to change the policy of the European Union toward students and teachers from some of the SEE countries.

A pilot project involving a network of schools along the lines of the Council of Europe Black Sea Initiative on History should be started in the region as well as the pilot project involving the organisation of the youth camps around the historical, archeological or ecological site of regional significance.

During the whole activity of the workshop the question of minority as crucial for the region was permanently present. Although ethnic minorities are the characteristic problem of the SEE, religious, gender and political minorities were also mentioned. From the point of view of history teaching, concentration on the minorities makes it easier to deconstruct the usually accepted pictures of national history and to introduce the alternative perspectives, methods, and subjects in history teaching.

In this respect a need of a pilot programme dealing with early awareness of the primary school pupils drawn from the schools across the region was understood as one of the priorities.

6

Recommendations

1. To develop a range of cross-border and multilateral initiatives in history education at four levels: school, teacher training, academic history and informal education. This would be aimed at (a) encouraging greater mutual and comparative understanding of the history of the region from a multiplicity of perspectives; (b) developing the skills and values necessary for the development of civil society.
2. To develop a flexible framework for action which will build on and complement existing expertise and ongoing programmes and initiatives.
3. The Council of Europe, on behalf of the Graz Process, to facilitate the setting up of a coordinating committee of experts and government officials to manage the framework.

4. The following cross-cutting themes will permeate all of the initiatives and developments:

- social and cultural diversity;
- a multidimensional approach to history teaching (political, social, cultural and economic); a comparative approach to the history of the region;
- the development of critical understanding of the media.

Coordinating Committee for History and History Teaching

The creation of an advisory and coordinating committee of experts and government officials to facilitate a coherent strategic framework for the region. Its functions to include:

- identifying priorities for development
- establishing networks
- cross fertilisation of ideas and experience
- evaluating and disseminating good practice.

Priority 1: The training of history teachers in new methodologies including:

- use of new technologies
- developing critical skills
- comparative approaches to history
- handling controversial and sensitive issues
- using out of school resources.

Actions:

Phase 1: Stocktaking activity to establish the current situation and identify gaps.

Phase 2: Initiate two pilot projects:

1. a series of unilateral, bilateral and multilateral workshops for potential multipliers in the region on new methodologies. To use approaches tried and tested by the Council of Europe, EUROCLIO and KulturKontakt.
2. a residential short course drawing together historians, teacher educators and history teachers on comparative approaches to teaching the history of South East Europe

Priority 2: The development of teaching resources for history teachers:

1. Stocktaking activity to establish the current situation and identify gaps.
2. A two year project where groups of teachers and experts cooperate to produce exemplar materials and a guide for teachers on how to use them. This would be followed up by work with publishers to develop a wider range of materials using this approach as a model.
3. Extend the work of the Joint History Project into teacher training for the region.

Priority 3: Higher Education

- Actions:
1. Stocktaking activity to establish the current situation and identify gaps.
 2. Provide support for the development of specific networks (e.g. of historians, teacher trainers, history students, etc.).
 3. Provide resources and support for the professional development of historians.
 4. A cooperative pilot project involving 4 to 6 universities across the region to initiate exchange programmes for historians and post graduate researchers, joint teaching projects, a pilot scheme for credit transfer for history students between the collaborating universities.

Priority 4: Raising awareness of social and cultural diversity.

- Actions:
1. A pilot project working with primary school pupils drawn from schools across the region on historical themes relating to the rich diversity and positive mutual influences of South East Europe.

Priority 5: Youth

- Actions:
1. To extend existing history initiatives and programmes for young people to all the countries of South East Europe. This could include the work of the Korber Foundation, the Socrates Programme, the Europe at School activity of the Council of Europe.
 2. A pilot project involving a network of schools along the lines of the Council of Europe Black Sea Initiative on History.
 3. A pilot project involving the organisation of a youth camp around a historical, archaeological or ecological site of regional significance.

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

DISCUSSION PAPER PREPARED BY THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE SECRETARIAT

Introduction

This document is intended as a discussion paper for the workshop on Education for Democratic Citizenship at the Sofia Conference¹. It is based on the Council of Europe work on sites of citizenship in South East Europe. This experience should be considered by the workshop as a case study and as the starting point for exchanging views on objectives, processes, conditions and needs for strengthening Education for Democratic Citizenship in South East Europe.

1. Education for Democratic Citizenship

At the 1998 Graz Conference on educational co-operation for peace, stability and democracy, citizenship education was defined in the following way (Final recommendations of the Graz Conference):

- strengthening democratic citizenship demands the recognition of the inter-relationships between systemic change, grass-roots community action and personal development; it presupposes co-operation and participation on the part of all citizens, based on the democratic principles of power-sharing and dialogue; and must be supported by legislative and regulatory frameworks which assure the negotiation of the rights of minorities and the socially marginalised to active participation on an equal basis with their fellow citizens in all spheres of life;
- is best described as a lifelong learning experience and as a means of empowering people of all ages and circumstances to take control of their own destinies, with the aim of strengthening democratic culture and human rights;
- lifelong learning for democratic citizenship should therefore be supported as a holistic, integrated and multi-faceted endeavour, a long-term initiative which covers all contexts of formal and informal learning;
- the aims and methods of citizenship education should foster active participation in society at all levels, and as such contribute to the effectiveness and quality of education; should favor inter-disciplinary and cross-curricula approaches; should use participative and experimental teaching and learning practices, including mediation and conflict-resolution; should seek to involve learners actively in the organisation and process of educational life; and should build close relations with the community and associative life;
- in the implementation educational and youth policies should value new forms of social participation of young people.

¹ See also the presentation of the workshop's objectives in the programme of the Sofia Conference.

2. The South East Europe context

The situation in Southeast Europe is too complex to describe in a few paragraphs. The following points came to the fore during a recent Council of Europe meeting on the creation of a strategy on the development of sites of citizenship in SEE. Site activities in Southeast Europe show the diversity of the region and its variety of historical and socio-political contexts. However, in spite of the differences, the countries and the sites of citizenship in this part of Europe also share certain features.

The countries in SEE are at different stages of political transition. For most of them the question whether they will emerge as stable democracies remains unresolved. The political processes that they are experiencing, have not taken place in similar ways in any other region. This fact lends a certain distinctiveness to the region, with elements such as a specific notion of stability and democracy and the need to foster the potential of the region through capacity building and regional co-operation. The distinctiveness might result in understanding and learning about concepts like citizenship or democracy in a more urgent and different manner than before in the West.

Post-war societies in SEE suffer from destroyed or damaged social fabrics; they have the strongest need for reconciliatory activities. But also those societies indirectly affected by the war are faced with fragmented societies, isolation of ethnic minorities and a shared need for improved intercultural understanding, based on human rights and democratic principles. Reconciliatory activities and the move towards pluralist democratic societies must be fostered on the local, regional and national levels.

Concerning the official political priorities of Southeast Europe, questions of education in general, and of education for democratic citizenship in particular, rank rather low. School systems are often still authoritarian and traditionalist. Pro-active policies for educational reform processes and a "global" vision of education, which encompasses the wide range of formal and non-formal learning and teaching activities are needed. Thus, most of the Southeast European sites concentrate on the school as a potential nucleus of democratic development and link learning and teaching activities in the formal and non-formal sectors.

Phenomena such as apparent political apathy and lack of motivation constitute barriers to citizen participation. However, what appears as political apathy might in reality be a conscious decision to reject top-down approaches or a sign of frustration about institutions that work along lines of tribal nationalism and not in a democratic way. It might be a sign that political institutions are considered "irrelevant", especially by young people, and that political activity takes place in alternative spaces.

Lack of motivation might be due to poverty and economic under-development – how can an unemployed person or a teacher working for a very low or no salary be motivated to do voluntary work? How, more generally, can people be motivated to participate when recent history has shown that they are, at this point in time, not fully the masters of their destinies?

3. Sites of citizenship

Sites of citizenship are an integral part of the Council of Europe project on "Education for Democratic Citizenship"². The project first started working with sites of citizenship in Belgium, France, Ireland, Portugal and Quebec (1997/98). Later on, sites in Bulgaria, Italy and Spain joined the project (1998/99). The current focus of site activities is on the development of sites in Albania, Croatia, Moldova and Romania.

Sites of citizenship are new, or innovative, forms of management of democratic life. They are initiatives rooted in civil society that practise participatory and representative democracy at the local level. It is not the location of a "site" that counts, but the participation and the learning processes taking place within it. In all sites the participants exercise the most basic form of participation and citizenship, namely speaking up, expressing their needs, interests and problems. They develop specific strategies to respond to different aspects of social exclusion and discrimination (e.g. poverty, unemployment, illiteracy or drug addiction), to address questions of political exclusion of certain groups (e.g. young people), or to improve communication between different ethnic groups in multicultural settings. The activities take place in formal and non-formal learning environments, based on the idea of life-long learning.

The EDC project's criteria for sites describe a site of citizenship as:

- an initiative which is rooted in civil society;
- a building site of democracy, engaging a plurality of actors in their diverse roles;
- participant driven and based upon democratic values and processes;
- committed to empowerment and democratic social change;
- focussed on one, or several, aspects of the structures of power (in the contexts of education, employment, justice, environment, politics, health, culture, etc.) which shapes the relationship between the citizen and all levels of state authority;
- a practice or set of practices, involving innovative partnerships through which citizens are engaged in reformulating the context for democratic participation;
- identifying and confronting exclusion and the barriers to participation; is exploring and developing local/group/community resources;
- a project which is innovative and which results in added learning and educational value for the actors;
- potentially self-sufficient and self-sustaining;
- an activity, which has the potential for transferability, generalisation and influence at the local, regional, national and European level.

² For further information, see the Graz process Web site: <<http://www.see-educoop.net>> for Michela Cecchini's extended presentation of sites of citizenship in workshop D at the 1998 Graz Conference and for the document outlining the Council of Europe sites in South East Europe.

4. Contribution of sites of citizenship in South East Europe

Sites of citizenship cannot offer solutions to the grave problems in South East Europe, but they can contribute to a democratic development in societies in transition. Their approach is based on a firm confidence in the abilities of human beings to shape their lives in an active and constructive way and to become participating citizens, who are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Bottom-up approach:

Sites of citizenship practice a bottom-up approach. This means a direct involvement of a multitude of civil society actors in diverse roles. The site participants learn to express their needs, which are then explored and negotiated. Community development takes place through citizens' projects, initiatives and NGOs. Often original participatory structures are set up, e.g. youth commissions for intercultural understanding in the Bulgarian site. A sense of "ownership" of the activities heightens participants' motivation.

Learning of skills:

Through learning strategies in formal and non-formal contexts, site actors acquire a variety of skills. They advance their abilities to actively listen, to question and to challenge systems, to make decisions and to cope with problems, failures or conflicts. Mediation skills enable them to establish or improve the communication between individuals, authorities, institutions and communities. The increase in skills leads to improved self-images, self-reliance and the empowerment of site participants.

Partnerships and networks:

The currently existing Southeast European sites all concentrate on building partnerships at various levels. Sites within one country, across the region and across Europe enter into partnerships with each other. These site partnerships serve towards a dissemination of information and experiences and a connection of support systems. They thus contribute to reconciliation at the local and regional levels.

Sites also develop innovative partnerships with Ministries, local authorities, intergovernmental organisations, NGOs and other partners and create or join a variety of networks, e.g. training or school networks. This results in improved communication and more transparency, new learning experiences for all partners involved and the development of new support systems.

Intercultural dialogue:

All Southeast European sites focus on different aspects of intercultural understanding. Participants develop their capacities for constructive dialogue with members of different national, ethnic or religious groups and common activities are organised. This direct practice of intercultural communication as an important element of reconciliatory efforts is particularly geared towards young people.

5. Conditions for the sustainability of sites of citizenship

In order to provide the necessary conditions for sustainable sites, it is central to:

- continue and extend the co-operation with and support for ongoing site activities in Southeast Europe, beyond the end of the EDC project in September 2000;
- provide a forum for discussions and exchange of experiences between site actors, site co-ordinators and international experts and for peer group support for project proposals and development;
- make use of local expertise, e.g. on the development of civil society;
- encourage participatory action research, constant evaluation of the learning experience and feedback by the participants;
- join the different sites in a network of exchange, information, common projects and mutual support (East-East; East-West);
- provide sites with communication possibilities, e.g. e-mail;
- foster partnerships between sites and local, national and international authorities and organisations;
- support local and regional networks and facilitate the access of sites to international networks (e.g. of youth organisations, universities, etc.);
- foster continued training of teachers, trainers, students, local authorities, sponsors;
- support educational reform processes through policy recommendations emerging from knowledge and experience gained through the site activity;
- offer visible, continuing support, in order to facilitate the development of projects;
- provide long-term target-orientated funding

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

REPORT

Rapporteur: *Milika Dhamo, University of Tirana*

Preamble:

The group composed of representatives of the education authorities of the respective participatory countries, representatives of international organizations, NGO-s, foundations, educators discussed the role and place of education for democratic citizenship in the on-going efforts for peace, stability and democracy in the SEE.

It was the consensus of the participants that citizenship is a wide, multifaceted concept as well as complex practice. It has not only a political dimension, but also social, cultural, economic dimensions. As such it requires a holistic approach.

Based on this conceptual framework, education for democratic citizenship in the region aims at raising citizens' awareness of their rights and responsibilities, empowering people, encouraging participation of the youth in civil society.

Recommendations:

The group strongly recommended that the issue of democratic citizenship be addressed simultaneously in the following levels:

- policy and institution level
- formal education level
- civil society level

Policy and institution level

1. Support the governments to:

- work on the awareness raising for the importance of citizenship education
- design, develop and implement national policy framework
- establish institutions dealing with citizenship education
- develop national standards of citizenship education

2. Support the regional cooperation efforts in education for democratic citizenship.

Formal education level

- pre-service and in-service teacher training
- cooperation for material development
- curriculum development and revision
- regional school partnerships
- interdisciplinary approach

Civil society level

1. Support for:

- community involvement
- media involvement
- youth and other organizations involvement

2. Ensure sustainability of initiatives and projects:

- governmental support for NGO-s projects

EDUCATION AND THE MANAGEMENT OF DIVERSITY

KLAGENFURT MEETING FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE SOFIA CONFERENCE

Under the auspices of the Graz Process, Task Force South East Europe, the following proposals for an action framework were agreed by the participants in the Klagenfurt workshop "Education and the Management of Diversity", held 17-19 September 1999, organised jointly by the Centre for Intercultural Studies (a joint project with the Council of Europe), Klagenfurt University and KulturKontakt.

The Klagenfurt Memorandum

Education is a powerful complement to economic, social, political and cultural measures. But it can only work within a social, economic, political and cultural frame. Although education plays a crucial role in achieving openness for diversity it cannot be successful without support from these other fields in bringing about the type of social change and development which is desired by the majority of the population in South Eastern Europe.

What makes diversity management even more difficult is the fact that educational systems still are considered as a means of constructing national identities, a concept which cannot but result in homogenizing heterogeneous populations. Due to the process of social transformation in South Eastern Europe there are various competing tendencies rivaling for an impact on educational systems, such as centralization, decentralization, nation-building, ethnic autonomy and pluricultural diversity. Such contradictory tendencies neither help to overcome the frontiers and barriers still existing physically and mentally nor do they meet the demands of a globalized society or the needs of the population in South Eastern Europe.

The concept of "South Eastern Europe" is a construction referring to very diverse realities. If one looks at educational systems of South Eastern European countries, one has to differentiate between post-war countries and their particular problems such as traumatization and segregating societies on the one hand, and countries which have not gone through that misery on the other hand. Therefore concepts developed for one particular situation cannot mechanically be transferred to another one within the region. Especially with view to the management of diversity this is of crucial importance.

Within the last ten years a great number of reforms and projects have been undertaken by national authorities, international organizations and NGOs with respect to the management of diversity.

They have had a positive impact on the situation in the following aspects:

- Multicultural education has been put on the political agenda.
- Minorities are given more attention.
- Models of managing diversity are being developed gradually.
- Individuals and representatives of different cultural backgrounds have been brought together and involved into controversial discussions.
- The ground for networks, for the exchange of experience and for cooperation has been prepared and in some places networking functions already.
- The involvement of NGOs engaged in education for peace, democracy, diversity and respect for otherness contributes to democratization by widening the scope of activities and the number of actors involved.

However, introducing and strengthening the process of managing diversity in education faces a number of problems threatening the impact and the sustainability of projects and initiatives:

1. Problematic concepts of managing diversity

Despite the good will, the energy and the financial means spent on projects, some of them have not been as successful as was expected because of shortcomings in the theory and practice of democratic social development and lack of theoretically based concepts of diversity that would meet the needs of peaceful multicultural development. The list of problems specified below names some of them:

- The concept of diversity is often restricted to ethnicity, thus ignoring the reality of other socially important criteria of diversity (e.g. gender, age, social status etc.) all of which are integral parts of multiple identities. The focus on ethnic diversity exclusively produces unwanted side-effects and contributes to strengthening tendencies of ethnic segregation and radicalism.
- Especially the reanimation of ethnic myth is an impediment to the democratic management of diversity.
- As far as ethnicity is concerned, management of diversity is predominantly limited to the protection of minority rights and does not involve society as a whole in the process of integration. Thus the majority is not included in the learning process.
- The balance between unity and diversity is not given enough attention.
- Even successful initiatives have problems in getting incorporated into the system.
- Diversity management often lacks adaptation to the realities of the region.

2. Problems with implementation procedures:

Some of the problems stem from neglect of technical knowledge how to implement change so as to grant an impact on the educational system and sustainability.

- There is a lack of partnership between Eastern and Western experts due to limited confidence in local expertise and due to restricted respect and knowledge on the Western side as far as local capacities and resources are concerned. Therefore too often ready-made solutions and recipes are given priority.
- Cooperation on different levels - ranging from the local to the cross-border level - has hardly been developed.
- There is a basic discrepancy between the length of time educational change takes and the amount of time available for the implementation of projects. Short term projects and random choice of participants and project goals diminish the impact these initiatives might have. Under these conditions sustainability is hard to achieve.
- Management of diversity must rely on multipliers as agents of change. However, this approach has not proved as effective as had been expected due to lack of adequate training and random choice of participants. Under the conditions of a closed system it is rather doubtful if multipliers can play any role at all.

3. Evaluation and quality development

In every organization people form opinions and make judgements. They are continuously commenting: Was this and that program good or bad? Did this or that initiative work? Did we get what we wanted or didn't we? Evaluation is the attempt to base these comments on systematic research and to arrive at judgements which are based on criteria. In other words, it is the attempt to overcome impressionism by using methods of inquiry. Evaluation is a scientific instrument for the interpretation of institutional reality which does not fit in with dictatorship or authoritarian control. In any situation of planned educational change in a democratic system it is a basic requirement to examine the measures taken for their effectiveness and efficiency so as to find out whether goals are being reached, the quality of education is improving and the financial means are being used properly. There is, however, little evidence that evaluation plays any considerable role in projects and initiatives in South Eastern Europe.

The participants of the Klagenfurt Conference have agreed on the observation that supervision of implementation processes is insufficient and there are hardly any concepts of evaluation and no evaluation techniques in place.

Recommendations of the Klagenfurt Conference

1. Concepts of managing diversity

Management of diversity depends on the quality of democracy. Democratic institutions and democratic education must encourage living together in peace, freedom of expression, acceptance of diversity and tolerance.

The participants of the Klagenfurt Conference are convinced that the following educational measures are appropriate for the development of a democratic concept for the management of diversity:

- Educational concepts should focus on multiple identity and the acceptance of difference, and they should also be embedded in a wider concept of democratic citizenship and human rights education.
- The management of diversity is rather directly linked with the teaching of history, which traditionally had been serving nationalistic goals. Concepts of diversity should play a more prominent role in history teaching.
- More attention to the local environment and to the methodology of how concepts of diversity are taught, are urgently required for a new education, particularly within the frame of teacher training.
- Understanding diversity should be widened by implementing ideas of diversity across the curriculum (even in subjects like mathematics or biology) in formal and nonformal education.
- Education should also make people aware of multiple identities and supply room for multiple identities by strengthening interethnic dialogue and by enabling people to take different perspectives (local, regional, neighbouring and global views).

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2. Implementation procedures

It is basic for the impact and the sustainability of any planned change in education to put more emphasis on needs analysis:

- What are the exact needs of change, what possible and necessary partners are there, what is the necessary support that must come from the system?
- Coherent approaches demand a closer cooperation of key stake holders and there must also be enough time available to develop common approaches: Cooperation of international institutions, local NGOs and experts on one side and governments on the other side are vital for any lasting impact on the system. In particular, local NGOs and government officials should help avoid the construction of parallel structures.
- Any cooperation must be based on a democratic concept of partnership which relies on equality of regional and international experts.
- The Klagenfurt group also sees the need for a transversal approach implying the cooperation between all levels of school and higher education, adult education

and informal education. It recommends more curriculum inclination (purposefulness), but also other measures to enhance acceptance of diversity, such as school projects with children of different background, public lectures, conferences and the use of media for the general public, all with cross-border perspectives.

- It is of great importance to have an infrastructure available that helps facilitate educational change. There is special need for a clearing house that forwards information about ongoing projects, experts etc., and that facilitates partnerships on different levels and for different other purposes.
- The implementation of programmes for the promotion of diversity in education should be supported by the promotion of crosscultural school and class partnerships, including individual "tandem-partnerships". Examples of good practice (e.g. class-partnerships) could stimulate activities in this field of education for diversity.

3. Quality assurance

In the area of quality assurance a number of measures will have to be taken in order to introduce and promote a "culture of evaluation":

- A legal framework for evaluation activities will have to be constructed.
- The selection of open minded and well trained people suited for the role of an evaluator of rather complex and innovative learning processes will have to follow next.
- The establishment of criteria for evaluation of education for diversity and for successful management of diversity can only be achieved in discussions with experts from different fields such as politics, intercultural education, social theory, cultural studies. This includes identification of bench marks of failures and achievements.
- Evaluation should assess the internal impact and success as well as the possible impact on the system.
- Last but not least, money for evaluation should be allocated and be part of the project budget.

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*Members of the Klagenfurt Group,
17-19 September 1999*

EDUCATION AND THE MANAGEMENT OF DIVERSITY

REPORT

Rapporteur: *Vedrana Spajic-Vrkas, University of Zagreb*

Drawing on the proposals worked out by the Klagenfurt Group, the participants of the workshop on Education and Management of Diversity have come out with the following recommendations:

- 1.1. The concept of diversity should be approached to as an evolving and a multidimensional concept. It should be broadened to include all aspects of diversity (ethnicity, nationality, religion, language, gender, race, citizen status (resident, migrant, refugee), health condition, social and economic background, rural-urban population, different age groups, sexual orientation, life styles, and other culturally based differences). Besides, it should be used in a constructive and a future-oriented manner to allow for new forms of diversities that might emerge in Europe as the outcomes of the complex challenges facing social relations and construction of diversity.
- 1.2. Reduction of diversity solely to nationality or ethnicity that is common in the region, can create new boundaries. Therefore, the balance between national/ethnic and civic dimension should be reflected in all aspects and forms as well as on all levels of education and training. Such balance may be achieved by making European dimension based on respect for human rights, democracy and equality, pluralism and rule of law an integral part of education reforms at all levels. Both differences and European dimension should be taught and learned as values in the context of education for democratic citizenship.
- 1.3. The concept of management primarily means how to cope with diversity to enhance its constructiveness. In this context, the expression " management of diversity in education" means what and how to use in education to make diversity a means for social cohesion and unity. It should include management of recognition, acceptance, respect of and responsibility for the others as integral parts of community's mainstream culture. This refers to the acquisition of knowledge as well as of skills necessary for functioning efficiently in a democratic plural community. Education should be seen as preparing an individual for unifying and constructive diversity, and not as a means of transmitting ethnocentric multiculturalism.
- 1.4. Attention should be given in education to promoting inclusive multiple identities based upon the respect for the right to be different as the basis for promoting human dignity and individual empowerment. This also means accepting openness and change as principles of identity formation.
- 1.5. By integrating the issue of diversity in education the problem of cultural discontinuity should be resolved.

- 1.6. Competencies relevant to the recognition, respect and responsibility of diversity as the basis for social cohesion include flexible perception, multiple perspective, interest in/for the others, commitment to a society as a plural community of equal opportunities, critical approach to social reality and commitment to action and change.
- 1.7. The priority should include:
- inventory of activities (projects, actions, model schools, etc.) already in implementation in the region with the view to find out good practices for further dissemination;
 - identification of local and regional experts and institutions able and willing to develop models of education based on broadened and inclusive concept of diversity including the European dimensions part of education for democratic citizenship based on six principles: networking, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, dissemination and sustainability.
 - cross-curricula critical analysis and development with the view to include a broadened concept of diversity and multiple identity as a means of social cohesion;
 - teacher pre-service and in-service preparation based on examples of good practices in the region, including knowledge on diversities as well as procedural knowledge/skills of integration of multicultural perspective in education, use of different tools that promote unity through diversity (studies in folk cultures, arts, life styles, etc.) Besides, teacher competencies should encompass group dynamic, mediation, curricula development skills;
 - promotion of small scale research (action research and case studies) that are coordinated within the region;
 - mobilization of local and regional forces, particularly NGOs active in the field, including networking among and exchange of experts, teachers, and students across the region;
 - development of a support system for changes including legal provisions, decentralized decision making in education, closer local authorities and local community involvement, increase of school autonomy, reorganization of school administration and promotion of democratic school and classroom climate.
- 1.8. Launching of and a sustainable support for regional projects and national projects promoting regional dimension and responsibility for the region are suggested as key aspects of an immediate action plan:
- Projects on approaching diversity in education that encompasses two dimensions based on the above mentioned priorities:
 1. training and re-training of teachers within the region to strengthen the diversity awareness and develop the notion and practice of cultural mediation in schools for a role of multipliers;
 2. curricula analysis and development from the point of view of inclusion of diversity into the mainstream culture as a positive value.

- Projects on teaching and learning different aspects of culture as a means of uniting diversity in the region such as language learning, youth life style, art forms, etc. that facilitate cross cultural communication, strengthen multiple identities, help deconstruct ethnic and national identity myths, stereotypes, prejudices and ethnocentrism.
 - Projects of local and national NGOs and institutions that make pressure upon state administration to introduce inclusive concepts of diversity into formal educational system as well as projects that develop means of cooperation among grass roots initiatives, local and national authorities and schools in order to cross over the boundaries between formal and non formal education in this field.
- 1.9. All the activities in this field including the above mentioned projects should be supported by a wide range of international institutions such as: European Commission, Council of Europe, Graz Process, Royaumont Process, UNESCO, UNICEF as well as other international and national foundations and donors, and respective governments.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND ITS ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

PROPOSALS FOR AN ACTION FRAMEWORK (FROM ETF)

HOW VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

Under the auspices of the Graz Process¹, Task Force South East Europe, the following proposals for an action framework were agreed by participants at the Mavrovo conference on Civil Society and Vocational Education and Training in South East Europe, held 9-11 September 1999. The conference was jointly organised by the European Training Foundation and the Austrian Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs via KulturKontakt, in co-operation with the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of democratic citizenship and civic education in the vocational education and training process;
- Define the role of vocational education and training for civil society in the reconstruction process within the region;
- Empower key actors to initiate networks to enhance co-operation at local, national, regional levels;
- Make recommendations and concrete project proposals for the Graz process in preparation for the Sofia Conference.

The workshop was attended by some **80** experts, representing in particular South East European partner countries, but also other CEE countries, EU member states, European Commission, Council of Europe, international organisations, and donors.

1. Background

The recent war in South Eastern Europe has confirmed that the region contains some of the most ethnically and culturally complex and fragmented areas of Europe. The region also contains some of the poorest countries in Europe, a factor that contributes

¹ Follow up of Conference on European Educational Co-operation for Peace Stability and Democracy in November 1998 held in Graz, November 1998

to the instability of the region. The recent physical destruction and displacement of refugees has compounded the difficulties faced by individuals, institutions and countries. Furthermore, the war has disrupted the economic interrelations between the countries of the region, including those not directly involved, leading to sharp downturns in national GDP with devastating consequences for already fragile employment systems.

Human Resource Development, and in particular Vocational Education and Training, has a critical role to play in the reconstruction process. In the short term, investment in education and training will enable the countries most affected by the crisis to provide their citizens with one of the basic services of a civil society. In the longer term, investment in education and training will be vital to underpin the socio-economic development of the countries and the region towards full integration in the Europe and the world.

Following the recent crisis in South Eastern Europe the international community has agreed on a Stability Pact for the region. The Stability Pact aims at the creation of an area of political stability and economic prosperity. The main elements within it will be to promote and sustain democracy and the rule of law, security, respect for human rights, and the re-launch of economic activity. The working tables democratisation and human rights, and economic reconstruction in the Stability Pact should in future, among other issues, further elaborate the importance of civic education, training (including higher education) and support for public administrations and civil society organisations and initiatives.

Investment in HRD, and in particular VET will be essential for both the developments of civil society and economic reconstruction in the region, which are, in turn, preconditions for stability and democracy. In the light of the experience in other Central and East European countries, the reform of the VET sector can only be achieved through the long term joint commitment and support of individuals, communities, national authorities and the international community.

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2. VET as an important vehicle for the development of civil society

VET can be an important vehicle for the development of civil society in the reconstruction process in South East Europe, by

- promoting citizenship education as a precondition for democratic society
- Introducing the principle of social partnership at all levels
- Integrating civil society-related contents and methodologies in the training process
- Providing facilities of schools and training centres for community relevant development initiatives
- Bringing different communities and ethnic groups together
- Fostering regional, cross border exchange and co-operation.

This role of VET should be taken into account in the planning process for reconstruction at national and regional level, as well as by the international community.

Available good practice and experience in the field from inside and outside the region represents an important starting point for developing new initiatives as well as for sustaining existing ones.

3. Action Framework

It has been shown that the reforms of the VET systems initiated in most of the SEE countries, even though they are largely restricted to the formal and state organised school systems, have been important vehicles for developing crucial elements of civic society in individual countries.

However, these VET reform programmes are always connected to a limited number of pilot schools and would need continued support even in those countries that have only been indirectly affected by the crisis in the region in order to secure a minimum level of system impact and sustainability. In the other countries similar VET reform programmes need to be urgently started and include an even more conscious and systematic attention to the concept of democratic citizenship. Support to VET reforms should be included explicitly under the framework of the Stability Pact.

In view of the diverse contexts within the region these VET reform programmes will necessarily be very country specific. However, exactly given the specific situation in the region, there will be a need for intensified regional co-operation, both among the countries of South Eastern Europe and between them and countries in other regions of Europe.

The conference has confirmed that individual countries also show a large number of - often highly innovative - local or community based initiatives, especially in the field of democratic citizenship. These initiatives are often supported by and highly dependent on international NGOs. These initiatives are often isolated and of limited duration and need to be better related to VET reform projects, locally, and to the development of civic society, nationally.

Thus, it will be essential to define a set of programme and project proposals at the regional, national and community level. The following proposals have been formulated during the conference.

VET contents and methodologies

Regional

- Exchange of experience and sharing of expertise on curricula, textbooks and teacher training for citizenship education in VET
- Regional facilities for cross-curricular and local curriculum development, including teacher training and methodologies of implementation
- Regional networking especially through use of existing networks and initiatives in the region, such as Sites of Citizenship initiative of the Council of Europe
- Cross border projects for VET actors, teachers and participants
- Twinning of VET institutions

National

- Design of new generation of VET reform programmes with special focus on including citizenship in curricula organisation and teaching approaches
- Design of VET reform programmes in relation to general and higher education
- Extension of PHARE VET reform programmes

Local

- Funds for innovative intercultural VET projects

VET and economic and social development

Regional

- Development of networks and coaching instruments for SMEs and micro enterprises
- Training provision to schools, VET centres and community actors to introduce democratic management and 'learning organisation' values

National

- Development of continuing vocational education and training for adults
- Development of targeted VET programmes to combat social exclusion
- Support for the development of a legal frame to facilitate VET school autonomy in setting up local development plans

Local

- Support for developing analyses of the local needs and for setting actions for community building
- Development of VET schools into local community centres

VET as support for democratic and social reconstruction in the region

Regional

- Strengthening of co-operation between National Observatories
- Extension of National Observatories to all countries in the region
- Extension of all VET and civil society related accession activities (such as LEONARDO and other relevant EU programmes) to all countries in the region
- Dissemination and exchange of good practice

National

- Institution building: joint staff development programmes for VET actors from different communities
- Promotion of social partners involvement in VET

Local

- Joint projects of NGOs and VET schools
- Support to school and business/industry micro-projects

Principles for Programme Development and Implementation

In view of the specific context of South Eastern Europe, initiatives should be guided by the following principles:

- Maximum use should be made of local experts and expertise, involvement of local business and industry in designing market specific training and assure the technology transfer.
- Project definition should be demand driven and respond to needs defined by the countries rather than donor driven and defined by what can be delivered by foreign organisations.
- Initiatives should be based on an inclusive approach aimed at the active involvement of all countries of the region.
- The experience of donors and institutions that are already active in the field should be a point of reference in the reconstruction planning and implementation to enhance synergy, effectiveness and impact of actions.
- Every effort should be made to encourage and support synergy and co-operation among different actors. In particular, the reconstruction process should encourage and support a mix of top down and bottom up initiatives.
- Inter-institutional co-operation will have to be improved, especially between those institutions involved in the reform of vocational education and training, on the one hand, and those engaged in developing democratic citizenship, on the other.
- In view of the scarcity of local resources and the need for international assistance an well-organised structure of donor co-ordination will be needed.
- Inter-community, cross-border and inter-regional initiatives should receive priority over purely local, national or regional ones. Networking, exchange of information and experience and lasting partnerships will have to be encouraged to secure wider dissemination and sustainability.
- Efforts should be undertaken to involve, besides international organisations and NGOs, also national and multinational companies in enhancing the role of VET for civic society.

Mavrovo, 11 September 1999

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND ITS ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

REPORT

Rapporteur: *Madlen Serban, Romanian Ministry of National Education*

First of all I would like to mention that our workshop was the most populated one by putting together 30 participants, not only experts in VET or in civil society issues, but as well as representatives of the social partners.

The participants in the workshop "*Vocational Education and Training and its role in the Development of Civil Society*" stressed the importance of considering the title of the workshop as one of the main topics for the region.

Stability, understood as economic development and human well-being, democracy and peace, should be based on social cohesion and, therefore, participants in vocational education and training (students or trainees) could not be excluded from any related development in the region.

It is argued that HRD in general, and VET in particular, are keys to successful political transition, post-war reconstruction and stability building. The three pillars to build on are:

1. the promotion of a market approach
2. the development of a culture of peace and democratic citizenship
3. treating education and training as a high priority.

The potential contribution of VET to the ongoing democratisation process in the context of the South Eastern Europe is defined as:

- a) shaping a learning society
- b) overcoming the skills gap
- c) encouraging social partnership and social dialogue
- d) fostering intercultural learning
- e) helping people to help themselves.

Speaking about VET, the participants referred to initial training (secondary and tertiary education, higher education included) and continuing training (unemployed, employees).

During the workshop inputs were presented on systemic approach and good practices examples.

The discussions focused mainly on:

- what should be done from the perspectives of long term and sustainable developments;
- how;
- which mechanisms could be used whatever they exist or should be created.

As far as sustainability is concerned, the participants stressed that this is one of the main issues for the regional long term development. Therefore they suggest to consider:

- the development, the monitoring and the evaluation of projects or programmes to be based on appropriate information;
- assessment of the impact of projects before their development and implementation;
- development of the ownership spirit of the projects by project definition based on demand driven rather than donor driven;
- involvement of multiple actors as stakeholders;
- institutional strengthening;
- progressive national budget contribution to development;
- co-ordination and added value of investments in the region.

What should be done?

The participants identified two fields of intervention:

1. learning process
2. practising process

1. The VET system should be reconsidered from the perspective of effectiveness and efficiency, of quality assurance and equity. Institutional arrangements according to the new organizational culture of schools and the related legal framework development should be considered. The corporate responsibility of multiple actors involved in VET should be reflected in institutional and legal framework.

In this respect management training is needed in order to empower all actors to assume responsibilities, to participate in the management process. Participants mentioned as actors teachers, students, parents, social partners and local public authorities.

The local development relevancy of the VET provision is very important. In an uncertain economy it was suggested to base the VET provision on key competencies and on social skills. Self development and self assessment at individual and institutional level should be promoted. The brain drain in the region could be diminished by letting people feel at home, and that will be supported through sustainable economic development.

The students or trainees enrolled in VET should be trained to participate in the whole society development process. They should prove pro-active attitudes in peace making and democracy development. Therefore democratic values should be considered: intercultural thinking, conflict solving should become practices.

Intellectual skills related to how the media are reporting or media skills, computer skills, how to deal with diversity, and *participatory skills* as how to communicate/how to debate, how to realise an NGO (voluntary organisation), how to deal with an NGO, how to cooperate with authorities, how to interfere with media, were mentioned among the main ones to be considered in VET also.

Reform and innovation in the curriculum development and teachers / trainers / advisers training represent the priorities.

The participants underlined the need to develop vocational standards and curricula that should include in a very well defined way the social skills, the metacognitive skills. Curriculum should include social skills as compulsory or optional autonomous subjects or as cross-curriculum themes.

The delivering process should be student-oriented so didactical methodologies should be adapted. Inter-active methods were mentioned as relevant.

Changing the personal make up of teachers in VET schools was considered as a starting point for delivering civil values. The attitude of Government vis à vis education should change by fund allocation for all related activities.

That being said, participants referred to the changes at the school environment level.

At institutional level, participants mentioned as well the need to optimise the use of resources, to make school more active in communities. The suggestion to transform schools in *community resource centres* was erased. Schools could deliver vocational training or adults' civic education or second chance education for dropouts or any other community based education.

2. Practising was recommended to be done by involving actors in the decision-making process. Therefore training was mentioned, once again, as a priority for the region in order to empower actors to take part in the decision making process. Actors could be helped also to set their own associations. The learning process should be oriented through active citizenship development.

VET should include schemes of practising roles specific to the real work, to the real life. Supporting the transition from school to work, from vocational training to work, the VET provision should be done in enterprises or in simulating environments.

That requires training of teachers/trainers and managers to develop these opportunities. Simulation companies or training firms might support the objectives.

The VET system should allow individuals to practise the choice for the career by giving them these opportunities. That means VET system should be based on horizontal and vertical mobility and should offer the counselling and the guidance for a better expression of choices.

It is important that extracurricular activities in vocational education are oriented towards the associative life development, to self management.

These activities could be developed through twinning and partnerships.

How to do it?

By project/programmes development at national level with different donors contribution, by bi-lateral or multilateral co-operation.

It was very clearly stated that the region should take advantage of the existing mechanisms. The National Observatories of ETF represent an institutional network that has to be oriented in these directions.

Participants mentioned also the networking process that should consider the development of the co-operation culture:

- in the country
- on the cross-border approach
- by virtual means (Internet, e-mail).

A proposal for the extension of Tempus, Socrates and Leonardo programmes in the region with the eligibility conditionality linked with the promotion of topics related to stability, peace and democracy has been forwarded.

The lack of foreign languages skills was mentioned as a constraint. Therefore dedicated training was suggested as a priority.

The networking was recommended for all actors involved in VET (students, teachers, managers, educational authorities, parents, social partners, professional associations and other NGO representatives) regardless of their position at local or national level, in order to support the bottom-up and the top-down approaches.

Which topics should be taken as priorities?

The participants proposed:

1. Economic areas:
 - Business education and administration
 - Tourism
 - Engineering
2. Entrepreneurship
3. Social partnership and social dialogue

**BACKGROUND TO THE ENHANCED
GRAZ RPOCESS**

7

EVENTS WITHIN THE GRAZ PROCESS

International conference on Southeast Europe (November 1998, Graz)

The conference on "European Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy" within the frame of the Austrian EU presidency led to the formation of a Task Force to facilitate the implementation of the conference recommendations and Action Plan.

1. The Task Force of the "Graz Process"

In December 1998 the first meeting of the Task Force took place: European Commission: DGIA, DGXXII, Council of Europe, Royaumont Process, UNESCO/Cepes, Bulgaria, Germany, Finland and Austria. In order to stress the process character of the aims and activities of this initiative the name "Graz Process" was adopted. Since then the Task Force has been meeting in regular intervals.

The war in Kosovo led to a redefinition of aims and strategies as well as to a strengthening of efforts. In meetings with experts from the region the need for reviewing and redefining existing education strategies in the region became apparent. Some priorities identified were: importance of a regional and inclusive approach, strengthening of the role of education in post-war reconstruction strategies, development of medium and long-term visions and perspectives, empowerment of local actors, inter-institutional co-operation (also with foundations and NGOs).

In June the "Stability Pact", launched by Germany as the EU-Presidency, initiated on a political level a process of strategy development for post-war regional development. It became one of the aims of the "Graz Process" to lobby for the inclusion of education in the Stability Pact.

At the Conference of European Education Ministers in Budapest (June 24-26) the ministers stressed in their declaration on the Kosovo crisis and post-war regional development, the role of education. The Royaumont Process as well as the "Graz Process" are mentioned as two existing initiatives worth strengthening.

The European Commission has committed itself to finance a feasibility study on the "Southeast European Educational Co-operation Centre" under its OBNOVA programme.

Portugal and France as the upcoming presidencies, the European Training Foundation, the World Bank and the OSCE become members of the Task Force.

On September 16 the first meeting of the regional working table of the Stability Pact takes place.

In September the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) organised a brainstorming meeting of education experts on strategy development. In its recommendations to the Stability Pact (letter to Mr Hombach) the importance of education in the process of regional development in SEE is stressed. The "Graz Process" is pointed out as a possible instrument in this field as well as the need for an Education Co-operation Centre.

At the Task Force meeting on October 4/5 the decision was taken that the "Graz Process" will explore possibilities of taking on responsibilities for education within the frame of the Stability Pact, Working Table 1.

At the first meeting of Working Table 1 of the Stability Pact (October 18-19, Geneva) Austria proposed on behalf of the Task Force to take over a co-ordinating role in the field of education. The Austrian proposal was unanimously accepted. The Table agreed to formulate a co-ordinated, concrete programme of educational reforms within an enhanced Graz Process (chaired and co-ordinated by Austria).

2. Second International Conference on South Eastern Europe Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy (November 12 - 14, Sofia)

In preparation of the Sofia Conference five workshops with regional and international experts were co-organised by members of the Task Force and co-funded by UNESCO/CEPES, European Training Foundation, Council of Europe, Austrian Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Austrian Ministry of Science and Transport.

The following themes covered:

- "Higher Education and the Development of Civic Communities in Southeast Europe", Sinaia, July 1 - 3, organised by Cepes/Unesco and the Austrian Ministry of Science and Transport
- "Building an Educational Strategy for Southeast Europe - Vision of the Future", Sinaia, July 3 - 6, organised by Cepes/UNESCO and KulturKontakt Austria on behalf of the Austrian Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs
- "The Role of Democratic Citizenship and Diversity Education in Vocational Education and Training", Mavrovo/FYROM, September 9 - 11, organised by the European Training Foundation and KulturKontakt Austria on behalf of the Austrian Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs
- "Management of Diversity. The Role of Teachers and Teacher Training in SEE", Klagenfurt, September 17 - 19, organised by the Centre for Intercultural Studies (a joint project with the Council of Europe), Klagenfurt University and KulturKontakt Austria on behalf of the Austrian Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs
- "New Approaches to History and History Teaching in SEE. A Comparative Analyses", Graz, October 1 - 2, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, Euroclio, Joint History Project and the "Bansko-Project", organised by Graz University, CSBSC and KulturKontakt Austria on behalf of the Austrian Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs.

The Sofia Conference (co-funded by Task Force members, the Open Society Foundation and the European Cultural Foundation) is being organised by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science (together with the Balkan Colleges Foundation) jointly with the Austrian co-ordination office of the Task Force, KulturKontakt, financed by Austria.

STABILITY PACT FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

Working Table on Democratisation and Human Rights

Geneva, 18/19 October 1999

Conclusions by the Chairman Max van der Stoep

The Working Table on Democratisation and Human Rights held its inaugural meeting in Geneva on the 18/19th of October. The Working Table was addressed by the Swiss Federal Councillor for Foreign Affairs Joseph Deiss, by the Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact Bodo Hombach and by the representative of the EU Presidency, Ambassador Timo Lahelma.

In introducing the meeting, the Chairman underlined that its central purpose was to avoid project-driven solutions and to concentrate on developing a cohesive, priority-driven strategy.

The Table noted the need for cohesive action between all three Stability Pact Tables on cross-cutting issues such as corruption, judicial reform and human trafficking. It acknowledged concerns that trafficking in human beings be viewed as a human rights issue as well as a law enforcement problem. The Chairman undertook to ensure, through the Secretariat, close cooperation with sub-groups established by other Tables.

The Presidency of the European Union referred to its framework document, which highlights the EU perception of the priority areas for the Working Table.

The Table supported the Chairman's desire to keep administrative structures to an absolute minimum and build instead on existing expertise and programmes. In light of the diversity of tasks assigned to the Table, the Chairman proposed a formula of open-ended task forces, lead by sponsoring organizations/countries, to meet on specific issues in priority areas and accelerate the development of concrete programs of action in priority areas.

The Table agreed with the Chairman that these task forces should be action oriented "coalitions of the willing" on each issue, dividing rationally labour among those best suited to do it. The task forces will be flexible tools for review, evaluation and harmonisation of activities and priorities. The mandate of the task forces will be to propose a program of action, to select and prioritise ongoing activities, identify complementarities and draw up inventories of projected events and activities. The Table welcomed Hungary's offer to convene a meeting between the Working Table Chairman, the Stability Pact Secretariat and task force representatives in Budapest on 24 January 2000 to assess progress in advance of the next plenary meeting of the Working Table. Task

forces should finalize concrete proposals by the Budapest meeting. They should also identify funding sources for activities undertaken.

The Chairman will assist the task forces in the evaluation, review and assessment of proposals and give guidance as appropriate.

The Chairman requested task force sponsors to make proposals, prior to the Budapest meeting, on how to involve relevant NGOs in their work.

The Chairman stressed that it was critical that countries of the region provide a significant input into the task forces. He also urged them to join forces to develop common projects of cross-border or regional character to contribute to swift action.

Human Rights and National Minorities

The Table felt that all states of the region should accept and implement existing human and minority rights obligations, including the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Rights of National Minorities. It endorsed the initiative of the Council of Europe to launch, in cooperation with the OSCE Office of High Commissioner for National Minorities, a series of consultations between actors at the regional level. These consultations would also aim at a systematic analysis of the views of governments and national minorities in South Eastern Europe with regard to human rights and minority problems.

The Table endorsed the Chairman's proposal to establish a Task Force on Human Rights and Ethnic Minorities, sponsored by Slovenia. It also welcomed the offer of the Slovenian government to host a Conference in early 2000 on questions related to national minorities, to refine a concrete program of action, taking account of the above fact finding missions. The Table welcomed the proposal by the Council of Europe on a steering Group, composed *inter alia* of Slovenia, Council of Europe, OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities and OSCE, in view of the Conference and other relevant task force activity.

The Table further noted that the vulnerability and displacement of Roma and Sinti populations throughout the region merited special attention. It requested the Human Rights and Ethnic Minorities Task Force to investigate specific measures to safeguard the rights of such populations on a region-wide basis.

Ombudsmen Institutions

The Table considered the Ombudsman Institution an important complement to judicial protection of human rights and an important mechanism through which to promote accountability and good governance. It welcomed the initiative, co-sponsored by Hungary and the Council of Europe, to host a conference on human rights and minority rights protection institutions in December in order to investigate opportunities to create, empower and network such institutions on a region-wide basis. The Table invited further consideration of how to provide practical and political assistance to human rights protection institutions under the auspices of the Good Governance Task Force.

Return

The Table felt that the Stability Pact offered a valuable framework to support constructive regional dialogue on return of refugees and displaced persons. The Table recognized that long-term solutions for refugees and displaced persons throughout the region were central to stability and should be treated comprehensively.

The Table supported the Humanitarian Issues Working Group (HIWG) under UNHCR auspices, in which many Stability Pact participating states and organizations take part. The Table called for close action-oriented cooperation with the HIWG. The UN welcomed the renewed impetus that the Stability Pact could give the HIWG. The Table welcomed the willingness of the HIWG to work within the framework of the Stability Pact. The Chairman of the Working Table will participate in the next meeting of the HIWG, scheduled for early December, and report to the Working Table on how the Stability Pact can creatively contribute to ongoing efforts.

Parliamentary cooperation

The Table recognized that the Stability Pact could provide impetus for enhancing relations between parliamentarians through several existing fora, including the European Parliament, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. The Table welcomed the interest expressed by several delegations from the region to facilitate closer substantive cooperation and exchange of expertise among democratically oriented parliamentarians. The Table endorsed the Chairman's proposal to invite the Royaumont process to consult with interested parties and develop an action plan to advance these prior to the 24 January meeting in Budapest.

Good Governance

The Table agreed that promoting transparent, accountable and responsive governance based on human rights values and principles is a key Stability Pact objective. The Table endorsed the Chairman's proposal to establish a task force on Good Governance, sponsored by the Council of Europe. In addition to developing measures to strengthen independent human rights institution-building, the task force will investigate means of rationalising public administration, taking innovative measures to combat corruption and strengthen local government and trans-frontier co-operation. Special attention will be given to bolstering local democratic processes throughout the region.

Gender

Participants committed themselves to advancing gender equality. The Table recommended that all task forces ensure that gender mainstreaming is reflected in their activities. After discussion, the Table agreed that the overall relevance of gender equality issues also justified the creation of a task force, sponsored by the OSCE, to focus specifically on this issue. The OSCE informed the Chairman that it will propose the

appointment of the head of a local NGO to chair the task force. The Table welcomed the OSCE's willingness to provide initial administrative assistance and discuss longer-term support for partner organizations. The final composition of the task force will include representatives from regional NGOs and governments, to ensure interlinkage between the states of the region and civil society elements. This task force will develop programs designed to strengthen existing NGO networks by improving communication and joint lobbying efforts. It will also implement measures designed to empower women politically. It will report to the Chairman of the Working Table in December 1999 with an action plan for 2000.

Media

The Table noted the various initiatives already under way in this field. It concurred with the Chairman's proposal to establish a Media Task Force, sponsored by the United Kingdom. The task force will advance a coordinated plan, including specific action to assist independent media in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to promote freedom of expression throughout the region. The task force will consider, in particular, how the Stability Pact process can be used to promote adherence to existing international standards for freedom of expression and how ongoing efforts to improve regulatory frameworks could be given a regional dimension.

The Table also endorsed the principle of a Charter for the protection of independent media, which the UK would draft and discuss within the task force. A draft proposal was circulated at the meeting. The Table felt that a Media Charter with verifiable commitments could be a critical tool to enhance the democratic transition of the countries in the region, and encouraged the task force to finalise the Charter within the shortest possible delay.

Education

Recognising that accelerated economic, political and social transitions in South Eastern Europe have placed great and varied strains on educational systems, the Table agreed to formulate a co-ordinated, concrete programme of educational reforms within an enhanced "Graz Process". Contributors will confer with a wide range of social partners from the region as well as the World Bank, Council of Europe, United Nations and OECD and give special consideration to the teaching of history throughout the region. Proposals are expected by the 15th of November.

The Table requested the "enhanced Graz process" to consider youth issues, with a view to making a proposal on how the process could include these issues in its proceedings.

DRAFT PROPOSAL

South East European Education Co-operation Centre

Priorities:

a. flow of information

in an overall reconstruction effort in the post war/crises period shape and format of existing programmes will have to be adapted rapidly as well as new programmes will have to be initiated. Flow of information is essential to keep up with latest developments and thus avoid parallelism and promote efficient use of synergies/resources;

b. providing a platform

to establish and re-establish cross border co-operation among regional experts/intellectuals as a first step for initiating cross-border co-operation projects and to give "displaced" intellectuals an opportunity to re-establish national, regional and international contacts (integration to avoid further brain-drain);

c. making efficient use of past experience

e.g. from BiH: critical analyses of the relationship between input/output of previous and existing educational programmes jointly conducted by regional and international experts and joint strategy development (regional empowerment, capacity building, avoiding the "victim syndrom");

d. instrument to make regional expertise available

and to channel it to international and European decision making bodies to ensure its inclusion/participation in mid- and long-term strategy development.

7

General Objectives of SEE-ECC

SEE-ECC as a (*relatively*) light structured institute, which can:

- facilitate the process of networking among initiatives of countries of the region and with other European countries by creating a platform and a meeting place for dialogue enhancing the flow of information and optimising the use of regional expertise;
- based on the information gathered by its Resource Centre respond flexibly and rapidly to emerging needs as defined by the local actors in the countries and the region as a whole;
- serve as a mediator between grass roots initiatives and local decision makers on the one hand and donor organisations on the other hand;

- enhance the process of democratic institution building by addressing the training needs of NGO's, educational institutions and decision makers;
- facilitate future cross-border links between institutions and professionals.

Specific Objectives

- a. expert function:** monitoring of ongoing projects and collecting data on new initiatives with a specific emphasis on best practice examples; providing data on international, national, bi- and multilateral donor activities and existing networks in the region, pooling data on regional and international key players (decision makers/experts/private initiatives);
- b. clearing house function:** the dissemination of information to key players (experts, private and individual initiatives, decision makers, donor, organisations) will make use of modern communication technology (IT) in order to give free access to all groups and encourage a dialogue among participants; where need should arise (e.g. grass-roots initiatives with no access to IT) traditional means of information dissemination will be used (e.g. newsletter). Meetings of key players will provide the opportunity for in-depth, topic related exchange of experience;
- c. brokering function:** based on the information available tailor-made facilitation procedures will be designed such as meetings of key players in the relevant field, workshops with regional and international experts, small conferences, training inputs, etc. to facilitate immediate and flexible response to social, economic or political changes; virtual networking via IT will provide an open platform for discussion, exchange of experience and networking;
- d. institution building measures:** skills of key players of educational institutions, NGOs and decision makers will be enhanced by participating in a creative dialogue making use of regional as well as international expertise and best practice examples thus providing their respective institution with access to a wide range of expertise. At the same time cross-border institutional exchange will facilitate lasting intra- and transnational links.

South East European Educational Cooperation Network

Since summer 1999 KulturKontakt Austria has provided a comprehensive information service via the Internet on initiatives, projects and progress in educational co-operation in and with Southeast Europe. Information from the countries and regions as well as on international programmes offer those responsible for education a wealth of useful advice on co-operation.

News about current initiatives, a database, an extensive collection of addresses, articles on the subject, a mailing list as well as a separate focus on reconstruction initiatives make up the service which covers 350 pages. Weekly updates maintain the service's usefulness.

More than 500 visits a month from all European and Southeast European countries as well as European and international educational institutions show the need for this service.

We would like to invite you to participate in this process, a platform which is facilitating the flow of information between grassroots initiatives, NGOs, regional educational policy makers and European and international institutions.

The page offers:

- news about current activities, conferences, as well as internationally relevant documents;
- a project database with more than 100 regional as well as international co-operative projects;
- hundreds of links and addresses on local educational initiatives as well as international programme providers;
- theory with articles on questions of educational policy;
- a mailing list with a discussion forum;
- a separate Kosovo page with news and links about the situation in the region,
- as well as the Graz and Sofia Conference papers.

We would like to take the liberty of drawing your attention to a new service. In our database you can get a picture of more than 100 projects of educational initiatives. Please help to keep this basic research up-to-date or take the opportunity of making your project accessible to a specialist public. A separate online form will provide you with assistance for this purpose.

A Project by KulturKontakt Austria, Supported by The Austrian Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Austrian Ministry of Science and Transport

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS GRAZ '98

Participants of the Presidency Conference¹

- having stressed the significance of education for a peaceful and prosperous development in the region
- having stressed the need of intensified educational co-operation in and with SEE, guided by the notion of democratic citizenship and good neighbourliness
- recognizing threats to peace, stability, democracy and socio-economic welfare caused by intolerance, ethnic segregation and inadequate respect of minority rights
- having stressed the need for the region to grow on the basis of local needs, expertise and empowerment

Recommend support for educational policies and practices contributing

to a strengthening of democracy, civil society and human rights as prerequisites for lasting peace and stability by:

- enabling citizens to actively participate in the democratic debate and decision making as well as in independent institutions, organisations and initiatives
- improving the co-operation between educational authorities and institutions, educators in the context of civil society
- enabling citizens to value, contribute to and to make use of the potential richness of multi-ethnic environments, diversity and multiplicity of identities, based on minority rights and their protection, and mutual knowledge, acceptance and respect
- supporting citizens to increase their participation in professional life to social and economic well-being of the individual
- developing and strengthening partnerships across community and country borders, liaising with and setting up bilateral, regional, multilateral and European projects and programmes
- enabling citizens to master and benefit from all the instruments of the information society
- opening access to the media

¹ From the EU-Member States, from the/other SEE- countries (according to the Royaumont - formula), from the/other associated countries from Central and Eastern Europe, Cyprus, EFTA/EEA, Switzerland; representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament, European Training Foundation, Council of Europe, UNESCO, OSCE, Worldbank; representatives from NGOs

Participants highlight the following needs for:

- an adequate share of budgetary funds for the education sector
- support for educational infrastructure and means for international communication
- legislation and policies in line with international agreements and standards (equal access, clearly defined minority rights) as enshrined in the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the protection of national minorities and the European Charter for regional or minority languages and their effective implementation
- mechanisms for a proper degree of autonomy, above all in tertiary educational institutions
- embedding education system in effective democratic Civil Society
- human resources development: improving initial education and training and further training and qualification through coherent policies
- enhancing for the social status and rights of educators
- internationally applied procedures, tools and methods for co-operation based on voluntary approach, good will and mutual trust (e.g. networks, academic recognition, exchange and transfer of information and data)

Participants paid special attention to the following sectors:

Vocational Education and Training

- participants stressed the need for a clearer view on VET's role for regional economic co-operation and civil society: VET is of crucial importance to economic development and employment potential as well as for contributing to the democratic process
- efforts are needed to promote social inclusion to improve access to a diversified, innovative and quality-oriented initial training and continuing training, as part of life-long learning, which are adapted a) to the needs of the local and regional markets and cultural backgrounds, and b) to the needs of all cross-sections of the population, including those suffering from various forms of discrimination or disadvantage
- particular attention should be paid to the development of core skills / key competencies for all, including interdisciplinary and action-oriented skills, creativity and entrepreneurial skills, the use of information and communication technologies, foreign language learning ability, and social learning in democratic environments which support team-work and closer participation in decision-making
- integration into the development of the education systems of the social partners (representatives of employers and employees) will help to bring about not only an improvement in the quality of VET, but also a culture of dialogue and compromise essential to the democratic process

- the idea of setting up of cross-border and regional networks linking together national projects should be supported. These could include regional VET networks focusing on enhancing the skills needed for regional development (such as tourism)
- enabling teaching and training professionals and trainees to spend periods of training and familiarisation in other countries can help bring about greater levels of understanding between peoples as well as the acquisition of better skills
- participants stressed the need to enhance knowledge through the applied capacity of research and development in the field

Higher Education Co-operation

- in order to make use of Higher Education's full potential for peace, stability and democracy
- institutional autonomy and academic freedom shall be fostered. Relevant organisations must insist on the autonomy of universities and the protection of staff within these institutions. Funding programmes must be dependent on the positive record of adherence to this principle.
- A legal framework to advance equal opportunities in university employment and student access should be established.
- Universities should be under an obligation to develop policies on access to degree courses for student from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups.
- The development of democratic, representative students' organisations as an important element of participatory democracy should be supported, amongst others by a legal framework.
- There is an urgent need to implement significant improvement concerning networking of means of communication in the region, thus ensuring freedom of exchange
- steps shall be taken to develop possibilities (including funding) to involve the academic community in the countries not yet eligible in existing programmes
- means should be found and initiatives be developed to enable Higher Education associations including students' organisations to participate fully in the activities of regional European, and multilateral organisations
- special attention should be given to the development of institution-building
- regional and grass-roots initiatives shall be encouraged
- cooperation shall be guided by the notion of mutual sensitivity and trust
- efforts shall be made to link-up projects and to combine efforts

Citizenship Education

- strengthening democratic citizenship demands the recognition of the inter-relationships between systemic change, grass-roots community action and personal development; it presupposes cooperation and participation on the part of all citizens, based on the democratic principles of power-sharing and dialogue; and must be supported by legislative and regulatory frameworks which assure the negotiation of the rights of minorities and the socially marginalized to active participation on an equal basis with their fellow citizens in all spheres of life;
- is best described as a lifelong learning experience and as a means of empowering people of all ages and circumstances to take control of their own destinies, with the aim of strengthening democratic culture and human rights;
- lifelong learning for democratic citizenship should therefore be supported as a holistic, integrated and multi-faceted endeavour, a long-term initiative which covers all contexts of formal and informal learning;
- the aims and methods of citizenship education should foster active participation in society at all levels, and as such contribute to the effectiveness and quality of education; should favor inter-disciplinary and cross-curricula approaches; should use participative and experimental teaching and learning practices, including mediation and conflict-resolution; should seek to involve learners actively in the organization and process of educational life; and should build close relations with the community and associative life;
- in the implementation educational and youth policies should value new forms of social participation of young people.

History, History Teaching

- participants stressed the importance of new approaches to history teaching for the development of Civil Society, good neighbourliness and mutual understanding
- participants stressed the need for comparative reviews of curricula and in particular textbooks. The experience of bilateral commissions in (inter alia) working out joint guidelines for textbooks could be of relevance. Joint bilateral as well as multilateral commissions between SEE-countries could be supported
- participants highlighted also the importance of new didactic and methodological approaches in pre- and in-service teacher training as well as active learning strategies
- The workshop suggests the coordination of represented persons and institutions at this conference as well as existing ones in the countries of the region who are dedicated to the teaching of history both at the school and university level. We put the premise on initiatives from the region in close cooperation with the existing general European framework, and endorse strongly existing concrete proposals like the Joint History Project. We express our deep conviction that history is at the basis of any attempt at European educational co-operation in Southeastern Europe, and therefore the teaching of history has to be a central point of discussion for any follow-up initiative.

Educational Policies towards Diversity

- to preserve diversity school systems must teach how to deal pro-actively with conflicts on all levels.
- education and learning processes should integrate schools, NGOs, and media; they should reach from the local community to the global community.
- communication literacy and skills should aim at new modes of cooperation, exchange of peoples, and experiences, and should serve innovation.
- documentation and evaluation of projects and programmes to increase mutual empowerment and cost efficiency
- stress the need for grass-root-initiatives.

Participants highly appreciated the joint meeting with the governmental representatives of the Royaumont Process and presented their findings for discussion and support.

Participants recommend increased financial support for the educational sector and synergetic plans for long term oriented sustainable forms of inter-ethnic, regional, national, bilateral, multilateral and European co-operation programmes.

ACTION PLAN - GRAZ '98

Concrete follow-up activities were proposed on three levels (short-term, medium term as well as long-term) by the organizers, participating institutions, and by the participants as a result of the conference workshops. (See also action-oriented proposals in the Recommendations.)

In the collaborative spirit of the conference partnerships between supporting institutions will be actively pursued to facilitate the implementation of the proposals.

Short-term activities:

Task Force

- to be set up and presided by Austria - in close co-operation with the forthcoming Presidencies of the Council of the EU - including the European Commission, the Council of Europe, UNESCO/CEPES, Royaumont Process and Bulgaria as the host of the 99 Sofia conference (see below), also drawing on the expertise of experts, foundations and NGOs
- with a foreseen duration of one year, unless a prolongation proves to be of value
- with the aim of accompanying the process of realization and implementation of follow-up activities up to the conference in Sofia

Follow-up Conference Sofia 1999

- a follow-up conference in Sofia in Oct./Nov. 99, again in co-operation with European and international institutions, in liaison with the Royaumont Process and assisted by several donors and scientific institutions
- this conference could conclude the stocktaking process
- draw conclusions on the work to be carried out between Graz and Sofia (see "Task Force")
- and ensure the implementation of some of the proposed courses of action which should be under way by then

Medium- and long-term activities:

Regional Resource Centre: Support for Networks

- participants recommend an investigation of the feasibility of a small "centre" to be set up in the region which would initially work for 3 years; the Sofia conference could mark the starting point; the centre should aim to provide:
 - service such as documentation and information - access to relevant data concerning ongoing and planned educational activities, donors, support for programmes, experts, literature, media; databank accessible via internet
 - support for co-operation of SEE educators focussing on specific issue areas, above all citizenship education (civics, history, intercultural understanding, vocational qualifications for regional co-operation) - networking the networks
- The task force mentioned above should work on further implementing steps such as investigation of a possible merging of the Resource Centre Project with the South-East European Open College Project (see below), and the respective joint feasibility study to be carried out beginning of 99

Concrete Proposals put forward by:

European Commission:

1. the Commission will contribute to the follow up actions to this conference in order to pave the way for the next phase of work planned for Sofia next year. While Austria will continue to play a central role in steering the work, the Commission will aim to co-operate with Austria together with the partners in Southeast Europe to achieve worthwhile results. The Commission appreciates the commitment of the Bulgarian authorities to build effectively on the results of this conference in the preparation for the Sofia event.
2. the Commission proposes to launch a feasibility study to examine how the Austrian project for a regional resource centre could work alongside the idea of an Open College for Southeast Europe which could support the individual education and training needs and developments in that region and promote higher education co-operation within the region and with other European countries. The South-East European Open College could be the starting point for developing a new type of network of universities, public administrations and professional organisations in the region, and which could deepen relations between Southeast Europe and neighbouring countries. It could possibly take the form of a circulating campus, but it would be foolhardy to second guess the results of this feasibility study, which the Commission hopes could be launched at the beginning of next year. The Commission would also welcome the opportunity of cooperating with other organisations in carrying out this project.
3. the Commission aims to participate alongside other international bodies in the organisation of conferences or seminars during 1999 related to matters discussed in Graz. Such meetings could be of interest to a wide range of countries in Southeast

Europe and could be seen as part of the follow-up to the Graz meeting here and also help to make a contribution to the follow up event in Sofia.

4. the human resource programmes of the EU such as Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci are due to be renewed and revitalised in 2000 by entering a second phase. The Commission is proposing that part of this renewal process should be to create the necessary conditions for co-operation between the programmes and third countries and international organisations, as is, of course, already provided for in the Treaty on European Union. If its proposals meet with a suitably supportive reception by the other institutions, the Commission is hopeful that this step forwards in fostering international co-operation in education and training will provide an appropriate framework for extending the advantages of programme co-operation more widely throughout Europe as well as beyond.

Council of Europe:

School, and out of school education

1. education for democratic citizenship
 - Development of sites of citizenship in Croatia, Bulgaria, Albania, Romania, Moldova
 - Creation of a Balkan network of sites of citizenship
 - Training programme for multipliers "education for democratic citizenship and European studies" in Croatia, Romania (co-operation currently negotiated with DG1A)
2. Balkans School network
 - Development of the network following the first training course which took place in September 1998 in Bulgaria
3. democratic school development
 - continuation of the democratic school development project in Albania, in co-operation with KulturKontakt and AEDP
 - Setting up of a similar project in the "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
4. European studies
 - Regional conference on "European studies for democratic citizenship"
5. Higher Education
 - Joint projects with UNESCO and the World Bank to build a capacity in education in Bosnia and Herzegovina:
 - Consultative Council for higher education
 - Central European university branch campus in Sarajevo
 - Joint project under discussion with Italy to build up institutional and policy-making capacity in Albania
 - Ongoing advisory activities in Bulgaria, Croatia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
 - European workshop on language regulation in HE (to be held possibly in Albania)

European Training Foundation:

As part of its Phare Multi-Country Programme for Distance Education, the European Training Foundation on behalf of the European Commission and in co-operation with key stakeholders will design projects for Bosnia Herzegovina and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia which will

- a) accommodate the outputs of the current Phare Multi-Country Programme for Distance Education and
- b) contribute to the further development of the education and training systems of the countries concerned.

In addition the European Training Foundation is developing a project on regional co-operation in vocational education and training which will include mainly Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and is aimed at developing cultural exchanges and mutual understanding between the different interested parties of the vocational education and training systems in the region.

Furthermore the Foundation's network of national observatories will constitute a focus for co-operation in Southeast Europe and contribute to further initiatives on vocational education and training in the region.

UNESCO:

Higher Education

1. Consolidation of ongoing CEPES Clearing House activities regarding information on higher education, e.g. development of web services, initiation of publications' series;
2. Development of Network of Chairs on South East European Studies in Romania, Moldova, Turkey, and of existing Chairs on Peace, Human Rights and Democracy in Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine;
3. Support to NGOs: Organisation of 8th Congress of the Association of South East European Studies; annual meeting of Black Sea University Network, of the AIMOS Network;
4. Continuation of Joint project with the Council of Europe on capacity building in higher education in Bosnia-Herzegovina
5. Workshop to disseminate good practice in gender studies in higher education
6. Ongoing support to Romanian higher education reform and further advisory services to Moldova in Science system reform

Civic Education/UNESCO Associated Schools Network

1. Implementation of Civic Education project in Albania with Italian government support;
2. Continuation of project on Peace and Human Rights Education for Croatian primary schools;

3. Continuation of project on curriculum and text book revision in Bosnia Herzegovina;
4. Extension of SEMEP Project (South East Mediterranean Sea Project) to secondary schools in the Black Sea Region

Participants of the Conference:

Vocational Education and Training

- Networking the projects in VET in the field of tourism developed in bilateral or multilateral bases
- Networking of national observatories in South-East Europe in order to contribute to further development of VET in the region

Higher Education Cooperation

- Human Rights and Peace Education
- There is a growing need for high quality offers of education and training in the field of human rights and democracy. The establishment of a European Training Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Graz is supposed. The starting point is a two year Joint European Project (TEMPUS) taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- A Balkan Inter-university Network for Peace Education should be created.

European Studies

- Research on Europe and European issues is underdeveloped hence funding should be sought from relevant agencies and organisations to support a programme of research particularly to enhance and accelerate European integration.
- Closer co-operation in research by establishing joint units.
- Special departments for training students in the languages and cultures of the neighbouring countries.

Support for Universities in Southeast Europe

- Action should be taken to encourage the private sector to continue and to increase funding to support students in higher education. Such efforts require coordination at a national and a regional level.
- One-day meetings of different organizations active in the region will be organized in Sarajewo, Tirana and Skopje to combine efforts.
- Funding should be provided for partners in the scientific community in countries not yet eligible to participate in existing programmes (such as TEMPUS)

- A permanent observatory to monitor the conditions of autonomy under which universities operate should be established as proposed by the University of Bologna and adopted by the European Rectors' Conference Board. Funding is still to be found.
- CEEPUS proposes a thematic multidisciplinary network comprising universities from the CEEPUS countries and Silent Partners from both South East Europe and interested EU countries under the umbrella of the Central CEEPUS Office. The first theme to be developed will be the "Self vs. the Other". Mobility within the network will add an additional dimension of personal experience. The proposed network shall run for 2 years. Work in progress may be presented at the planned Sofia conference in Autumn 1999. (Pending approval by the Joint Committee of Ministers). It was noted that the Austrian Ministry of Science and Transport has offered 200 additional scholarship months to promote student and staff mobility between Austria and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Additional funding shall be sought.
- Balkan universities and other European universities should pay increased attention to their role for the society. They should develop summer schools, joint appointments of staff, and joint degree programmes and should be funded and promoted. Drawing on recent experiences of NGOs and involving the public and private sectors.

Inventory of NGOs

- An inventory of locally organized NGOs active at national and transnational level in the region, especially in higher education and access for these NGOs to already existing NGOs at European level

Support for Students and Student Organisations

- Support should be made available to students' organisations to help establish links throughout Europe; in particular funding should be sought to cover the travel costs and fees to allow students to participate in meetings and seminars, and to develop a better telecommunications infrastructure. (Initial funding has been offered by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science. Additional funding is required to deliver on this project.)

Comparative Studies of Conflict

- Funding should be sought to encourage comparative studies of conflict within and between European nation states. Links should be established with the United Nations INCORE project at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland.

Internet

- CEEPUS is organising a contest within the framework of the CEEPUS Ministers' Prize to select the best proposals for presenting and linking information relevant

to the region and concerning Higher Education. If possible, finalists may be presented at the planned Sofia conference in fall 1999. (Pending approval by the Joint Committee of Ministers).

- There is an urgent need to connect universities in South East Europe to the Internet with an appropriate band-width to sustain good communications. A feasibility study should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity to determine the most cost effective means of delivering a high quality service, considering a satellite solution.
- Measures should be taken to enhance the development of European based and oriented material sensitive to the cultural traditions of European societies.

Education for Democratic Citizenship:

Increase networking, exchanges and cooperation by:

- setting up small project groups composed of two experts of SEE and one Western expert to develop materials and monitor their use in schools in the three countries.
- pairing foreign and local experts as a means for local empowerment
- exchange materials on active learning methods
- set up large scale and long term projects with potential for systemic democratic changes
- include learning for democratic citizenship as a criteria for the monitoring of fulfillment of international legal commitments (e.g. as part of the national reports presenting the implementation of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the protection of national minorities).

POLICY PAPERS

STABILITY PACT Working Table I

Contribution of the European Commission in the field of Education and Training Non-Paper

Education and training play a pivotal role in bringing peace, stability and economic development to the region of South-East Europe. Cooperation in education and training can strengthen civil society and democratic structures, contribute to the relaunching of the economy and promote cooperation across national and ethnic boundaries. On the long term, education and training appear as the key to a sustainable regional development, full integration into European structures and competitiveness in the world economy.

The European Commission proposed on May 26, 1999, the creation of a **Stabilisation and Association Process** for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Albania, as well as the wider region of South-East Europe. Increased assistance for democratisation, civil society, education and institution-building was identified as one of the main elements of this process.

At their meeting in **Budapest** in June 1999, a **joint declaration** of the participating European Ministers of Education and of the European Commission **on the Kosovo conflict** emphasized the importance of education programmes for the reconstruction of South-East Europe.

In line with the objectives of the Stabilisation and Association Process and its Budapest Declaration, **the European Commission welcomes the decision** taken at the Geneva Meeting of the Working Table I of the Stability Pact **to entrust an enhanced Graz process task force with the development of a coherent strategy for educational cooperation with South-East Europe.**

The Commission recalls the support it has given to Graz process since its inception, including, most recently, the financing of a **feasibility study on the establishment of a South-East European Educational Cooperation Centre** comprising an open college and a resource centre.

The European Commission will likewise support the enhanced Graz process responsible for coordinating the priority area "education" in the Stability Pact framework through

a determined and flexible use of its **existing programme instruments** (see below). It will actively participate in the Task Force where it is represented by both the **Directorate-General for Education and Culture** and the **DG for External Relations**. Similarly, the **European Training Foundation**, as an agency of the European Union, is also a member of the Graz Process Task Force, and is orienting its own programmes increasingly towards support to human resource development in South-East Europe.

Specific Instruments

A. Tempus

The objective of the TEMPUS Programme is to assist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the New Independent States (NIS) and Mongolia in the **reform of higher education**. Since 1990, more than 2.600 cooperation projects were implemented in which more than 7000 higher education institutions, 120.000 teaching staff and 37.000 students from both the EU and the partner countries participated.

The third phase of the TEMPUS programme will commence in the year 2000 covering the NIS, Mongolia, as well as **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Croatia** following the conclusions of the EU General Affairs Council of June 21-22, 1999.

All candidate countries for accession to the EU, including **Slovenia, Hungary, Romania** and **Bulgaria**, are no longer directly eligible for financial support as they fully participate in the EU programmes SOCRATES and LEONARDO DA VINCI. Institutions from these countries can, however, participate on a non-funding basis.

The TEMPUS Programme finances cooperation projects between universities of the EU and the partner countries for a duration of 2-3 years focusing on **university management, curriculum development, institution building, and networking**. **Student mobility projects** and **individual mobility grants** are also funded.

TEMPUS combines a bottom-up with a top-down approach: Projects are selected on the basis of joint **proposals** received from the universities according to general **priorities** defined on a country-by-country basis jointly by the Commission and the competent authorities in the partner countries.

TEMPUS appears because of its structure and objectives as a **privileged instrument for the achievement of the objectives of the Stability Pact:**

- The new TEMPUS programme emphasizes the **institution building role of higher education institutions** in line with the priorities identified by the Graz process. Assistance in the development of institutional and administrative structures is aimed in particular at the **promotion of democracy and the rule of law**. Short training courses are developed and delivered, targeting staff of public authorities at all levels, social partners, professional associations, media and media organisations, as well as industries.
- The Joint European Projects and the **networking** projects strengthen **regional cooperation** between the countries concerned, as recognised in their national pri-

orities. The multilateral partnership approach facilitates **mutual understanding** and the **establishment of new links** between institutions in the participating countries. An example is Bosnia and Herzegovina where the universities from the different communities participate jointly in the same projects.

- The exchange of students and staff and the organisation of workshops, conferences and seminars do not only play a catalyst role in re-establishing **direct people-to-people links across national and ethnic boundaries**. They lay the foundation for the structural ability of higher education institutions to cooperate. The reform of curricula, the development of credit transfer systems, the strengthening of quality assurance systems in the framework of Joint European Projects strengthen the overall **compatibility and coherence of the higher education sector**.
- The cooperation projects **draw upon the experience of the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe** in higher education reform and institution building. The TEMPUS guidelines strongly encourage the participation of experts from these countries in all projects, especially in the networking projects.
- The direct cooperation with institutions from the EU assists South-East Europe to remain integrated into European higher education, develop an education system in line with the **highest standards of quality**, and to take part in developments towards a common **European education area**. TEMPUS, furthermore, offers cooperation opportunities not only with the EU countries but also with the **Countries belonging to the G24 Group** which (like the candidate countries for membership in the EU) can participate without EU funding.
- Last but not least, the financial budget of the TEMPUS programme (1995-99 TEMPUS budget for Romania, Bulgaria, Bosnia, FYROM and Albania: more than 100 million Euro) allows **to reach a critical mass of higher education institutions**, students and academic staff in the region and, thus, to have a real impact on higher education reform as a pillar for the long-term democratisation and economic stabilisation of South-East Europe.

The European Commission will ensure **maximum synergy** with the enhanced Graz process by actively **promoting project applications in the priority areas** defined by the Stability Pact. Due consideration will be given to these priority areas when deciding on the **selection of projects or individual mobility applications** and when establishing the **working programmes of the National TEMPUS Offices**. The European Commission will, furthermore, support the inclusion of additional South-East European countries in the TEMPUS programme as soon as political and legal conditions will allow so, in this way covering the entire region.

B. European Training Foundation

Since its creation in 1995, the European Training Foundation (ETF) in Turin is **supporting vocational education and training reform** in Central and Eastern Europe, the New Independent States and Mongolia, and, since 1998, also in the Mediterranean partner countries.

A key action of the Foundation is to gather and assess structured information on vocational training and its links with the labour market through its **network of National Observatories**, which covers, among other states, the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe preparing for membership of the European Union as well as Albania, FYROM and – as of December 1999 – Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on **in-depth studies of the vocational education and training and labour market systems** of the countries of the Stability Pact, ETF publishes **short analytical country reports** focusing on the needs and priorities for the development of the respective systems.

The European Training Foundation has been directly responsible for implementing **several VET reform projects financed under the PHARE Programme** of the European Union. These include projects aimed at the reform of VET in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia and FYROM, as well as multi-country projects on distance education and higher education. In addition, and through its own budget, the Foundation has supported a number of VET-labour market reform projects in the Stability Pact countries, such as management training for SME development, VET projects for re-integration of refugees, and projects which aim at promoting democratisation in the region through enhancing the participation of civil society in VET.

Based on its knowledge and experience in the region and in line with the underlying principles of the Stability Pact, the Foundation has prepared an **outline of proposals for the reconstruction of the human resource development in South East Europe**. These proposals give particular emphasis on the role which human resource development can play in the field of democratisation and economic development. The approach adopted by the Foundation in its proposals stresses the regional dimension to the reconstruction process through multi-country networks and staff development. The Foundation also underlines the importance of transferring good practice especially from neighbouring accession and EU countries to support and accelerate the reform process.

Particular emphasis is given by ETF to supporting **co-operation among donors** in the field of VET. Drawing on its expertise from the implementation of reform projects and information gathered through stocktaking missions, studies and reports the Foundation has organised donor cooperation workshops in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina. A further workshop is planned for FYROM, 6-7 December 1999. ETF has also assigned one member of staff to the task force in Pristina with the objective of drawing up an integrated VET reform strategy for Kosovo.

At an institutional level, the European Training Foundation is, in conformity with guidelines from the Member States and the European Commission, prepared to continue to provide **support to the institutional framework of the Stability Pact process**. Under the Democracy Table, the Foundation will continue to play an active role in the Task Force set up under the Graz Process. Under the Economic Reconstruction Table, the Foundation could assist in the co-ordination of actions in the field of human resource development.

Community Programmes

A. Youth for Europe and European Voluntary Service

Non-formal education for young people between 15 and 25 has been supported by the **YOUTH FOR EUROPE** (YfE) and the **EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE** (EVS) programmes which cover youth activities outside education or training institutions. These two programmes contribute to the **democratisation of civil society** by encouraging the development of youth associative life and by strengthening the role of youth associations. Programme activities aim at the promotion of **intercultural learning**, the **raising of awareness for equal opportunities** for women and men, as well as the **fight against any form of exclusion, racism or xenophobia**. Through direct participation in programme activities, Youth for Europe and the EVS enable young people to develop their personal skills and to become **active citizens** in their local community.

Youth for Europe and EVS have supported youth activities with youth associations from member countries of the Stability Pact since 1995. Individuals and institutions from **Albania, FYROM, and Bosnia and Herzegovina** are eligible in both programmes. Some youths from **Croatia** and **Serbia** have likewise taken part in youth exchanges on an individual basis in activities focusing on conflict resolution and mediation. A first training course of youth workers from **Kosovo** is scheduled for the beginning of year 2000 in Albania. The European Youth Forum, platform of EU national youth councils and international associations supported by the Commission, is currently developing a long term action plan to establish a **network of youth organisations** covering the entire region.

B. SOCRATES AND LEONARDO

The EU programmes **SOCRATES** (education) and **LEONARDO DA VINCI** (training) are designed to promote a **Europe of knowledge**, to create an open and dynamic **European education area**, and to build up the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for **active citizenship** and **employability**. Activities include the promotion of the **mobility** of students, pupils, teachers and trainers at all levels, **joint projects** on curriculum development, or the **networking** of institutions for education and training.

In the framework of the pre-accession strategy, **Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary** and **Slovenia** are like all of the candidate countries fully participating in the SOCRATES, LEONARDO DA VINCI and YOUTH programmes. A **new programme generation** of these programmes will cover the period 2000-2006.

SOUTH EAST EUROPE REGION

Some examples of Tempus projects

ALBANIA

Curriculum development in public administration and financial management and a training programme for civil servants (AC_JEP-14356-99)

This project, due to start by the end of 1999, responds to the needs of the county by strengthening the capacities of two Albanian universities through the improvement of curriculum in Public Administration and financial management and by establishing a training programme aimed at improving the qualification of public employees in coping with the multiple aspects of the transition reform processes.

To develop and implement procedures and criteria of accreditation and evaluation and to train university and Agency staff in their use (UM_JEP-14052-99)

This project will contribute to the establishment of a national quality assurance system for the higher education institutions in Albania. This project will be implemented in parallel to the measures that the government has taken in the new law for Higher Education (1999) which aims to establish an effective system of accreditation and evaluation in Albanian higher education. The project will begin by the end of 1999.

To establish a postgraduate inter-university and multidisciplinary programme in European Studies at Tirana, ShkodrO and Elbasan (AC_JEP-13221-98)

This project is considered important for Albanian institutions in transition. It should have a strong impact in the process of European integration, inter-university co-operation, in the creation of new structures and new curriculum in higher education.

The project involves a very committed network of EU universities who have previous Tempus experience in Albania. This project is running until March 2001.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Project in Human Rights (JEP-13257-98)

In view of the importance of human rights given in the Dayton Peace Agreement, this project is aiming at reaching a common concept of human rights education in all Bosnian universities.

Although human rights is being taught to a certain extent as part of some other subjects, mainly public law, there were at present no systematic courses on human rights. Curriculum Development in Human Rights, in line with the EU standards, at undergraduate and postgraduate level is the main objective of this project. Different seminars are being organised to discuss about Human Rights and Bosnian teaching staff is being retrained in the subject . In addition, Bosnian students will follow courses at the EU partners.

The project is co-ordinated by the Human Rights Centre in Sarajevo.

They have a strong consortium with good EU partners who are experienced in the field and who know the country (ex. World University Service Graz, Danish Centre for Human

Rights, University of Brussels, Lund, Utrecht, Graz, Ulster, Barcelona, Padova). The project has been running for one year and will last until March 2001.

Regional Pilot Project in preparing the universities for academic leadership in International Building (JEP-14263-99)

This project will start by the end of 1999 and will last for two years. It is a regional project with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Universities are aware of their important role and task in responding to the changing needs of the economy and employment in their region. One of the concrete outcomes of this project will be the development of a joint methodology for all the universities to develop curricula in co-operation with local authorities, economic actors, professional associations, etc. A paper in Methodology of University dialogue with the Environment in relation to the assessment of the academic needs and curricula development will be produced.

Courses on EU policies (Agriculture, Economics and Finance, Community Law and Citizenship, Education: civil participation and peace processes and Reconstructing society) will be developed within this project.

In addition, several actions will be taken to involve a number of academics in Thematic Networks, which are created under Socrates. A Thematic Network Congress will be organised in BiH on "The Role of Universities in Transforming Environments: experiences and models".

Project for developing a new study program for training future managers of SMEs (JEP-14150)

This project will start by the end of 1999 and will last for two years.

Within the framework of this project, new courses and teaching material for undergraduate studies in the area of management of small and medium sized companies will be developed, in the faculty of economics of the University of Sarajevo and Banja Luka.

BULGARIA

Projects in the field of Medicine (JEP-13385-98 and JEP-13560-98)

The objective is to restructure post graduate medical studies including teaching methods and curricula so as to match the EU standards. This project follows a previous one, which dealt with the undergraduate study programmes. Following completion of the project the Medical University of Sofia will provide a very similar training for future medical doctors to the one provided in the EU. A second project (13560) is looking at the continuous training of nurses and the establishment of a relevant system to do so.

Training of local administrators in European Integration (IB_JEP-13070-98)

This project has started training 100 administrators from the main local authorities of the country i.e. District of Sofia (comprising 26 municipalities), Plovdiv and Varna, in the field of European affairs including EU programme and project management. Training is organised by the Centre of European Studies based in Sofia with the support of EU partners and local/national NGOs for Municipalities.

Project in the field of Public administration (JEP-12012-97)

This project has set up one of the very first new public administration study programmes in Bulgaria, the new programme at MA level is now up and running for the first year at the university of Sofia.

Project in the field of regional and urban planning (JEP-12540-97)

A four year modular study programme leading to a BSc is currently being developed at the University of Architecture in Sofia, when completed this will be the first degree in this new and extremely important field in the country. Previously this education simply did not exist in the country.

FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Regional projects in the field of European Studies

(AC_JEP-13038-97 and AC_JEP-14061-99)

The first project, of one year duration, aims to retrain young staff from the Faculties of Law and Economics of the University of Skopje (807) and the Universities of Tirana and Shkodrî (Albania). The project will be completed by March 2000.

The project will be followed up by another JEP (AC_JEP-14061-99), co-ordinated by the same institution, but where activities will also be extended to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The follow-up project aims to restructure the curricula in Albania, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the areas of EU Institutions, Law, History and Human Rights.

Setting up of a new department, relevant study and training programmes in the field of translation and interpretation (JEP-12261-97).

This project is currently running and addresses a direct need for training in translation and interpreting in the country and a more general need for high quality professionals in areas of multilingual communication.

Teacher training in Macedonian and minority languages (AC_JEP-13375-98)

This project has identified the need to retrain teachers of Macedonian and minority languages (particularly Albanian) and to create new curricula for the training of pre-school and primary school teachers.

The project is particularly important for the political stability in the country (especially for good relations between the local populations). Furthermore it should have a strong and long-term influence for teacher training in the faculties and education of pupils in pre-schools and primary schools.

The project will run until March 2001.

Establishment of a postgraduate program in European Integration at the Faculty of Economics targeted at civil servants (AC_JEP-14066-99)

This project, due to begin before the end of 1999, intends to introduce and develop a training programme in European integration for civil servants. The project will re-structure European Integration specialisation in the Faculty's International Economic Masters programme, through the revision of curriculum and training of academic staff for the delivery of these programmes to civil servants and postgraduate students.

The Ministry of Development, Ministry of Economics, Ministry of Education, Economic Chamber and the National Bank support the project.

ROMANIA

Project in the field of child protection (JEP-13428-98)

Since 1997, Romania has a new law on child protection and professionals need to be retrained. In addition, the heritage of the poor services for children and their family in communist times needs to be reviewed.

This project is aiming at the training of experts in the field of childcare in family and society for improving the child protection policy. A centre of continuing education will be created for providing interdisciplinary courses based on EU standards and legislation. The centre will be located at the West University of Timisoara, Faculty of Sociology and Psychology.

The results of the conference "Today's children are tomorrow parents" is the basis for the development of the new study program.

The target group consists of members of NGOs, Hospitals, UNICEF in Romania.

SLOVENIA

Project in entrepreneurship education (JEP-12320-97)

Since the important development of SMEs within the Slovenian economy, there was a strong demand for entrepreneurship education, in order to train young people with the necessary skills for the market economy. A College of Entrepreneurship, which is a private, non-profit higher education institution, has been established in Ljubljana through Tempus and started its activities in 1996. The objective of this project is to develop practically oriented courses for SMEs with the goal of facilitating technology transfer and the penetration of Slovenian SMEs to the European markets. In addition, the existing curricula will be improved based on introducing best European practice.

The project is running and will last until March 2001.

ANNEXES

1. TEMPUS

- List of TEMPUS projects in the countries of the Stability Pact - Project Selection 1999
- List of running projects with Albania, FYROM and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and regional projects (1997-2000)
- TEMPUS Priorities for Albania, FYROM and Bosnia and Herzegovina (2000-2002)

2. Institution Building

3. European Training Foundation

- Overview of ETF activities in the Balkans
- ETF Concept Paper on the role of VET in the socio-economic reconstruction of South-Eastern Europe

COUNCIL OF EUROPE POLICY ON EDUCATION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

*Background Paper for the Conference,
Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy,
Sofia, 12 - 14 November 1999*

INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe is an inter-governmental organisation founded in 1949 to promote the unity of Europeans on the basis of the respect for human rights, the rule of law and pluralist democracy - fundamental conditions for peace and stability in our continent. 41 European countries are now members of the Organisation, including all the countries of the South East Europe region except Bosnia and Herzegovina (however, as a signatory of the Cultural Convention the country participates fully in all activities in the fields of education and culture, and procedures for accession as a full member state are now reaching their final phase) and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Over the past 50 years, the Council of Europe has developed an important corpus of standards covering all aspects of the functioning of democratic society. In the field of education and cultural co-operation the European Cultural Convention has provided a framework for common action since it was officially opened for signing on 19 December 1954. This instrument has constantly expanded and developed, and forty-seven states are now signatory to the Convention.

The original purpose of the European Cultural Convention - of using cultural and educational co-operation as a means of building bridges between countries which had recently been at war, as well as between the two halves of a divided cold-war Europe - has provided a wealth of experience which is directly applicable in South East Europe today. Intensive programmes of co-operation covering education, culture, cultural heritage, sport and youth now underpin the response of the organisation to the new challenges presented in the region as a result of recent conflicts.

The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, which aims at reconciliation, reconstruction and conflict prevention, raises expectations with governments and populations in the region for speedy economic development and accelerated integration into the European co-operation structures. Yet there can be neither stability nor sustainable economic development unless some basic pre-conditions are met. These include the rule of law and the establishment of pluralist democratic institutions, but also the development of a well functioning civil society, free media and an education system centered around common core values, where the languages, history and culture of others - and of the European culture common to all - are taught and respected.

It is in establishing these pre-conditions for future sustainable development, through project work which involves both governmental and non-governmental partners, that a

specific contribution can be made by the Council of Europe to the development of democratic, peaceful and open societies. The Council of Europe will continue to play a major role in the development of modern educational and cultural systems, as its mission in promoting human rights, the rule of law and pluralist democracy makes it a leading organisation in these fields.

A NEW APPROACH TO EDUCATION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

The post-conflict challenges in South East Europe are on a scale which far exceeds anything faced in the past fifty years and requires a response which, whilst being built upon the fundamental principles and values embodied by the organisation, goes beyond the traditional activities of the Council of Europe. The more difficult challenges - and the ones where the Council of Europe has an important role to play - are in the long-term process of reconciliation between individuals and communities, and in ensuring that conditions are created whereby further conflicts are managed and resolved through non-violent means.

The Council of Europe has a potential role to play in coordination, specific expertise to draw upon in terms of technical assistance, and considerable experience in mediating complex questions of educational and cultural rights. Policy guidance at all levels of education systems, drawing upon experience and ideas developed throughout the continent, are the major strengths which the Organisation has to offer. The fundamental principles which are both promoted and safeguarded by the Council of Europe should be asserted as the non-negotiable basic building blocks for sustainable post-conflict educational development.

The Council of Europe's education programme is founded on the principles of:

- the autonomy of the individual;
- concern for the individual, social, cultural, economic and political dimensions of citizenship;
- the development of education in a democratic context, which is thereby encouraged and reinforced.

Up until now, some education activities have been specifically located in countries - in the typical form of bilateral projects. Other work has focussed upon multi-lateral co-operation. The challenges of defining a specific regional approach to South Eastern Europe are ongoing. It is imperative to think differently about what kind of attention should be given to the whole region - and indeed to clarify what countries should be included within this region. It is also important to avoid the creation of a regional concept that is regarded by local populations as pejorative and stigmatising, and to consider the problems of constructing conceptual references with which the peoples in the region do not identify. Most importantly, the identity of "South Eastern Europe" must be affirmed as part of a common Europe, and to this extent all European countries are concerned by future initiatives.

The Council of Europe operates in partnership with international governmental and non-governmental organisations active in the region. A particular role will therefore be played by the organisation within the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern

Europe, and in particular within the Task Force of the enhanced Graz Process. The workshops of the Sofia Conference all include aspects of education policy and practice where the experience and political profile of the Council of Europe can make an effective contribution. The following thematic areas are of particular interest:

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

In order to uphold and reinforce human rights and the rule of law, individuals must exercise the rights and responsibilities of democratic, participative citizenship. The nature of democracy and the rights of the citizen are inextricably linked to the context in which they develop. Since it was set up in 1997, the Council of Europe's "Education for Democratic Citizenship" Project has sought to respond to the pressing need, voiced both by member states and citizens, to reassess the meaning of participative democracy and the status of the citizen. Factors to be taken into account include globalisation, European consolidation, technological change and, particularly in the case of countries of South East Europe, ethnic relations and conflict.

It has become increasingly evident that individual citizens have a vital role to play in achieving democratic stability and in combating all forms of extremism. The EDC Project seeks to find out how individuals can be inspired to take up this challenge and how they can be empowered in the context of rapidly evolving political and societal structures. Three core questions have been addressed: what values and skills will be required by twenty-first century citizens in Europe, how can they be acquired, and how can they be transmitted to others.

HISTORY

The study of history is one of the Council of Europe's longest-standing areas of interest, and vast experience has been accrued which is now of relevance in the countries of the region. The violent break-up of former-Yugoslavia further demonstrates that without an awareness of the historical forces that have divided Europe for most of the century, citizens are more vulnerable to manipulation. History can be used as a prime instrument to reinforce nationalism and ethnic division, yet it also has the positive potential to encourage mutual respect and understanding.

Both bilateral and multi-lateral projects of the Council of Europe focus upon the positive potential of history, and upon the balance between local, regional, national, European and world history in school curricula. Within a current project on Twentieth Century history teaching, guidelines are being drawn up which aim to lay the foundations for a European approach to history teaching which fully respects the diversity of peoples and cultures.

The particular challenges of learning and teaching history in the complex, post-conflict environments of South East Europe can provide examples of how to deal with controversial and sensitive questions. Policy developments in the region need to be guided and enriched by discussion of relevant experience in other European countries. Two major challenges lie ahead: the first is to avoid materials being produced which could

incite ethnic hatred and sow the seeds for renewed conflict. The second is to encourage history teaching which recognises and respects diverse perspectives, and enables pupils to "step into the shoes of the other".

MODERN LANGUAGES

The teaching and learning of modern languages has also been a major preoccupation of the Council of Europe from the launch of its work in education co-operation. In recent years, common standard setting instruments have been developed in Strasbourg which are influential in language policy formulation throughout Europe, and seminars have been organised for their application in curriculum development in a number of countries in South East Europe. Language policy activities highlight the importance of ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to learn languages, and the need to develop suitable programmes. Particular attention is being paid to the promotion of more diversified and improved language learning so that citizens can respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by an increasingly interactive Europe.

Activities place increasing emphasis upon developing the necessary language and intercultural skills for living together in multicultural democratic societies. This philosophy, applicable throughout the continent, is of particular relevance to South East Europe where the rich linguistic and cultural diversity needs to be respected as a source of mutual enrichment, rather than a possible barrier to communication, or as a source of conflict. Language learning plays an increasingly important role in developing the competences required for democratic citizenship. The links between languages, citizenship and identities are being developed in the context of the evolution of contemporary society. Language policy activities in South East Europe can act as a catalyst for reflection and action with regard to the challenges of integration and stability in multilingual and multicultural societies.

HIGHER EDUCATION

In the field of higher education, the Council of Europe plays a role in standard setting, policy advice and concrete project development.

Work on recognition issues has been pursued in close co-operation with UNESCO, and this joint effort has resulted in the development of a new framework for issues of academic recognition - firstly with the setting-up in 1994 of the European Network of National Information Centres on Academic Recognition and Mobility (the ENIC network), and more recently with the adoption of the Lisboa Recognition Convention in 1997. Through the ENIC network and the implementation of the Lisboa Recognition Convention the Council of Europe will continue to play a major role in the complex issues of recognition and accreditation of qualifications. The potential exists for important beneficial effects of regional co-operation in this area, whereas lack of attention to these "technical" matters could result in negative political outcomes.

In recent years the Council of Europe has played a major advisory role in the reform of Central and Eastern European higher education systems, notably through its

Legislative Reform Programme. This programme draws on the services of experienced experts, and responds to requests for advice on the formulation of legislation and policy development. Legal and policy expertise with regard to the reform and (re)construction of modern future-oriented higher education systems in the region will continue to be a major priority to which the organisation is equipped to respond.

Ongoing projects in higher education, such as that on European Studies for Democratic Citizenship, will also be used to facilitate the introduction of democratic values in South Eastern Europe. A particular aspect of this work focuses upon universities as sites of citizenship, considering participation in all aspects of institutional life, including decision-making processes, and examining the role of universities in the wider society.

Inter-institutional co-operation, and in particular the development of regional networks in South Eastern Europe, are also being encouraged in co-operation with partner organisations. These networks would be concrete initiatives to improve exchanges and the quality of higher education, but would also serve as important confidence building measures.

YOUTH

While all of the activities of the Council of Europe recognise the importance of developing policy and education systems to build tomorrow's society, the youth sector has a key responsibility to engage young people, whether organised collectively or as individuals, in reconstructing their own societies. The organisation's youth activities are value oriented and concentrate upon human resource development through nonformal education, enabling young people to become responsible organisers of both their own lives and of civil society.

The sector has been particularly quick to respond to challenges in South East Europe. An invitation of the European Youth Foundation to non governmental organisations to present projects in the Kosovo region has resulted in twenty projects which are now running and which will take part in a first evaluation in December 1999. A concrete Action Plan for Southeast Europe in the youth sector has also been developed, and this is intended to start off a process of medium term regional development in South East Europe.

EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION

The Role of Vocational Education and Training in the Socio-economic Reconstruction of South-Eastern Europe

The contribution of education and training has been crucial to the development of market economies and the emergence of civil societies in Central and Eastern Europe over the past ten years. If the aims of economic reconstruction and the development of civil society as set out in the Peace and Stability Pact are to be met, education and training must be fully integrated into the reconstruction process for South-Eastern Europe.

The experience of the Foundation in reconstructing education and training systems has led to the following main conclusions:

- The development of human resource capacities is a long-term process that requires a long-term commitment by partner countries and donors, and a long term development strategy by the partner country government;
- Reform must target the whole system of education and training, from primary school to higher education, and the system's links with the labour market;
- The reform process must be **tackled** from two sides. Top down measures to build institutional frameworks and capacity. Bottom up measures to involve and empower local actors, such as teachers, school staff, communities, social partners etc.;
- A regional perspective to the reconstruction process is critical if economic and social links between the countries in the region are to be restored, and the process of full integration into EU to be achieved. Education and training can be instrumental in creating the pre-conditions for economic and social co-operation, mobility of labour and eventual participation of the region in the EU education area.

Since the end of the military conflict in Kosovo, the Foundation has sought to raise awareness among key players of the importance of human resource development in the reconstruction process. In addition, the Foundation has taken steps to enhance its own understanding of the needs of the region, and in particular of countries and territories in the region which had not been eligible for support in the past. Stocktaking missions have been carried out in Kosovo and Croatia. The Foundation has also taken advantage of opportunities for discussion with the Advisory Forum to explore priorities and possible actions in the region. On the basis of these steps and discussions, the Foundation has put forward a number of outline proposals for international donor support for the overall reform of the vocational education and training systems in the countries of South Eastern Europe for the period 2000 onwards. In the context of these overall reform proposals, the Foundation has also elaborated its own proposals for Work Programme 2000. This paper outlines the main content of the proposals for overall reform.

Immediate objectives for education and training development in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia

Those countries most directly affected by recent conflicts have special needs that have to be addressed urgently, particularly in regard to the building of civil societies and kick-starting economic recovery. Particular use has been made of the Foundation's experience in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and FYROM in defining these proposals. It is, however, necessary that even short-term actions should support also the long-term education and training development needs of the countries. In these circumstances the Foundation proposes short-term aims:

- Institution building for ministries and VET institutions;
- Staff development for teacher, trainers and school managers;
- To stimulate local economies and the development of small enterprises;
- To enhance structured information base on education and training reform needs and provide a framework for donor co-operation;
- To provide basic facilities and equipment for schools damaged in the conflict;
- Special measure to re-integrate refugees and demobilised soldiers in the labour market.

To meet these objectives, the Foundation proposes:

- Short trainer training courses to introduce participatory teaching methodologies;
- Short courses in core occupational skills development exploiting new teaching methodologies and engendering democratic principles in the learning environment;
- Short workshops for local employers, chambers of commerce, social partners, and civic leaders on issues relating to the development of democratic structures, e.g. measures for increasing tolerance, equity of access to training, transparency in recruitment policies, equity within the workplace;
- Targeted measures to support the growth of new or existing small trades and enterprises, including short courses in entrepreneurial skills linked to micro credit lines for investment and consultancy;
- Staff development and study visits for key players to provide exposure to examples of good practice and build links both within the region and with other CEEC and EU Member States. This initiative is particularly useful in building up links among key players in the region;
- Extensive training and labour market needs analysis at sub-national level within the countries of the region to build up the structured information base to assess and monitor needs and development at a local level;
- Programme of donor workshops in the field of HRD in the countries of the region;

- Damage assessment and procurement of new facilities and equipment for HRD institutions in the regions directly effected by the recent conflicts;
- Training courses for demobilised soldiers for skill development and insertion in labour market.

Long term VET reform programme for the countries of South Eastern Europe

The long-term objectives outlined in the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe are to create lasting conditions for democracy, a market economy and regional co-operation. The Foundation's experience in supporting the accession process for candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe has been particularly valuable in identifying appropriate programme proposals to reach these goals. In particular, the Foundation has called upon its experience of measures to enhance institutional capacity and to increase the employability and mobility of the workforce in Central and Eastern Europe. The key points of the education and training reform programme are outlined below:

- Institution building and staff development at central and regional levels for ministry officials, vocational training institutions, school managers and social partners. The social partners need to be involved in the development of new curricula and in the setting of national standards in order to decrease the gap between the current skills-base and the needs of a market economy.
- Development of national conceptual frameworks and development plans for vocational training, setting out short, medium and long-term objectives and a strategy for their achievement. Facilitation should include making available examples of best practice from within the region (Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania) and encouraging a consistency in approach amongst the countries of the South Eastern Europe.
- Development of a legal framework within which initial and continuing VET can operate effectively; again regional consistency should be encouraged.
- Development of national continuing vocational training systems, including management training to combat the endemic unemployment problem, and improve conditions for disadvantaged groups including ethnic minorities and war victims.
- Development of standards and curricula in line with national economic development programmes and enhanced teacher training provision including learner-centred methodologies. HRD cannot be dealt with in isolation, but must be linked with and respond to developments in the labour market.
- Development of civil society through school-community partnerships involving the social partners, through the introduction of teaching and learning methodologies conducive to the development of independent thought, through the introduction of civil society issues to the curriculum and through the facilitation of inter-cultural communications amongst key civic leaders.
- Extending the Foundation's network of National Observatories to all the countries in the region. The Observatories have a brief to gather and disseminate data on

the labour market and the activities of training providers in meeting labour market needs and to influence government policies in the field of education and training and the labour market. Observatories have recently been established in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and one is planned for Croatia. Consideration should be given to setting-up Observatories in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

- Co-ordination of donor interventions to ensure the greatest synergy among different actions.

VET reform programme as a vehicle for integrating the region in Europe

This programme, implemented consistently throughout South Eastern Europe, will underpin the European Union and other donors' policies to the region and will contribute to the creation of an environment in which greater cross-border co-operation can thrive and traditional trading links be restored. In the long term, this programme will encourage cross-border co-operation and enhance the integration of the region within the EU and its educational area through:

- Enhancing co-operation and networks among ministries, schools and other players through joint institution building projects linking schools, communities and teachers across countries; building links between South Eastern European countries and other candidate and EU Member States. In the long term this should also encourage greater worker mobility through initiatives which promote a greater common recognition of standards and qualifications among the countries of the region;
- Strengthening economic ties through cross-border networking of professional associations providing management training and small enterprise development schemes. In addition, specific multi-country vocational training programmes will support the development of key sectors in the region such as public utilities, environment, agriculture etc.

UNESCO-CEPES POSITION PAPER

On the Further Development of Higher Education in Southeast Europe

I. Introduction

1. Southeast Europe holds a particular place in the long history of cultural, religious, economic, and political processes which both positively and adversely have affected Europe as a whole. Its mixture of ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity has, more than in other parts of Europe, resulted in a complex map of various kinds of collective identities, disparities in economic and social development, including those affecting higher education and science. In comparison with the recently accelerated processes of European integration as well as those of globalization, the facts and feelings in this region of being disadvantaged and underprivileged should not be underestimated when seeking explanations for recent events which have brought the problems of the region so vividly to our attention and to that of international fora. One general conclusion should be drawn from these events: there is a growing need for both individual and collective responsibility. Southeast Europe needs international, particularly European, attention. International organizations and mainly European institutions need to take a decisive stand in favor of support for positive transformations in the region of a kind that is essential for lasting peaceful co-existence, economic development, and mutually reinforcing cultural diversity. In such a context, the modernization and the further development of higher education and its institutions become important imperatives.
2. Among various initiatives aimed at achieving such objectives, the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe represents a particularly important step towards a more concerted and comprehensive approach to the region on behalf of the international community. Within the framework for implementing the Stability Pact, education is expected to play an important role and we have to prove imaginative enough in promoting those actions which would lead to democratic development and economic prosperity.

II. A Need for International Support to Higher Education in Southeast Europe

3. Without being a panacea, it is nevertheless "education", at all its levels and in all its forms, which is the foundation, the starting point, and the prerequisite for all kinds of modernization. It is through education that we can aim at seeking better understanding of the world of ours in which, as recently pointed out by the former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, "having good neighbors is more important than having good guns". Education is vital in all parts of Southeast Europe as a means in the

process of reconciliation, since educated, informed, and well-trained people should be able, more than others, to overcome prejudices and make positive contributions to the development of their respective local communities and countries.

4. Higher education and other academic institutions, by virtue of their inherent mission and functioning, should aspire to a special role in the promotion of the processes of democratization and of the creation of civil society. As higher education institutions are par excellence oriented towards "others" and serve as repositories of knowledge and humanistic values, they also have an obligation to serve as positive examples in the enhancement of co-operation. While the university should be recognized as an important nation-building institution, it should not be permitted to fall into the trap of sectarian claims and of narrow-minded ethnic interests. It is in such a context that we consider "modernization through internationalization" to be a particularly viable general approach to higher education in Southeast Europe.

III. UNESCO-CEPES and Its Role in Southeast Europe

5. Since 1989, UNESCO-CEPES [which is in charge of UNESCO activities in the so-called Europe Region that covers all the countries of Europe, plus North America, Turkey, and Israel] is involved in the promotion of reforms of higher education in Central and Eastern Europe. "Ten years after" it can be said, with all appropriate modesty, that UNESCO-CEPES initiated a number of projects and made a significant contribution to an overall remarkable degree of progress and of democratization of higher education in many countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It has also demonstrated its commitment to the development of higher education at system and institutional level, the promotion of principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, as well as the creation of conditions for student and staff international mobility. Given that UNESCO is not by definition and by level of available financial resources a funding agency, UNESCO-CEPES depends very much on "working through partnerships". Experience gained in this regard has permitted the Centre to accumulate network building capacity and adaptability while preserving its commitment to the principles embraced by UNESCO that were spelled out in the UNESCO Policy Paper for Change and Development in Higher Education (1995) as well as in two documents that were adopted by the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education: Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century: Vision and Action (Paris, UNESCO, 5-9 October 1998) and The World Declaration and the Priority Action Plan. In this context, The European Agenda for Change for Higher Education in the XXIst Century, that was adopted by the CRE/UNESCO-CEPES European Regional Forum (Palermo, 24-27 September 1997), holds a specific place in our approach to enhancing academic co-operation in Europe.

6. Collaborating on a regular basis with various international governmental and non-governmental organizations such as the European Commission and its European Training Foundation, the World Bank, the Council of Europe, OECD, the Association of European Universities/CRE, the World University Service, the Salzburg Seminar, and others, UNESCO-CEPES has developed considerable negotiating skills involving mediation between international interests and regional and local expectations and realities. Moreover, the on-going work of UNESCO-CEPES and of its partners,

that is related to implementation of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region, is a good example of the need for concerted approaches in such an area as the adaptation of international educational standards to regional and local needs.

7. In the implementation of its activities, UNESCO-CEPES tries not only to provide expert knowledge and skills but also to assure a non-discriminatory framework for its projects. As such, UNESCO-CEPES has proved its capacity to bring to the negotiating table international donors, policy-makers, and leaders of academic institutions, and representing them, organizations which, despite conflicting views on specific issues, have been able to discuss important issues of higher education in their respective countries or regions, foremost in order to be able to pull together the scarce resources.
8. In its overall approach, UNESCO-CEPES is permanently seeking to mutually reinforce activities oriented towards analysis, reflection and action. In the context of the topic of this document, it is relevant to point out that owing to its actual location in the region, UNESCO-CEPES was able to develop a unique "regional inside view" of the problems of higher education in Southeast Europe. The number of publications prepared by UNESCO-CEPES that deal with higher education in this region is a good example of the Centre's intrinsic interest in this region.

IV. Responding to New Needs and Expectations

9. UNESCO is well aware of the insufficiencies of local capacity to deal with the types and the numbers of problems in Southeast Europe. Therefore, it is approving of the need for concrete and concerted international support. In this context, UNESCO-CEPES is going to orient some of its current activities as well as to develop new ones during the 2000-2001 period [UNESCO has adopted the biennium as its programming cycle] in view of the following strategic objectives:
 - Maximization of the impact of international support by facilitating and promoting exchanges of information and joint co-operation in the area of higher education;
 - Paying due attention to local expertise and to the need to enhance local capacity in designing and implementing educational programmes by providing support for external funding of training and transfer of know-how;
 - Avoiding exclusion by widening access to information about recent developments in policy-making and research relevant to governance, administration, and international academic mobility.
10. UNESCO-CEPES considers that the following should be the main areas of international action:
 - the European and regional framework for higher education policy and reform;
 - the university as a cultural and civic community;
 - governance and management of higher education systems and institutions, including issues of - quality assurance and accreditation;

- academic freedom and institutional autonomy;
 - international academic co-operation principles, forms, and mechanisms.
11. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned main areas of international action, UNESCO-CEPES has elaborated the following list of concrete projects and undertakings for Southeast Europe. It should however be pointed out that implementation of specific activities will, to a great extent, depend on available regular funds [those coming from the budget allocated by UNESCO] and extra-budgetary funds [those obtained from other funding sources]:
- a) inclusion of a substantial number of countries and institutions from the region in the UNESCO-CEPES project entitled "Ten Years After and Looking Ahead" which analyze the evolution of higher education in Central and Eastern Europe;
 - b) activities which will be oriented towards the building up of modern institutional frameworks for governance and administration with full respect for local academic traditions;
 - c) use of the experience gained in implementing the EU-Phare Multi-country Programme to undertake a survey identifying institutional needs regarding the modernization of structures and mechanisms relevant to governance, management, and administration;
 - d) access to UNESCO-CEPES comparative documentation on legislative reforms in higher education;
 - e) support to the activities of local NGOs engaged in the modernization of the governance and the functioning of higher education in the region and efforts to facilitate their participation in the relevant activities of UNESCO;
 - f) actions aimed at advocacy for respect of academic freedom and institutional autonomy through promotion of and publicity about good practice in higher education in the Southeast Europe region;
 - g) the undertaking of a study on the origins, missions, and functioning of a "bilingual university". The experience of this relatively little known structural and academic arrangement might be of interest and relevance for the diminishing of anxiety vis-a-vis the "other language" [this topic is going to be dealt with in one of the forthcoming issues of the UNESCO-CEPES quarterly review Higher Education in Europe (No. 4, 2000)];
 - h) promotion of actions oriented towards the mutual recognition of academic qualifications (in the framework provided by the joint Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention);
 - i) promotion of good practice in "transnational educational offerings" (in collaboration with the ENIC recognition centres and relevant quality assurance agencies and organizations);
 - j) promotion of actions oriented towards greater gender equity in higher education as well as promotion of access to higher education of various marginalized groups;

- k) promotion of the objectives and modalities of co-operation available under the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme, especially those relevant for the promotion of greater understanding, partnership, and solidarity among higher education institutions in the region;
- l) in collaboration with relevant units of UNESCO (in particular the Regional Office for Science and Technology for Europe in Venice - UVO-ROSTE), to provide support for initiatives oriented toward the improvement of institutional mechanisms for science policy;
- m) promotion of co-operation within the Black Sea University Network and the Danubian Countries Rectors' Conference;
- n) the undertaking, in close collaboration with the UNESCO Office in Sarajevo and UNMiBH, of a feasibility study on the revival of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- o) provide support in the matters related to higher education to the Department of Education and Culture of UNMIK, Kosovo.

V. Concluding Observations

12. It should be pointed once again that the actions of UNESCO-CEPES in the domain of higher education in Southeast Europe, which have been presented in this position paper, are in line with overall efforts stipulated by the Stability Pact in "bringing about mature democratic political processes" and the "deepening and strengthening of civil society". Higher education and the academic community of this region can play a strategic role in achieving these objectives. The modernizing effects of the universities and of other learning organizations must be used in the processes of rebuilding society and communities in this region. As vehicles for ensuring the transmission of knowledge, skills, and democratic values, universities promote certain values and behavior patterns of their own that support the building of democratic societies and the furthering of the economic, social, political, and democratic transition processes which must take place in this region.

November 1999

OTHER DOCUMENTS

International Conference on South Eastern Europe
"Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy"

**Expert Conference in the Framework
of the Enhanced Graz Process
Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe,
Working Table 1**

Sofia, Bulgaria, 12-14 November 1999

Agenda

Pre-Conference Day

11 November 1999, Thursday

Arrival of participants

16.30 - 18.00 **Optional pre-conference programme:**

Four parallel project sites:

- *Our Common CEEPUS Future,*
 - *Balkan School - Sofia,*
 - *National Finance & Business College,*
 - *National School Complex of Culture.*
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Conference Day 1

12 November 1999, Friday

9.00 - 9.30 **Official opening of the conference:**

- *Address by Peter Stoyanov, Bulgarian President*
 - *Vesselin Metodiev, Bulgarian Minister of Education and Science*
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9.30 - 10.30 **Key note speeches:**

- *Donald Kursch, Representative of the Stability Pact*
- *Slavko Gaber, University of Ljubljana*

*Political efforts for peace, democracy and stability in the region -
the possible role of education and regional and European
educational co-operation within the framework of the Stability
Pact for South Eastern Europe.*

10.30 - 11.00	Coffee break
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11.00 - 12.30	Panel discussion: <i>The impact of recent political developments on education policy and strategy</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anton Dobart, Chair of the Task Force of the Enhanced Graz Process, Austrian Ministry of Education • Madlen Serban, Romanian Ministry of Education • Anna-Maria Totomanova, Deputy Minister, Bulgarian Ministry of Education, • Guiseppe Massangioli, European Commission, DG Education and Culture • Haris Lalacos, Royaumont Process • David Crosier, Council of Europe • Gabriele Mazza, Council of Europe Chair: Riitta Lampola , Finnish Presidency Presentation of guidelines for working group discussions by Lesley Wilson, General Rapporteur
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12.30 - 14.30	Lunch break "Education Fair" in the foyer
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14.30 - 16.00	Workshop session I <i>Discussion of the recommendations of the preparatory workshops</i> Seven parallel workshops: A. <i>Strategy and Vision</i> B. <i>Higher Education and its Role in the Development of Civil Society (two workshops)</i> C. <i>History and History Teaching</i> D. <i>Education for Democratic Citizenship</i> E. <i>Education and the Management of Diversity</i> F. <i>Vocational Education and Training and its Role in the Development of Civil Society</i>
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16.00 - 16.30	Coffee-break
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16.30 - 18.00	Workshop session I <i>Continued</i>
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20.00 - 22.00	Reception hosted by the Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education and Science Vesselin Metodiev
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Conference Day 2

13 November 1999, Saturday

- 9.00 - 10.30 **Workshop session II**
Discussion on strategies and concrete action for mid- and long-term educational development and regional and European educational co-operation
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- 10.30 - 11.00 **Coffee-break**
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- 11.00 - 12.30 **Workshop session II**
Continued
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- 12.30 - 14.30 **Lunch break**
"Education Fair" in the foyer
- 14.30 - 16.00 **Panel Discussion**
Policy and strategy development: The role of education for the stability of the region and the European integration
- *Vesel Nuhju, University of Prishtina*
 - *Vladimir Milcin, Open Society Institute Macedonia*
 - *Peter de Rooij, European Training Foundation*
 - *Lazar Vlasceanu, UNESCO/Cepes*
 - *Sonia Licht, Open Society Network*
- Chair: Helder Cardoso, Pereira, Portugal*
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- 16.00 - 16.40 **Coffee break**
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- 16.40 - 18.10 **Workshop session III**
Recommendations, key priorities and action plan annexes
-
- 20.00 **Dinner**
• *Address by Marin Raykov, Bulgarian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs*

Conference Day 3

14 November 1999, Sunday

9.00 - 10.00 **Plenary session 1**

Reports from the seven workshops: Rapporteurs

Chair: Boris Tomov, Rector of the University of Rousse, Bulgaria

10.00 - 10.30 **Coffee break**

10.30 - 12.00 **Plenary session 2**

Recommendations of the Sofia conference, priorities and action plan presented by the General Rapporteur, Lesley Wilson

Panel Discussion

A feasible strategy, work programme and schedule for strengthening reform and regional/European educational co-operation in the framework of the Stability Pact

- *Milika Dhamo, University of Tirana*
- *Manja Klemencic, The National Union of Students in Europe*
- *Zarko Puhovski, University of Zagreb*
- *James Socknat, World Bank*
- *Holger Schröder, European Commission, DG Education and Culture*
- *Gabriele Mazza, Council of Europe*

Chair: Anton Dobart, Chair of the Task Force of the Enhanced Graz Process, Austria

12.00 - 12 30 **Official closing of the conference**

- *Anton Dobart, Chair of the Task Force: Outlook on the work programme and schedule of activities of the Enhanced Graz Process*
- *Vesselin Metodiev, Bulgarian Minister of Education and Science: Closing of the conference*

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