



NATO Foundation  
Defense College



UNITED STATES EMBASSY  
TO ITALY

## The Western Balkans at a crossroads

*Conference organised by  
the NATO Defense College Foundation with the support of the US Embassy in Rome*

**ROME, 6<sup>th</sup>– 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

Venue: *Centro Congressi Roma Eventi -Piazza di Spagna, Via Alibert, 5/a, Rome*

### ***Draft Agenda***

#### **WEDNESDAY, 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2017**

14,00-15,00      Arrival of participants - Registration

15,00              Welcome remarks

- ❑ **Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo**, President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome\*
- ❑ **Chris Whitecross**, Commandant, NATO Defense College\*

#### *Initial remarks*

**Paolo Alli**, President, NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Brussels

15,30 -17,00

#### **SESSION 1**

#### **MOVING FORWARD: GOOD REASONS FOR GOOD REFORMS**

*Since 1991, year of the Yugoslav dissolution, distances between the Western Balkans and the European institutions have been covered, however much still needs to be done. The Balkans are at an historical crossroad. They should move towards a future of social integration, economic development and political stability and the rule of law.*

Chair: **Dimitrij Rupel**, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Ljubljana\*

- ❑ **Miro Kovač**, Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, Zagreb\*
- ❑ **Yannis-Alexis Zepos**, Ambassador former Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Athens\*
- ❑ **Lyubomir Kyuchukov**, Director, Economics and International Relations Institute, Sofia\*
- ❑ **Jelena Milic**, Director, Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies, Belgrade\*

General Discussion

17,00-17,30 Coffee break

17,30-19,00

## SESSION 2 OLD AND NEW ROADBLOCKS: HOW TO REMOVE THEM?

*The Balkan region is known for producing more history than they can digest. In addition to the heritage of fragmentation and hardship, new challenges are emerging, such as criminal networks, small arms proliferation, illegal trafficking and terrorist groups. These challenges are often of a more political nature, including external actors trying to take advantage of the situation to improve their sphere of influence.*

Chair: **Giovanni Russo**, Deputy Prosecutor, National Anti-Mafia Directorate, Rome\*

- ❑ **Tobias Freeman**, Project Manager, Strengthening the Fight against Illicit Trade in South Eastern Europe, International Institute for Criminal Justice and Human Rights, Siracusa\*
- ❑ **Peter Neumann**, Director, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, King's College, London\*
- ❑ **Matenia Sirseldudi**, Researcher, Institute for Police and Security Research, University of Bremen, Bremen\*
- ❑ **Louise Shelley**, Director, Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center Fairfax, Arlington\*

General discussion

## THURSDAY, 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2017

10,00-11,30

## SESSION 3 REGIONAL CO-OPERATION: THE CURRENT STATE OF THE ART

*The key priority for the Western Balkans towards the Euro-Atlantic integration is to move from post-war societies to a truly regional co-operation. This means building new infrastructures, passing economic reforms and fostering a renewed dialogue on security within the countries in the region. Nowadays, it is important to avoid the rebound to nationalism and protectionism. In this context, the European Union and NATO must be vectors able to foster a genuine conversation among the stakeholders of the area.*

Chair: **Richard Hooker**, Senior Director for NATO/Europe, Russia and Europe Directorate at the National Security Council, Washington D. C.\*

- ❑ **Haakon Blankenborg**, Director Of Western Balkans Section/Section for South East Europe, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Oslo\*
- ❑ **Gordana Delic**, Director, Balkan Trust for Democracy, Belgrade\*
- ❑ **Michel Soula**, Head of the Operations Section in the Operations Division, NATO HQ, Brussels\*
- ❑ **Martinusz Zoltan**, Director, Enlargement, Security, Foreign Affairs Council Support, General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Brussels\*

General discussion

11,30-12,00 Coffee break

12,00-12,15

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

**Benedetto Della Vedova**, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy\*

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