BALKAN PERSPECTIVES 2020
The Fight for a Timely Inclusion

High-Level Conference

Organised by the NATO Defense College Foundation
In co-operation with the NATO Public Diplomacy Division, the European Union
and the NATO Defense College

Rome, 28th of September 2020
Venue: Centro Congressi Roma Eventi - Piazza di Spagna, Via Alibert, 5/a, Rome

28th of September 2020

14,00 - 14,30 Participants Registration

14,30 - 14,45 Welcome Remarks

• Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo, President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome *
• Stephen J. Mariano, Dean, NATO Defense College, Rome *

14,45 - 15,00 Opening Remarks

• Wolfgang Petritsch, President, Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation, Vienna *

15,00 - 16,15

SESSION 1
Ways and means for a credible inclusion

Since the Dayton Agreement the Balkans have been a success story in terms of peace-building and stability. Nevertheless, both domestic difficulties and the constant crises in the international environment affecting the Balkan Six have made the integration path particularly difficult, in addition to a global pandemic with unprecedented effects. The EU presidency is committed to continue negotiations at different levels with Serbia, Montenegro, Albania and North Macedonia. Half of the region is still in a limbo concerning NATO membership. What are the best paths and instruments towards a credible inclusion? How can we forestall regional enlargement fatigue?

Chair: Ivan Vejvoda, Permanent Fellow, Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna *

• Nicola de Santis, Head Engagements Section, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO Headquarters, Brussels (Virtual) *
• **Ian Lesser**, Vice President and Executive Director, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Brussels *
• **Ahmet Evin**, founding Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sabanci University, Istanbul *
• **Andrea Orizio**, Head of Mission, OSCE, Belgrade *
• **Maciej Popowski**, Deputy Director General, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, Brussels *

**Q&A**

16,15 – 16,45 Coffee/Tea break

16,45 – 17,00

*Question time with:*

**Damon Wilson**, Executive Vice President, Atlantic Council, Washington D.C. (Virtual) *

Interviewer: **Valerie Hopkins**, Financial Times, South-East Europe Correspondent, Budapest *

17,00 – 18,15

**SESSION 2**

**THE BALKANS’ DRIVING FORCES**

The Balkans are fighting for their future. The intertwining between domestic policies still hostage to old and new factionalisms, extremely fragile economies and societal tensions towards more freedom, is common to all countries but it presents also local peculiarities that need a tailored approach. How can societies break the political depression-repression cycle that erodes public confidence and pushes towards emigration and depopulation?

Chair: **Arne Sannes Bjørnstad**, Special Representative for Western Balkans, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo *

• **Luisa Chiodi**, Scientific Director, OBC Transeuropa, Trento *
• **Remzi Lani**, Executive Director, Albanian Media Institute, Tirana *
• **Valbona Zeneli**, Chair, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, Garmisch-Partenkirchen *
• **Lubomir Ivanov**, former Permanent Representative of Bulgaria, NATO, Brussels

**Q&A**

18,15 – 18,30 **Concluding Remarks**

**Piero Fassino**, President, Foreign Affairs Committee, Chamber of Deputies, Rome *

**END OF THE CONFERENCE**

*CONFIRMED*

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