

A SUMMARY OF THE WORKSHOP RESULTS

"The Stability Pact" for South East Europe – Dawn of an Era of Regional Co-Operation"

The following issues dominated the discussion:

1. What are the main tasks of the Stability Pact in South East Europe?
2. Which role does the international presence play in the stabilisation process?
3. What are the problems, which can endanger the peace process?
 - A consensus was reached that the Stability Pact compared with earlier measures of conflict management is a more comprehensive and therefore more useful instrument to stabilise the region.
 - Further It was also accepted by most of the participants that the Stability Pact is a very useful instrument to define common interests and to provide a regional forum for communication and cooperation.
 - The most important common goals for all states in the Western Balkans mentioned in this workshop were of course the integration in the EU and NATO and the prevention of new violent conflicts.
 - No consensus was reached on the question if the Stability Pact should advance a regional integration process in South East Europe. Especially Mr. Stanicic was very sceptical in this regard.
 - But also Mr. Busek in his speech argued that the capabilities of the Stability Pact may not be overestimated.
In his presentation Mr. Busek pointed out that the Stability Pact should concentrate its activities on some core functions: Cross border co-operation, re-education, supporting measures for "good governance" and reconciliation. The Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact emphasised the importance of the "regional ownership" regarding the Stabilisation process and stressed that the International Community can only support this process.
 - The participants judged the role of the international presence in the Western Balkans very ambiguously:
On the one hand, all agreed that the international presence (especially the military presence) is still necessary in the next five to ten years to prevent the outbreak of new violent conflicts.
On the other hand, the international organisations were strongly criticised. They were mainly blamed to show ignorant behaviour and to act sometimes against the peace process.
 - The Speeches of panel four and five showed us that the open problems of order policy and the lasting ethnic nationalism in some parts of the Western Balkans represent still a serious obstacle for regional co-operation. Especially Drago Pilsel in his speech stressed the fact that the civil society in the former zones of conflict is not guaranteed. On contrary to the estimation of politicians in Western Europe, the undemocratic structures were not removed with the breakdown of the authoritarian regimes.

Predrag Jureković
Bureau for Security Policy at the
Federal Ministry of Defence Vienna

