



REGIONAL HIGH LEVEL CONFERENCE

Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security in South Eastern Europe

*Belgrade, Serbia
30-31 March 2009*

JOINT STATEMENT

Under the auspices of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and upon the invitation of the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Deputy Prime Minister of the host Government – Republic of Serbia, the South Eastern European States participating in the Regional High Level Conference on Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security in South Eastern Europe, held in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, on 30-31 March 2009, confirm their commitment to strengthen their partnership and mutual coordination with the aim of contributing to stability, justice and security for the citizens of the region.

The States in the region are resolved to coordinate their respective national and regional responses to transnational threats such as organized crime, drug and human trafficking, smuggling of migrants and firearms, money-laundering, and financing of terrorism, as well as to interlinked challenges such as corruption, drug abuse and the spread of HIV/AIDS, and to strengthen the effectiveness of the criminal justice systems so that they are fair, humane and consistent with United Nations and European Union conventions, protocols and relevant standards and norms.

The States acknowledge that the implementation of internationally recognized United Nations values and norms, as well as integration into the European Union require furtherance of democracy and rule of law for the citizens of each nation and for the region as a whole.

Reaffirming their commitment and strategic partnership between States in the region and key international stakeholders, the South Eastern European States endorse the Programme on Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security in South Eastern Europe as a common platform centered on three thematic and inter-linked pillars of:

1. Serious crime and illicit trafficking;
2. Integrity and criminal justice systems;
3. Drug prevention and treatment, and HIV treatment and care.

The States confirm their readiness to continue to pursue the goal of enhancing regional cooperation and joint activities as set out in the three thematic pillars in line with the preparatory activities, including UNODC's Expert Workshops in the region, both on a bilateral and regional level and with the support of other stakeholders.

Furthermore, the States commit to work together and in close partnership with relevant regional and international organizations towards achieving the following objectives:

1. Increased efficiency in coordination and partnership among the countries of the region;
2. Greater coherence of strategies and policies, as well as of implementation mechanisms among States in the region, neighboring countries, affected regions, and at the international level;
3. Strengthened capacity to address the transnational threats and challenges domestically, regionally, as well as internationally.

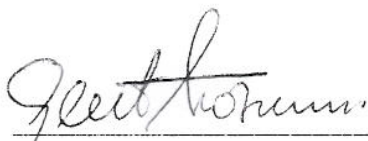
Cognizant of a need for balanced participation among national and international experts in carrying out capacity building activities of the Programme, the South Eastern European States underscore the importance of providing mutual technical assistance in exchange of programmes and experts' know-how within the region, building on the comparative advantages of each state. A practical and results-oriented approach is necessary to ensure that adequate assistance is provided.

Further elaboration of technical assistance modalities related to the three thematic pillars, as well as support to the implementation of the Programme, is expected from all the key stakeholders, including regional and international partners.

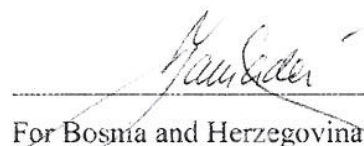
The States emphasize the importance of setting up the appropriate follow-up and monitoring mechanism for implementation of this Programme.

Finally, the South Eastern European States express appreciation for the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in initiating and facilitating the development of the Programme in close consultations with the governments in the region, other regional and international organizations, and national experts and request the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to be further involved in the resource mobilization efforts and support to the implementation of the Programme.

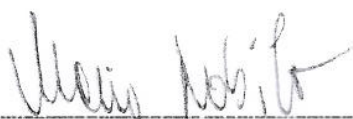
Done in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia on 30 March 2009.



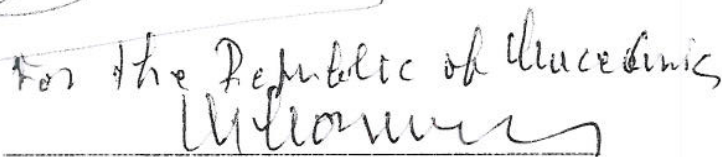
For the Republic of Albania



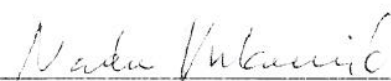
For Bosnia and Herzegovina



For the Republic of Croatia



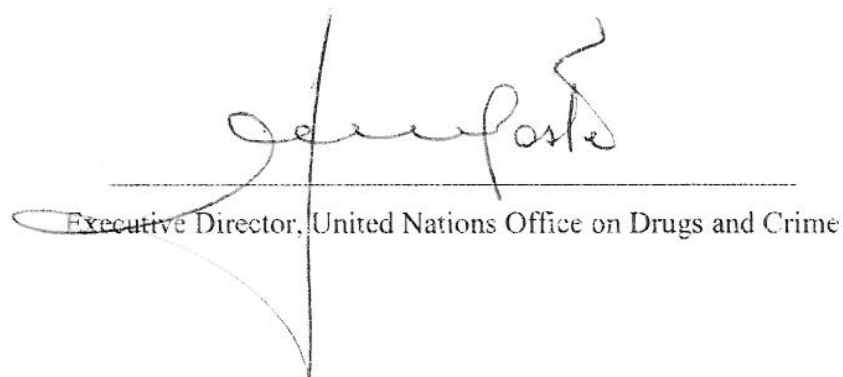
For The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



For Montenegro



For the Republic of Serbia



Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime