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University for Peace
Universidad para la Paz



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THE THIRD ECPD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
**RECONCILIATION AND HUMAN SECURITY
IN THE BALKANS**

Belgrade, October 26-27, 2007

*Belgrade City Hall
Dragoslava Jovanovića Street N° 2*

CLOSING REMARKS

Honourable Participants of the Conference, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to conclude this Conference by presenting to you the summary of what was achieved and what lies ahead. With your permission, I would like to introduce several key ideas and outcomes of this event.

ECPD will further continue its activities as an action oriented institution in the direction determined by this Conference, in order to achieve reconciliation and human security in the West Balkan Region with a view to accelerating the process of joining in to the process of overall European integration. Through deliberations in the Conference, in spite of the very difficult situation in the region, some positive trends in recent events have been confirmed.

Such trends should be nurtured and encouraged, because reconciliation and stability are prerequisite conditions for economic development and acceleration of the general European integration process to reach this region. And it allows the peoples of the region at last to look to the future after a long spell of suffering in fratricidal wars and conflicts.

The Executive Vice Rector of the University for Peace mandated by the General Assembly of the United Nations, Mr. Georges Tsai, participated in the Conference and it was agreed to study the possibility of strengthening the cooperative relations between the University for Peace and European Center for Peace and Development through carrying out joint academic courses and researches for peace and other activities.



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ECPD will continue to concentrate its efforts for the peace and stability in the Balkan regions, and for this purpose, it will continue to organize two more Conferences, possibly in other capitals of the countries in the region.

The ECPD Permanent International Study Group will continue its work to further the analysis of causes and consequences of the conflicts in the region and ways and means for achieving peace, reconciliation, human right and economic development of the region. For this purpose, SG will continue to work under the general theme of “Reconciliation and Human Security” and to prepare for the next year’s Conference. In this work, several priority issues may be assigned to separate working groups to be created under the SG.

ECPD as an institution for education for peace will establish within its general educational curriculum, courses for “Education for Peace” with masters and doctors degree in view.

ECPD will try to organize and promote regional cooperation, so that efforts for reconciliation and economic development of the region could be coordinated through many public and private organizations and institutions of the countries of the region.

These are the concrete results obtained through deliberations of the Conference. Now I would like to share with you some of the salient points of discussions to which all the participants of the Conference so assiduously contributed.

International society has gone through visible changes after the end of the cold war. Major inter-state wars have decreased but internal conflicts increased, and human rights came more to the centre of attention of the world community, hence human right and human security attracted more attention. Under UN authority, peace building efforts have been stepped up.

Yugoslavia played important role in history and the countries in the Balkan Region have every right to occupy honourable place in the integration process of Europe.

The causes of the conflicts must be ascertained and apology for the sufferings caused should be made. Criminal Court for former Yugoslavia is one step in this direction.

Some trends for ethnic reconciliation are observed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo and it should be encouraged in other areas as well. Economic development is important for reconciliation. In this regard I would like to mention the imaginative scheme of formulation of projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina for strengthening the entrepreneurship which was presented at the Conference. It will be carried out with prior studies and consultations with the regional communities and administration so that business and entrepreneurship that will be created will be based on the support of the region and any difficulties to arise may be resolved with their support. This is a way to reach reconciliation through economic development. This concept was welcomed and supported by the participants of the Conference.



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Projects dealing with education, health and economic issues in other regions, including Kosovo, may also be worked out in the framework of this scheme. The necessity of cultural and sport events which will have the effect of bringing together many ethnic groups to create harmony among them was stressed.

Long term reconciliation is possible. Cultural heritage of all the peoples and religions should be protected.

The presence of leaders of all the three major religions has made a memorable contribution to the deliberations of the Conference. Common element of upholding of peace and respect of human dignity was emphasized, and abuse of religion was cited as the cause of conflict. The study of gender issues and the empowerment of women as peacemakers have been stressed by contributors to the Conference.

Importance of general principles for the migration in Europe Union was stressed, and decentralization in some countries of EU was introduced. European space will incorporate countries of the Balkan regions.

Importance of economic development and its ethical component was repeatedly stressed as well as rule of law.

An important point that was made was that the Balkan problem is a problem for the whole of Europe, since the Balkans is central to Europe as any other part of it. The history of the Balkans can give us numerous examples of peaceful coexistence of various ethnic groups, religions and cultures.

This points to the need of making further efforts towards searching common and secure space for joint efforts in political, economic and cultural activities.

This conference will make a solid ground for the concrete formulation of researches and projects for reconciliation, and on the basis of it, the Conference in 2008 will produce concrete results by researchers and by making recommendations for implementation of projects for reconciliation and human security.

If this process is successfully implemented by the Conference in 2008, the Conference in 2009 will adopt a declaration reaffirming the principle of human security for the Balkan region and appeal to the governments, regional administrations and other entities to make a priority in their policy decisions to implement the concrete results and conclusions arrived at in the 2007 and 2008 Conferences.

The participation of high officials from the UN Human Security Commission and other UN bodies, as well as of EU and international organisations concerned will be very important.



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This could really be a unique attempt to firmly establish principles of human security through 5 years of sustained efforts and deliberations, not only in the Balkans, but also throughout Europe, and it may well offer a model to be applied to other conflict areas throughout the world.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the participants for their dedication and contribution to the Conference. We are all of one mind in wishing for the peace and stability to be re-established in the region, so that it can return to the European space in its rapidly advancing integration process.

Once again, I should like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the sponsors for their understanding and having partially contributed to the organisation of the Conference, although major part of financing was provided by ECPD itself. For years ECPD has acquired the attitude to try to be self-sufficient in performing its research and educational activities aiming at tolerance, reconciliation and peace.

We also thank Municipality of Belgrade for providing us this gorgeous setting for our Conference. Lastly, together with all of you, I would like to pay respect and appreciation for the most efficient translation. We owe you major part of the success of the Conference.

Thank you very much for your attention.



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