

## Editorial

Six years ago, the Western Balkans Security Observer was established as an academic journal of the Centre for Civil-Military Relations. Since then, the Journal has quickly developed from an in-house periodical into an academic publication covering security issues across the Western Balkans and South East Europe. As a confirmation of the improvement in quality, the Ministry of Education and Science of Serbia placed it on its list of academic journals in 2009. In the meantime, both the activities of the Centre and the topics covered by the Journal expanded beyond what their respective names indicated. As the Centre moved beyond civil-military relations to include wider area of security studies, it was renamed in 2010 into the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy. The Journal also widened its scope, not so much thematically but rather geographically. Increasingly, the number of submitted articles dealt with regions outside of the Western Balkans and the editorial board was not capable of properly accommodating them. Additionally, the Journal is faced with another problem. As one country after another joins the EU and NATO the Western Balkan region is actually shrinking as a security complex. As a result, the journal is faced with politically fortunate but analytically dangerous loss of its object of analysis. In order to ensure survival, the Journal decided to enlarge its geographic focus but keep its interest in regional level of analysis. Such transformation necessitated the adoption of the name – the *Journal of Regional Security* (JRS). Moreover, from this issue onwards the journal will be a joint publication of the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy and Faculty of Political Sciences/University of Belgrade. In order to cut costs the Journal will be published biannually in English only. Finally, when it comes to numeration we also introduced changes. In order to keep the continuity with the Western Balkans Security Observer, the journal kept the year counter that will now be numerated by volumes. This is why the Journal of Regional Security starts with Volume 7. When it comes to issues, we decided to abandon the old practice of accumulative numeration (last issue of the WBSO was 21). Thus, each year will have issues 1 and 2 with the possibility of increase in the future if the conditions allow.

The *Journal of Regional Security* is conceived as a peer-reviewed journal specializing in the field of regional security studies. Subject areas will include: security communities, regional security complexes, regional security sector reform and governance, security regimes, regional conflicts, security integration, region-building and comparative regional security research. The Journal is intended for international security scholars and policy makers from South East Europe but also from other established or emerging regions of the world. It aims to bring academic security studies communities from the Western Balkans not only closer to each other but also closer to security studies and security policy communities from other regions of the world, thus enabling smarter and more sustainable regional policy solutions. We sincerely hope that readers will appreciate our efforts to improve the quality of the journal, sharpen its analytical purchase and expand its geographic focus.

The first issue of the JRS deals with the security of the Balkan region, while intersecting with the security perspectives of others, such as the Middle East or Euro-Atlantic, regions. The authors have covered various aspects of security – ranging from military, through political, to economic and societal. In the opening article of this issue, Dessie Zagorcheva discusses the impact of NATO enlargement on security in Central Eastern Europe, and draws parallels with the actual enlargement taking place in the neighboring region of the Western Balkans. Drawing from the realist and liberal-institutionalist strands of International Relations theory, Zagorcheva goes on to examine the effects of institutional actors such as EU and NATO on stability and security, as well as cooperation, among the countries of the region. While considering NATO–Western Balkans relations through both membership and non-membership options, the article concludes with a hope that institutions such as the Alliance and the EU can make the region more stable, peaceful and secure.

Following the article by Zagorcheva is a piece by Sigurd Neubauer, dealing with energy security in the Mediterranean and the emergent Israeli-Balkan strategic Alliance. Despite Turkey's revived interest in the Balkans over the past decade, the author seeks to analyze Israel's political and economic opening towards the region. However, this effort could be viable only with further rapprochement between the two countries – which could spur improved relations between Israel and Lebanon, and Turkey and Cyprus in a wider Mediterranean region.

Security in the Balkans is further examined in light of the evolution of civil-military relations and security sector reform – which is the subject under analysis by Nihat Celik in the third article. Celik offers insight into the concept and legacy of civil-military relations, as well as second-generation reforms in the region and answers what should be done to establish more democratic structures of civil-military relations. He proposes additional efforts in education of civil society, media and various communication-oriented measures that can foster democratic principles and contribute to the development of more democratic type political regimes and societies.

Aiming her research interest toward the Balkans, Laura McLeod turns away from military and political, in her article, and takes on the societal security sector – in examining multiple meanings of 'gender security.' The article explores the ways in which a deeper understanding of the various meanings of 'gender security' in relation to Security Council Resolution 1325 in Serbia can be useful to practitioners. Discussing imaginations of conflict and post-conflict contexts, McLeod argues that 'gender security' can lead to a dialogue between conflicting groups, thus opening the way for a meaningful policy that can also be 'useful' to all stakeholders.

The article which follows is by Katerina Gachevska, it deals with the particular case of Bulgaria and lessons learned from fighting organized crime in that country. Given that

organized crime was seen as a threat to the national security of Bulgaria in the late 1990s, it posed a challenge to ensuing institutional and legislative reforms. The reforms presented limited results, which led to a growing distrust in the institutions of state. There was a growing gap between the stated goals of fighting organized crime and actual results on a national level. This article concludes that several years following Bulgaria's accession to the European Union there is still a firm conviction among people that organized crime has become endemic and linked with all institutional levels in a 'reformed' state.

Zora Popova situates her article in the domain of societal security, and focuses on the role of social capital reconstruction after an ethnic conflict. In the article, social capital is defined as a complex mechanism that enables coherence and functioning of any given societal system. It becomes a 'security factor' when the social capital of a state is in focus. This approach can be used to evaluate the developments and stability in new states and countries going through democratic transition – which has been demonstrated on the example of European Union enlargement policy in the Western Balkans and the idea of building a 'common supra-identity of the European citizens, supported by the respective system of elements of social capital'.

This issue concludes with the Reviews section and essay by Nikola Vujinovic. Drawing on the recent popular-cultural turn in IR, he uses George R.R Martin's book series "A Song of Ice and Fire" as an example of a regional security pattern. Then he goes on to apply the Regional Security Complex Theory in order to cast a new light on the developments in this notable contemporary piece of epic fiction.

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