

EUROPEAN PROGRAM

In 2000, the European context of Bulgaria's transition to democracy and market economy was expanded with the effective start of the work of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe. From Bulgaria's perspective, the Pact is expected to overcome one of the main impediments to Bulgaria's successful European integration – regional instability.

Thus, for CSD's European Program 2000 was a year of added efforts to provide an important analytical and networking link between the priorities of regional development and EU accession.

I. Facilitating Dialogue

On 24 February, 2000 the Center for the Study of Democracy hosted a meeting with Ambassador Michael Sahlin, Coordinator for Enlargement Issues and Bilateral Integration Support, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, who

delivered a lecture on *Sweden's Support for the EU Enlargement*, attended by representatives of Enterprise Development Fund, UN in Sofia, Privatization Agency, Sofia Municipality, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bulgarian Stock Exchange, Open Society Foundation, the Bulgarian Telecommunications Company, World Bank Mission in Sofia, Ministry of Finance, and other Bulgarian and foreign institutions.

Ambassador Sahlin stated Sweden's support for Bulgaria in its ambitious and commendable undertaking to join the European Union. He further outlined the priority issues of the process of EU enlargement: how the process of enlargement could be combined in the future with its deepening; the involvement of the Balkans and other East European regions; finding a proper security and stability solution while having in mind the considerable economic differentiation and factors of



Ambassador Michael Sahlin during the lecture at CSD

increasing heterogeneity by adding 28 member-countries more; the need of a comprehensive institutional reform which is to be reviewed at the Inter-Governmental Conference; the risk of allowing different membership pattern by categorizing the candidates in several groups; finding proper solution of future problems including the public opinion originating of the enlargement; the Security Pact issue, etc. Finally, he summarized Sweden's position and future active role towards the enormous task of Europe's response to globalization.

Participants expressed support to the ideas outlined above and Ambassador Sahlin answered their questions regarding the eventual shaping up of a new policy in EU in respect of the differentiation; the priorities and forms for supporting Bulgaria; the balance between the political will for extending negotiations with other countries and the fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria; rendering support to the Ombudsman Institution in this country, etc.

On May 31, CSD hosted a meeting on the *Social Profile of Ethnic Groups*, which was initiated by the No. 2 Diplomatic Club – an initiative of deputy chiefs of diplomatic missions in Sofia. Dr. Teodora Noncheva introduced a study *Social Profile of the Ethnic Groups in Bulgaria*, analyzing the incidence and peculiarities of poverty among ethnic groups, focusing on Romas and Turks. She outlined the major social and economic characteristics of these groups, the poverty profiles, the manpower characteristics and access to labor market.

Dr. Antonina Zhelyazkova, Director of the International Center on Minority Issues underlined the lack of scientific approach of Bulgarian governments so far in solving these problems and its negative impact on Bulgarian minorities for the years to come. She further outlined the prospects, programs and practices launched by the Minority Issues Center and aimed at the ethnic groups' integration and re-socialization in society.



During the meeting (from left to right): Dr. Teodora Noncheva, Mr. Vincenzo Celeste, Counselor at the Italian Embassy, Dr. Antonina Zhelyazkova and Mr. Plamen Mateev of CSD

During his recent visit to Bulgaria Lord Dahrendorf, Member of the House of Lords of the United Kingdom, and former Director of the London School of Economics and former Warden of St. Anthony's College at Oxford University, paid a visit to the Center for the Study of Democracy. Mr. Boyko Todorov, Program Director and Dr. Maria Yordanova, Head of CSD Law Program, informed Lord Dahrendorf of the latest areas of activity of CSD. Issues discussed included the judicial system in Bulgaria and its relation to the executive authorities and the promotion of democratic reforms and legal environment beneficial to the countries in transition. The regional aspects of legal reform were particularly highlighted. In 1992, CSD translated and published in Bulgarian *Reflections on the*

Revolution in Europe by Lord Dahrendorf, and the following year published *The Modern Social Conflict: An Essay on the Politics of Liberty* in Bulgarian.

Lord Dahrendorf emphasized the importance of building an independent judiciary and its role to strengthen the potentials of the newly established democracy in Bulgaria and the region of Southeast Europe. Discussion focused, among other things, on the Southeast European Legal Development Initiative (SELDI) (see below) launched in 1999 with the overall aim to contribute to the building of the rule of law and democratic institutions in the SEE countries. Lord Dahrendorf was invited to become member of the International Steering Board of SELDI.

II. Policy Studies

In 2000, CSD started an initiative to develop a number of policy reports on the implications for Bulgaria of the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe. The objective of the project is to develop the expert analytical response to the political and institutional opportunities that arose due to the institutional arrange-



During the visit at CSD: Dr. Maria Yordanova (far left), Lord Dahrendorf (middle) and Mr. Boyko Todorov (right)

ments and mechanisms of implementing the Stability Pact “on the ground”.

The commitment of the European Union and other international organizations outlined in the Pact provides a crucial opportunity for accelerated economic and political/social reforms in a stable regional environment and in the context of the accession process. The Pact provides the political and institutional framework of transforming the region into an integral part of the Euro-Atlantic structures. The Pact is a unique Euro-Atlantic platform bringing together international organizations and countries from Western Europe and the United States with the states in the region of Southeast Europe.

The project intends to provide an analytical response to the challenges facing Bulgaria in the context of the Stability

Pact as a new platform for Euro-Atlantic cooperation with the countries in Southeast Europe.

A process of consultation was initiated by the CSD with a number of leading Bulgarian think tanks and with foreign partners. After careful consideration a pool of experts from governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations, the business community and other public and private bodies were identified. They were approached and invited to participate in the development of the reports. As a result of the initial consultations, three task forces were set up to produce the three background documents detailing the practical implications for Bulgaria of the three Working Tables of the Stability Pact. An outline structure of the reports which was agreed includes:

Working Table I (Human rights and democratization)	Working Table II (Economic aspects)	Working Table III (Security)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Rights and Minorities • Media, including regulation of broadcasters • Gender equality – political and legal aspects of the issue in the context of the Stability Pact • Parliamentary cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regional approach for economic development of SEE • Potentials to strengthen the market economy in SEE • Regional cooperation as a factor for the integration of the SEE countries to the European structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal state development of the SEE countries • Potential security risks for the region • Possible initiatives for Bulgaria in the field of security and defense

In view of better tailoring the recommendations contained in the policy reports to the logic of the respective working tables, project experts undertook a number of consultations with US and European institutions, including the Stability Pact office. The project experts took part in a number of meetings of the relevant Working Tables in order to carry out consultations on the latest development. The reports will be published in the course of 2001 in both English and Bulgarian.

III. Southeast European Legal Development Initiative (SELDI)

Started in 1999 by the Center for the Study of Democracy and the International Development Law Institute (IDLI) (www.idli.org), the Southeast European Legal Development Initiative (SELDI) (www.seldi.net) received its first practical implementation in the course of 2000. Two of its main components – anticorruption and judicial reform – received support as part of the priorities of the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe. Other priority areas for SELDI are the establishment of legal centers in the SELDI countries on trade issues and the establishment of a Distance Learning Center.

1. First SELDI Conference

On April 7, 2000, the first conference of the Southeast European Legal Development Initiative (SELDI) with donors and international organizations was held in Rome hosted by IDLI. The conference was intended to acquaint the international community and donor organizations with the overall objectives and specific projects of SELDI. It was attended by representatives of various international organizations, foreign embassies, multilateral and bilateral donor agencies, representatives of the

Italian government and others.

Opening presentations by **Michael Hager**, Director of IDLI, **Minister Giuseppe Cipolloni**, Vice Coordinator of the Stability Pact at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and **John Tennant**, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, US Agency for International Development emphasized the importance of building the rule of law in the Southeast of Europe, in particular in the context of the Stability Pact. Speakers highlighted the key role to be played by non-governmental organizations in this process, specifically in the Southeast European Legal Development Initiative (SELDI). Minister Cipolloni reiterated the commitment of the Italian government to the stability and development of Southeast Europe, and expressed its support to SELDI. This support is the continuation of years of collaboration between IDLI and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The relevance of SELDI's focus on corruption is evident in the role of corruption in making possible cross-border organized crime and thus regional insecurity.

Speakers stated the important contribution SELDI with its focus on anticorruption, judicial reform and the legal aspects of international trade will make to the development of the region. Speakers recognized the need for going beyond country-specific efforts towards region-wide cooperation networks, particularly as regards issues of democratic governance, and the proactive role to be played by NGOs in such networks.

2. Coalition Building and Monitoring for Anticorruption In Southeast Europe

In September, practical work was started on the anticorruption component of SELDI. The first phase of the project *Coalition Building and Monitoring for Anti-*

corruption In Southeast Europe was launched in the countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Yugoslavia. The first phase was intended to carry out diagnostics and assessment of corruption in SEE, including the development of a background document analyzing the regional corruption issues as a basis for a Regional Anticorruption Action Agenda.

A pilot round of corruption monitoring and training, including on monitoring and coalition building, of partner organizations from the region took place on December 8-9 at the CSD. The workshop *Coalition Building and Monitoring for Anticorruption in Southeast Europe* was as introductory event for the project partners. Implementing a corruption watchdog is one of the main areas where NGOs could have a crucial role in promoting the rule of law and ensuring good governance. The training was intended to introduce non-governmental organizations in the region to the use of monitoring instruments for the purpose of implementing a corruption watchdog system. The skills transferred to the participating NGOs focused on the ability to structure the process of a watchdog system. NGO

representatives were trained on three main components of this system: significance for the role of NGOs in the reform efforts, design and management of the process, and utilization of results.

Allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate the Center for the Study of democracy and the International Development Law Institute for an initiative that appears to be both potentially effective and timely in contributing to achieving stability in Southeast Europe.

Piter Stek
Executive Director
World Bank

In both policy analysis and dissemination of results, and facilitating the policy dialogue CSD's European Program has been providing an indispensable public service in the field of European integration. In this, the Program meets an apparent need in Bulgaria and thus its efforts would be even more relevant now that the country enters a crucial period of accession negotiations.



At the SELDI Conference (from left to right): Bulgarian Ambassador to Germany Mr. Nikolai Apostolov; Mr. John Tennant, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Europe and Eurasia USAID; Mr. William T. Loris, Director General Elect, IDLI and Mr. L. Michael Hager, Director, IDLI