

## Preparing Leaders and Experts of the Western Balkans for New Challenges in International Security

### Objectives

The project aims to assist regional leaders in analysing and preparing their countries for the security challenges of the next few decades. We will introduce innovative tools and strategies, and prepare them to be able to demonstrate high quality needs assessment in these questions. In line with its mission the ICDT is committed to promote (inter-)regional cooperation, and political dialogue on the security of the region. Consequently our goal is to create an active debate about the threats which both the region and individual countries will likely face. Based on our experiences in shaping the security policy of many governments in the region, we would like to analyse the nature of these threats and provide alternative solutions to reduce them.

### Background

While countries of this region face a range of widely varied and grave political challenges, the underlying issue always seems to be a traditionalistic perception of security, concentrating on nationalistic interests and inter-state conflict, rather than a modern threat assessment focusing on the security challenges of the 21st century.

For the good of these countries, it is very important to keep up our efforts and continuously draw attention to the security threats posed by environmental threats, energy security, organized crime, drug trafficking and other new security threats –challenges which are best countered by the integration into the institutional framework of the Alliance.

For those countries which are in the accession process or are hesitant about joining the Alliance, a reinforcement of just why it is important for them to join is of crucial importance at this time. Those already members (Croatia and Albania), the case in point is to reinforce their commitment to the values of NATO and to its thinking on security issues.

### Project Description

Training will take place in Belgrade, as the city serves as the central transportation hub for the Western Balkans in March 2009. The participants will be selected to the program by February and they will receive the training materials from the participating experts.

This material will shortly introduce the nature of threats and some threat reducing techniques. We would also like to lay emphasis on describing how regional and international cooperation can help to minimize these dangers and whether a holistic approach to deal with them is more effective.

Our aim is to emphasize that the international community has to play an active role in regions outer from its geographical area (basically the out of area operations) due the changes of the nature of international threats. It is thus important to present a separate paper that will introduce the capabilities of NATO regarding threat reduction.

The program will include both civilian and military stakeholders to help to foster the continuous exchange of views between the public, private and non-profit sector, as well as among practitioners and academics.