

Confidence Building and Reconciliation in Kosovo - Three Years after Independence

Objectives

The main objective of the project is to organize a one-day workshop on the role of the EU and NATO (including the Hungarian government and civil society stakeholders) with regards to the relationship between Kosovo and Serbia, dialogue between the Albanian majority and minority communities, and peacebuilding and negotiated settlements (both through official and local channels). The aim of the workshop is to introduce the Hungarian public, government, academia, and civil society organizations to the activities of the EU and NATO in the sphere of the Serbia-Kosovo relations and the importance of their involvement for the region's stability and development.

Background

The European Union plays a major role in the efforts to foster dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo. Although members of the European Union are divided on the subject of Kosovo's status (five countries consider Kosovo a part of Serbia), there is a consensus among member countries that, both for the sake of Kosovo and the continuation of the European integration process of the nations of the Western Balkans, it is essential to safeguard both the stability and the economic well-being of Kosovo.

A necessary precondition for this is that Kosovo and Serbia – for now disregarding the question of status – establish bilateral relations in order for Kosovo to actively integrate into the region's economy and business networks, as well as gain the ability to be represented at international forums. Another precondition is that Kosovo reach out to its own minority groups, most importantly the country's biggest minority community, the Serbs, which account for the majority of the population in Kosovo's northern region.

Project Description

The Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy (CEID) and the ICDT will organize a one-day workshop where between sixty and seventy participants are expected to be present, primarily stakeholders of regional security and peacebuilding, international organizations and government representatives who deal with the region, embassies, representatives of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Hungarian Ministry of Defense, civil society institutions, experts in the field of intercultural dialogue and conflict resolution (peacebuilding, crisis management), student organizations, and other institutions.

The event will be the latest phase in a series of projects aiming to contribute to confidence-building in Kosovo successfully conducted by the ICDT. The workshop is expected to promote confidence-building in Serbia and Kosovo, and moreover between the majority and minority communities in Kosovo. Following the conclusion of the event, a comprehensive summary of the workshop will be prepared and circulated to all participants and interested organizations.