

THE ORGANISED CRIME AS A CONTEMPORARY NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY THREAT AND CHALLENGE FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS

Tanja Milosevska

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the dynamics and trends of organised crime as a security threat and challenge for the Western Balkans. This paper highlights the principal issues and concerns about non-traditional global security threats upon national security and regional stability. It reflects the widespread concern about the impact of three main sectors of organised crime activities-narcotic trade; illegal trafficking of small arms and light weapons and human trafficking are having on political and regional stability and economic vitality of the states in the Western Balkans.

Today's security challenges tend to be more disperse, less predictable, and more multidimensional than those of the Cold War era. In the past years, the security-policy milieu has changed from one dominated by the traditional threat of interstate war to one dominated by diffuse and (in most cases) non-military risks. Most of these challenges are not actually new at all, but since the end of the Cold War have just received more attention.

The primary challenge of analyzing contemporary non-traditional security threats is determining which ones are most critical to national and regional security.

As has become apparent by now, traditional security risks related to armed conflict in the Western Balkans have given rise to new, softer versions based on the spread of organised crime and governance failures caused by systemic corruption.

The problem of organised crime is further complicated by the fact that the most major criminals are often political and societal elites – powerful politicians, businesspeople, and unofficial power brokers. There is no economic motivation for organised crime to weaken, and thus it will continue to threaten the world order into 21st century. However, as the nature of crime changes and as new threats emerge, policies against crime will need to adjust.

Thus, being successful against the new challenges to the security and reforms in the Western Balkans is preconditioned on the leaving from the conventional state-oriented thinking.

Organised crime in the Western Balkans represents serious threat to peace, reconciliation, security, stability and sustainable development on individual, national, regional and international level.

Combating organised crime requires a pro-active thinking, which involves also the cooperation between the public and private sector. It is also necessary to develop a multidisciplinary approach to the phenomenon, a close cooperation between political decision factors, the executive institutions and legislative ones.

Responses to security threats considered in this sense should involve both state institutions and civil society. The promotion of security in such a globalized world depends on the willingness and ability of governments, citizens, corporations, and civil society organizations to contribute to the creation of a safe, equitable, and just global community. And the nature of these threats means that Republic of Macedonia cannot address them in isolation; threats to us are also threats to our neighbours.

2. ORGANISED CRIME AND SECURITY

The international security environment has gone through a period of major changes over the last twenty years, which makes the characterisation of the post-Cold War era difficult.

In this general context, Europe occupies a particular position. While Europe remains relatively safe and free of any major traditional threat, it is also becoming the object of some of the so-called new emerging threats, such as terrorism, organised crime, refugee flows, and environmental degradation.

This evolution raises the issue of its impact on the definition of security policies, which are supposed to tackle identified threats. In European security discourse, the non-traditional threats seem to have replaced the traditional threats emanating from states and articulated around the use of military force. For example, the 2003 *European Security Strategy* lists terrorism, WMD proliferation, failed states and organised crime as the key threats to European security, while only the threat of regional conflicts can be associated with traditional threats.

The growth of organised crime has emerged as a major security issue in the post-Cold War era. Ironically, an increasingly globalized economy that features international commerce, travel, and the movement of goods and services is also allowing the easy passage of illicit money, narcotics, illegal aliens, and nuclear material.¹

Be it in the tri-border area of Latin America, across the Western Balkans and former Soviet satellites, the 'golden triangle' of Far East Asia or right in the heart of Western Europe and North America, the impact of criminal enterprise on core national security is real.

In general, organised crime syndicates operate for one primary purpose: the acquisition of money or other forms of material gain. To earn these illicit profits, they engage in a number of criminal enterprises including narcotics and arms trafficking, human smuggling, prostitution, credit card fraud, extortion, gambling, contract murders, etc. The combined global gain of illicit crime has been estimated by US and UN sources at between 1 and 1.5 trillion dollars per year, exceeding the gross domestic product of all but a handful of highly developed countries. The economic and societal costs arising from organised crime are also high, adding up, according to one estimate, to roughly 40 billion pounds per year². In some cases, particular gangs will specialize in a particular type of criminal enterprise. Nigerian gangs specialize in heroin trafficking, while Colombian syndicates focus on cocaine. Certain Taiwanese gangs, meanwhile, have perfected the art of smuggling people. Among the various transnational crimes, however, narcotics trafficking is arguably the most significant and pernicious, not only because of the huge profits that are gained, but because this illegal ac-

¹ Roy Godson and Phil Williams, "Strengthening Cooperation Against Transnational Crime," *Survival*, (Autumn 1998).

² http://press.homeoffice.gov.uk/press-releases/New_Uk-Wide_Organised_Crime_Agen?version=1

tivity almost always results in significant collateral violence and destruction of human health. Globally, a narcotic trafficking is considered to be the world's third largest economy.³ In virtually every part of the world, drug trafficking is on the increase, despite numerous campaigns at various levels designed to eradicate it.

Organised crime presents a real and protracted threat to the nation state. It can undermine political institutions in countries with nascent democratic governments and foster mistrust of legitimate governments. Russian organised crime, for instance, has infiltrated that nation's society so deeply that many people no longer trust the government to provide a minimum level of protection for individuals, hence the rise of a private security industry.⁴ Criminal activity can also cause widespread death and social destruction. In the United States, for example, more than 15,000 American citizens lose their lives annually because of the narcotics trade (including collateral violence and health impacts).⁵ Money laundering can threaten a nation's banking system and undermine confidence in the entire financial system.

As Williams indicates, "criminal organisations add turbulence to domestic politics, and challenge the normal functioning of government and law. They are also linked in complex ways to the growth of the black market."⁶ Many would dispute that these are the only threats to global security in the future, and indeed, there are many challenges to peace and security today that are both military and non-military in character, but that do not touch on either of the above. But even if criminal organisations and the new competitiveness of black markets are not the only threats to global security, they are certainly two of the most pervasive. This happens because of the far-reaching destabilising effects they create. There is, for example, no proportionality in the way these threats affect governments and societies: the environment in which these threats operate and where the greatest amount of damage can be caused, is that of transitional systems.

From the security point of view, these illegal organisations pose a direct challenge to the judiciary and law enforcement capacity of all states. Indirectly, they generate a corrupting influence, eroding the effective functioning and the integrity of state institutions. But, in states in transition, these indirect threats include stopping the establishment of a legitimate state apparatus, which is essential for responsible governance. According to Williams, transnational criminal organisations are "the HIV virus of the modern state, breaking down; the immune system, and allowing the spread of infection into law enforcement agencies and other state institutions."⁷

First and foremost, organised crime could threaten the sovereignty of a nation-state. In international politics, nation-states are separated by frontiers and borders, which not only divide territories but also mark out different political and legal systems, level of economic development and political cultures.

³ Diane Coyle, "Drugs Trade 'the third largest economy,'" *The Independent (London)*, 22 February 1999.

⁴ Mark Galeotti, "Boom Time for the Russian 'Protectors,'" *Jane's Intelligence Review*, (1997):339.

⁵ Barry R. McCaffrey, (Prepared Testimony Before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Office of National Drug Control Policy, Federal News Service, 27 April 1999).

⁶ Phil Williams, *Transnational Criminal Organisations*, (Society Under Siege), 11-41.

⁷ Phil Williams, *Transnational Criminal Organisations*, (Society Under Siege), 36.

Secondly, in extreme cases, organised crime poses a threat and subsequently challenges the political power of the state itself. For example, in order to maintain their illicit activities, some organised crime groups are willing to use force against the state and its law enforcement agencies, which clearly undermines the state political power and monopoly on the use of force.

In addition to violence, organised crime groups also engage in large-scale corruption and money laundering in order to sustain their illicit activities, which, again, could threaten and undermine the stability of their host and home states, which in turn could threaten the national security. Corruption among state officials and judicial members would certainly weaken the state politically, economically and socially and these would severely threaten the national security because it affects the efficient functioning of the society in that state. Thus, it can be seen that violence and corruption could undermine political stability and hence pose threats to national security.⁸

The inability to control the importation of arms, people and drugs into their territory would cause the state to lose much of its significance. These threats and challenges clearly undermine state sovereignty in terms of their absolute control over their territory and these can be considered as threats to national security.

Although there is inevitably a vast range of conflicting literature on the subject, there is general consensus that organised crime is able to grow most effectively and become a serious threat to the state and civil society when:

The state is weak and/or corrupt. The very agencies meant to control crime are unable to do so or else unwilling, and instead are happy to be paid off by the criminals or even working with them. The legal, political and economic systems fail to meet the needs of society, or at least a significant section of it. When as a result of the above, the state lacks popular legitimacy.

For all of these reasons, the context in which criminal organisations operate must ultimately be seen as a direct challenge to the capacity states have firstly to govern themselves, and secondly to participate in multinational governance initiatives. In short, the complexity of organised crime activities not only undermines national security but also the international state system.

3. CRIME MARKETS

A quick search through Google for “drugs”, “organised crime” and “Balkans” reveals that the “black economy” is firmly associated with the region. The explanatory assumption appears to be: gangs of criminals drive southeast Europe into crime; it is intrinsic, and linked to international trade routes for drugs and other criminal activities. This underlying assumption is shared even by official documents. It is normal, there is crime and lawbreakers must be punished. Only rare voices call for a systemic and sober non-legalistic approach.

⁸ Milosevska Tanja, “Corruption as an Obstacle to International Development: The Macedonian Case”, *International Trade and Finance Association*, no.13, Florida, (2007), Working Papers 2007, <http://services.bepress.com/itfa/17th/art13>

Among them, Lord Ashdown recognizes the reasons: the Balkan region is “on Europe’s frontier, it is the corridor for crime and criminal products from Asia and the Caucasus’, it has weakened, fractured states and legal systems’, and “the black market n-crime stalks after war”.⁹

Another reasonable voice belongs to Mark Edmund Clark. He claims that:

“The operations of Balkans organised crime groups are nearly the same operations that one would see anywhere in the world. They provide goods and services in societies that the governments of those societies are unable to provide, may limit, or may restrict ... Balkan organised crime groups generally have functioned in complex networks that include: state security, intelligence, the military, political leaders, paramilitary groups, religious leaders, and business leaders in state-owned firms. They work in close cooperation to achieve mutual goals of increasing wealth and establishing greater influence in their states and sometimes other states within their region.”¹⁰

Bovenkerk highlighted the political, sociological, cultural and geographical factors, and observed that states with weak governments, remote, economically depressed regions or politically marginalized ethnic groups are often fertile grounds for organised crime groups to originate and flourish.¹¹

If the first phenomenon was of domestic origin, non-state criminality had a regional dimension. Interestingly enough, this ‘regional business’ was more focused on military equipment and arms trade. The dominant ethno-nationalistic agenda was used in order to create a better image for the arms business. Thus the rise of nationalism and outbreak of violent conflicts in the territory of former Yugoslavia provided a ‘golden opportunity’ for the Balkan mafia networks. The numerous ‘fronts’ could easily absorb the weapons and even asked for more. Paradoxically enough, at the expense of the nationalist fever and murderous politics of the leaders, the mafias could cooperate perfectly well without any nationalistic bias and with a lot of profit.¹²

Some have also emphasised the need to distinguish the organised crime groups of today from those which functioned during the Cold War era, stressing the need for conceptual distinction between the types of action which flourished under very different market conditions.¹³

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the Western Balkans has seen conflicts and political instability, poverty, weak democratic institutions, permeable borders and continues, in many countries, to see an abundance of corruption in state institutions and agencies such as the police, customs and the

⁹ Eugen, T.: *Balkans: Officials Pledge to Tackle the “Cancer” of Organized Crime*, in the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, <http://www.rferl.org/features/2002/11/26112002165722.asp?> (accessed 26 November, 2002).

¹⁰ Clark, M, E, “Understanding Balkan Organized Crime: A Key to Success in Iraq?”, *Columbia International Affairs*, (2003), http://www.ciao-net.org/special_section/iraq/papers/clm10/clm10.html?

¹¹ Bovenkerk, F, “Organized Crime and Ethnic Minorities: Is There a Link?”, *Transnational Organized Crime*, 4, (1998) 109-126.

¹² Vankovska Biljana, “*The Impact of conflict and Corruption on Macedonia’s Civil-Military Relations*”, in the Born Hans, ed, “*Civil-military relations in Europe: Learning from crisis and institutional change*”, (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, UK, 2006).

¹³ Vadim Volkov, “Organised Violence, Market Building, and State-Formation in Post-Communist Russia”, in the *Economic Crime in Russia*, ed. A.V.Ledeneva and M.Kurkchiyan (Kluwer Law International: Britain, 2000), 43-61.

judiciary. The region has proved to be a fertile soil for organised criminal activities, especially, drug trafficking.¹⁴

Organised crime in Western Balkans takes many forms and involves a large variety of criminal activities. However, there are three crime markets which are common to and considered to be major threats in most Western Balkans countries:

3.1. Illegal trafficking of small arms and light weapons

The wars in former Yugoslavia left massive quantities of weapons and other military hardware – from small arms to plastic explosives and even light artillery – outside of effective government control. Before its violent breakdown, Yugoslavia maintained the fourth largest army in Europe, with the matching military industrial complex.

A development inextricably linked to organised crime that should be of particular concern to the EU is the rise in armed crime and the trafficking of small arms and light weapons throughout Europe. Trafficking in arms, drugs and people are typically inter-connected, as criminals utilise established routes to branch out into different illicit commodities.

“Although the influx of weapons into the European Union (EU) is not overwhelming, there is a regular trickle of small arms primarily from the Balkan region, as well as from Eastern Europe, which could increase as the EU and the Schengen Rim both expand to the east and south-east. The collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the Warsaw Pact and the wars in former Yugoslavia has resulted in a relaxation of border controls and an excess supply of light weapons, some of which have found their way into Europe.”¹⁵

This new and favourable environment for the expansion and strengthening of organised crime groups was first established by the collapse of communist regimes, creating as it did internal power vacuums in these states to be filled by the nomenclature, increasing numbers of safe havens and ready availability of various types of resources (small arms and light weapons in particular).¹⁶

There are very clear connections between organised crime and illicit arms trafficking. Organised criminal groups act in accordance with the commercial rules of supply and demand that govern profit-making, and areas in which SALW are restricted or prohibited will be likely to be areas where there is conflict, thus presenting a prime business opportunity for organised crime groups.¹⁷

Although potentially extremely dangerous, arms trafficking are the least visible aspect of organised crime activity in the region. In essence, it unfolds on two levels: one is the trade of small arms,

¹⁴ Baghdoyan, S, “Drug trafficking in South-East Europe”, United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC), Vienna, www.unodc.org.

¹⁵ Domitilla Sagramoso, “The proliferation of illegal small arms and light weapons in and around the European Union: instability, organised crime and terrorist groups”, *Saferworld & Centre for Defence Studies*, (2001): 1–2.

¹⁶ Ingeborg Schroeder, “Transnational Organised Crime. Illicit Trade and European Security”, in *Illicit Trade and Organised Crime - New Threats to Economic Security?*, EU DG for External Relations (Italy, 1998): 77.

¹⁷ ‘International Crime Threat Assessment’, December 2000, www.whitehouse.gov.

mostly handguns and assault rifles, aimed at the Western European markets (Italy and Holland are the most common markets).

In addition, in the past years, a large quantity of surplus weapons owned by the national armies of the Western Balkans was destroyed as a part of a US-sponsored program. The program specifically targeted shoulder-launched anti-aircraft and armour-piercing rockets, as well as other weapons which could be used for terrorist activities.

Still, vast quantities of weapons left over from the war are still owned by civilians or poorly guarded, and may easily find their way in to the hands of terrorists. Not nearly enough effort has been made, for example, to secure industrial and military-grade plastic explosives, which are manufactured in several factories throughout former Yugoslavia, and can easily be obtained at the black market.

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) are both a means of protecting the illegal activities of organised crime groups and a base of activity and source of income for groups engaged in the trafficking of illegal commodities. Illicit arms trafficking present a serious threat to security within and outside the Western Balkans.

3.2. Drug production and trafficking

Europe is probably the most profitable drug market globally. Not only the EU with 1 to 1.5 million drug users, but also some of the new EU members as well as other central and eastern European states are important drug consuming countries. Organised crime-related drug production and trafficking will remain a major threat in Europe, in particular with regard to amphetamine-type substances and heroin.

While all the varieties of illicit drugs, from home-grown cannabis to synthetic drugs are easily available in the Balkans, the heroin trade is the one that causes most concern. Because of its profitability and the human cost it inflicts through the destruction of lives of the most productive strata of the population (the average age of the heroin addict is 25), and the spread of AIDS.

Although heroin trade remains the largest and most malignant problem in the Western Balkans, other drugs are also present. The abuse of cocaine and amphetamine-type-stimulants (ATS), such as ecstasy, amphetamine, and methamphetamine, is on the rise, and cannabis is omnipresent.

Serbian, Macedonian, Kosovar and Albanian clans established a solid network reaching into all parts of the South Eastern Balkans. They created drug routes and formed 'good' relationship with local police officers, civil servants, businessmen, and former intelligence officers. Via the Balkan route, heroin travels through Turkey, Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania to the Western European markets. The estimated value of goods shipped might amount to 400 billion USD a year. Albanian drug dealers, for example, ship heroin from Asia's Golden Crescent, frequently from Afghanistan. From there, the heroin passes through Iran to Turkey, where it is refined. From there, the heroin is taken by the Balkan/Albanian drugs dealers. According to the US State Department, four to six tones of heroin move through Turkey every month. The Albanian "Medellin connection" is particularly strong in Italy, where it operates with local mafia. Also Scandinavian countries claim that Al-

banians control 80% of the heroin market there. Switzerland says 90% of its drug market is connected to Albanians and German law enforcement agencies claim that Albanians form the largest group involved in heroin trafficking.¹⁸

Illegal drugs and the violence associated with their trafficking, threaten to overload criminal justice systems, overwhelm health care systems, and even undermine democratic political systems.

All the signals from the past years indicate an expansion of the threat posed by narcotics trafficking.

Trafficking in drugs not only affected numerous lives, but, through links to terrorism and other organised criminal activities such as money laundering, corruption, arms and the illegal movement of nuclear, biological and chemical materials, threatened the security and stability of the international community.¹⁹

Drug production and trafficking is a problem that can be addressed only through coordinated actions undertaken at national, regional and international levels.

3.3. People as a commodity in the form of smuggling in persons and trafficking in human beings

Although human trafficking is an ancient phenomenon, it has been recognized as a serious problem by the West relatively recently, and even more recently in the Western Balkans, where it emerged during and after the Yugoslav wars, and quickly became rampant. The destruction of social fabric caused by the war, coupled with massive migrations, and the economic collapse, worked together to create fertile ground for dealers in human beings.

People are exploited as a commodity by organised crime primarily in the forms of trafficking in human beings and smuggling in persons, and both forms have serious human rights implications. The Western Balkans remains of particular importance with regard to trafficking. Violence and intimidation against victims are frequent; and corruption is reported to be widespread as a tool facilitating trafficking. It would seem that often, trafficking in human beings is treated as a question of illegal immigration, which means that victims are deported rather than provided with support and protection and that the organised crime background is ignored. Smuggling in persons and trafficking in human beings are likely to expand with negative impact on human rights, and they will continue to generate political controversies.²⁰

In the Western Balkans, this activity roughly falls into three sub-categories:

1. Trafficking of women, mostly for sexual exploitation;
2. trafficking of men, usually poor migrants, for illegal labour markets; and

¹⁸ The Center for Peace in the Balkans, Research Analysis, May 2000, www.balkanpeace.org.

¹⁹ Tanja Milosevska, "The international security dimension of narcotic trade", *Contemporary Macedonian defense* 13, (2006): 185.

²⁰ Council of Europe Octopus Programme Strasbourg, 6 September, 2004.

3. Trafficking of children, mostly Roma, and engaging them as beggars, thieves, and burglars.

All three categories were, and still are, present in the Western Balkans.

The main routes towards economically and socially well-off countries of Western Europe are the following: firstly, via Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and partially Slovenia to Italy or Austria; secondly, from Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro to Albania, and across the Adriatic Sea into Italy; thirdly, from Romania, Bulgaria and Albania through Macedonia to Greece. In addition to this transnational dimension of human trafficking, internal trafficking from rural to urban areas is not decreasing and is even more difficult to be traced. In some cases corrupt local officials protect traffickers and thus ensure an unimpeded flow of women and children trafficked within the country.²¹

Only when the problem became so acute that it became obvious that it transcends its most common manifestations – prostitution, beggary, and illegal border-crossings—it became apparent that the urgent and coordinated action was necessary.

To be effective, anti-trafficking strategies must target both the supply side (the traffickers) and the demand side (owners, consumers or, in the case of trafficking for sexual exploitation, the sex buyers). On the supply side, the conditions that drive trafficking must be dealt with through efforts to: alert communities to the dangers of trafficking, improve and expand educational and economic opportunities for vulnerable groups, promote equal access to education, educate people regarding their legal rights, and create better and broader life opportunities.

Regarding traffickers, law enforcement must: vigorously prosecute traffickers and those who aid and abet them, fight public corruption which facilitates and profits from the trade, identify and interdict trafficking routes through better intelligence gathering and coordination, clarify legal definitions of trafficking and coordinate law enforcement responsibilities, and train personnel to identify and direct trafficking victims to appropriate care.

On the demand side, persons who exploit trafficked persons must be identified and prosecuted. Employers of forced labour and exploiters of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation must be named and appropriately punished. With regard to sex slavery, public awareness campaigns must be conducted in destination countries to make it harder for trafficking to be concealed or ignored. Victims must be rescued, rehabilitated, reintegrated into their families, or offered alternatives if unable to return to their home communities.²²

Local, state, national, and regional efforts to fight trafficking must be coordinated. By drawing public attention to the problem, governments can enlist the support of the public. Anti-trafficking strategies and programs developed with input from stakeholders (civil society and NGOs) are the

²¹ Dejan Anastasijevic, “Organized Crime in the Western Balkans” (paper presented at the first annual conference on Human Security, Terrorism and Organized Crime in the Western Balkan Region, HUMSEC Project, Ljubljana, November 23-26, 2006).

²² Trafficking in persons report, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, June 2006, <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/>.

most effective and more likely to succeed as they bring a comprehensive view to the problem. Nations should cooperate more closely to deny traffickers legal sanctuary and to facilitate their extradition for prosecution. Such cooperation should also aim to facilitate the voluntary and humane repatriation of victims. Programs that protect witnesses should be encouraged.

4. CONCLUSION-WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT ORGANISED CRIME?

Organised crime is likely to remain priority concerns of European societies for the foreseeable future. However, as the nature of crime changes and as new threats emerge, policies against crime will need to adjust.

A few scholars believe that since a significant number of organised crime groups are utilizing various types of fluid network structures, combating them would benefit from a strategy that focuses on network analysis, in concrete terms as well as in cyberspace. Experts believe that in combating organised crime, there is a need for a number of strategies. These include: a greater political commitment by governments around the globe to recognize the pernicious and transnational nature of organised crime and to combat it; a great need for cooperation for mutual legal assistance and sharing information in the form of international agreements and treaties among states and within states among departments and levels of government, to develop and implement a multi-national and multi-disciplinary approach; a need for increasing public awareness regarding organised crime with a focus on reducing the demand for illegal products and services-to prevent corruption at all levels in the civil society and to enhance loyalty to the legitimate state governing system; the need for strategic, systematic and pro-active collection, analysis and sharing of intelligence, a need for pro-active development and application of the legal apparatus; and for “a systematic threat assessment of known organised crime groups through collecting information on their criminal activities, financial sophistication, violence potential, market/territory and ability to corrupt” as well as through network analysis techniques; and finally, a need for extensive training of law enforcement communities internationally about the complexity of organised crime and the tools for combating it.

Organised crime presents an immense security challenge to state integrity both internally and externally. Organised criminal groups trafficking narcotics, humans, or weapons pose an especially challenging threat to state integrity. Crime groups have dramatically expanded their reach through the globalisation process with greater access to advanced technology, international travel, communication and markets. Some organised crime groups maintain close ties to global terrorist groups, financing and supplying them with arms or helping with logistics.

It has become obvious that coordinated international action against Balkan organised crime is virtually impossible. It requires a multidimensional approach: first, in western Europe (except perhaps Spain, Scandinavia and the UK) the authorities should address both the demand for black services and products originated in the Balkans; second, the carrot and stick approach including EU accession for the countries of the Western Balkans should be employed; and third, there should be concerted international cooperation to support local national efforts to eliminate formal and informal structures linked to organised crime.

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Tanja Miloševska is PhD Candidate at the Institute of Defense and Peace Studies at the University Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, where she also holds the position of a teaching assistant. She has successfully completed the Junior Faculty Development Program in the field of Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies at George Washington University.