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International Workshop

Under the direction of

**Gernot Eler, MP, President Southeast Europe Association, Berlin, and
Roderich Kiesewetter, MP, Vice-President Southeast Europa Association, Berlin**

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE AND EUROPE 2014:

RETHINKING AND REFILLING THE TOOLBOX

Berlin, German Bundestag, 24 April 2013

Conference venue **Berlin, German Bundestag, Dorotheenstrasse 93**

Conference Committee

Johanna Deimel, Deputy Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

Tobias Flessenkemper, German Institute for International and Security Affairs; Member of the Board Southeast Europe Association; Berlin

Wim van Meurs, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen; Member of the Board Southeast Europe Association; Nijmegen

Franz-Lothar Altmann, University Bucharest; Member of the Board Southeast Europe Association; Munich

Conference language **English**

The workshop will take place under **Chatham House Rule** in order to facilitate an unrestricted and open exchange of views and ideas.

AGENDA

Taking stock of EU enlargement policies and instruments towards the Western Balkans was one of the topics of the international workshop the Southeast Europe Association (SOG) has organized at the German Bundestag in April 2011. 2013 marks the tenth anniversary of the Thessaloniki European Council confirming the European perspective for the countries of the Western Balkans. Moreover, 2014 symbolically reminds us of the centenary of the assassination of the heir to the Habsburg throne in Sarajevo and the beginning of the First World War. Also today the fortunes of the Balkans and Europe as a whole are closely linked.

09:00 – 09:15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Franz-Lothar Altmann, Bucharest University / Member of the Board,
Southeast Europe Association, Munich

09:15 – 10:45 THE BALKANS AND EUROPE AFTER CROATIA'S ACCESSION

Moderator: Wim van Meurs, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen; Member of the Board, Southeast Europe Association, Nijmegen

Rapporteur: Hansjörg Brey, Executive Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

The Euro-crisis has plunged the European Union into a crisis that runs much deeper than a mere phase of economic and financial malaise. Conversely, after the EU accession of Croatia scheduled for July 1st, 2013, the process of enlargement seems to run out of steam. The member states are presently utterly preoccupied with the structural flaws and the conflicting strategies for the EU's internal difficulties. The associated and candidate countries are struggling to prove their willingness to implement reforms and resolve their longstanding conflicts.

On the Eastern border of the EU a stalemate seems to emerge. There are numerous obstacles to further enlargement after Croatia, both on the part of the EU and on the part of the candidates and associated countries. Hence, the integration process for those countries (Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo and Turkey) is expected to be in limbo for a significant number of years. Even for Montenegro the final closure of membership negotiations may be postponed due to pseudo-technical hindrances.

In Turkey the high annual growth rates are a stark contrast to the financial crisis and the economic weakness of the European common market. Too many political issues between Ankara and Brussels have put the accession negotiations on hold for a number of years and both parties seem to lose interest in full membership for Turkey.

Albeit on a different level, relations between the EU and an increasingly authoritarian and Moscow-oriented Ukraine under Yanukovych remain strained, too. Hence, the small republic of Moldova with its recent turn towards Europa, might round off the small group of future members to the Southeast of the European Union. The perspective for this group, however, is bleak and distant, and weak in terms of tangible medium-term targets and benefits.

Inputs (5 min) by:

Jacques Rupnik, Centre for International Studies and Research CERI, Paris

Ognyan Minchev, Executive Director Institute for Regional and International Studies, Sofia

Marta Szpala, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw

Corina Stratulat, Policy Analyst, European Policy Center, Brussels

10:45 – 12:15

COSTS AND BENEFITS OF SOUTH-EASTERN ENLARGEMENT

Moderator: Heinz Jürgen Axt, Vice President Southeast Europe Association, Duisburg

Rapporteur: Franz Lothar Altmann, Bucharest University / Member of the Board, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

The open bilateral questions in the Balkans, and the impact of the European crisis on the region, on the other hand, call for a rethinking of the Thessaloniki agenda. And so the increasingly realistic options of multi-speed integration, partial membership and possible exits from the Union. What are the costs and benefits of a medium-term widening from South-eastern enlargement for both sides? Scenarios for the present decade may include a further tightening of accession criteria and 'enlargement aversion' on the part of national politicians and constituencies in the EU. Conversely, the crisis-ridden EU may also lose part or much of its attraction for candidate or associate countries without much of a perspective for a substantial next step in integration benefits and trust-building vis-à-vis the voters in South-eastern Europe.

Inputs (5 min) by:

Alida Vračić, Executive Director, Think Tank POPULARI, Sarajevo

Tobias Flessenkemper, German Institute for International and Security Affairs; Member of the Board Southeast Europe Association; Berlin

Dušan Reljić, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin

Dirk Lange, Head of Department Croatia and Montenegro, European Commission DG Enlargement, Brussels

12:15 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:30

THE TOOLBOX AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS OF INTEGRATION

Moderator: Roderich Kiesewetter, MP, Vice President Southeast Europe Association, Berlin

Rapporteur: Johanna Deimel, Deputy Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

Based on the assumption of a longer pause or an end to the classical process of enlargement, but at the same time with a continued shared interest in enhanced relations between the EU and the Balkans, a rethinking of the toolbox is mandatory. And so is an 'out of the box' quest for alternative and additional instruments. Reassessment of the regional approach and the recent strategic use of the integration leverage in open conflicts in the region seem necessary. The potential of IPA II funds and/or visa liberalization as reform incentives are open to debate in the present situation. So are the criteria of regional cooperation and ICTY cooperation as part of the political dimension of integration.

Inputs (5 min) by:

Ditmir Bushati, MP, Chair of Committee for European Integration Albania, Tirana

Milan Pajević, Director of the European Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade

Lidija Topić, Advisor, Regional Cooperation Council Liaison Office in Brussels

15:30 – 17:00 THE WESTERN BALKANS 2014

Moderator: Gernot Erler, MP, President Southeast Europe Association, Berlin

Rapporteur: Tobias Flessenkemper, German Institute for International and Security Affairs; Member of the Board Southeast Europe Association; Berlin

The prospects of 2013-2014 for EU-Balkan relations raise the pivotal question, whether the EU strategy reaches beyond ad-hoc responses to Balkan crises. A workable division of labour between the Commissioner for Enlargement, the High Representative and the EEAS is emerging. Yet, the question whether European strategies vis-à-vis potential members and neighbours is shaped by Brussels or in a handful of national capitals, remains to be answered. Conversely, despite a plethora of regional organisations and forums, the Western Balkans is not anywhere near a joint approach for the continued attention of the EU for its shared interests.

Inputs (5 min) by:

Rainer Stinner, MP, German Bundestag; Member of the Board Southeast Europe Association, Berlin

Stiglmyer Alexandra, European Stability Initiative (ESI), Brussels

Tim Judah, Journalist, The Economist, London

Tvrtko Jakovina, Professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb

*****End of the Workshop*****

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Western Balkans / Region

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