**International video conference "Security Crises in the 21st Century and How to Manage Them"**

October 13 and 14, 2020

International video conference **"Security Crises in the 21st Century and How to Manage Them",** organized with logistical and IT support from the Institute for Standardization of Serbia on October 13 and 14, 2020, co-organized by the Center for Risk Analysis and Crisis Management from Belgrade (CARUK), in colaboration with the Croatian Association for International Studies (HUMS), the Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO) and the Libertas International University, brought together leading scientists and experts from countries in the region, as well as the UK, to exchange experiences in risk and crisis management, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the migrant crisis and many social and economic challenges across Europe and in the countries of the region. The organizers of the videoconference opted for a multidisciplinary approach to contemporary security challenges, aware that a long-term solution must be sought in connecting different academic disciplines, primarily biomedical, technical and political sciences, as well as security studies. Precisely because of this, the conference enabled professional and scientific authorities of various profiles, as well as holders of public office and members of crisis teams and headquarters from countries in the region to articulate their views in the context of security challenges and strengthening of regional response.

Among the security challenges, COVID-19 stood out in particular, a pervasive crisis that shook the foundations of an already fragile world political and economic order. "Risks have been released from Pandora's box thanks to global connectivity," was said at the beginning of the video conference. The topics of the first day of the conference, moderated by prof. dr. sc. Zoran Keković (CARUK) and doc. dr. sc. Jadranka Polović (HUMS), were how to restore citizens' trust in leaders and institutions that lead them through the crisis? What does good leadership mean in situations of health and other safety challenges whenit was absent even in developed democracies, despite the fact that crises are a reality. Participants wereprof. dr. sc. Vlatko Cvrtila, security expert and rector of Vern University in Zagreb, prof. dr. sc. Slobodan P. Simonović, Member of the Royal Canadian Academy and Professor at the University of Western Ontario in Canada, world expert in Hydraulic Engineering and Disaster Relief, prof. dr. sc. Aleksandar Jovanović, Director of the European Virtual Institute for Integrated Risk Management in Stuttgart, as well as British experts: Dr. David Rubens, analyst and founder of the Institute for Strategic Risk Management in the UK, and Lord Toby Harris, a longtime member of the House of Lords and a member of the COVID-19 Parliamentary Committee and the UK National Security Committee. At the end of the first day of the conference, doc. dr. sc. Stjepan Šterc from the Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb, spoke about migrations security challenges, while the actions and criticisms that the European Union faced during the crisis were discussed by doc. dr. sc. Robert Mikac from the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Zagreb.

The second day of the Conference was entirely dedicated to the COVID-19 pandemic, so besides a number of eminent scientists and academics, government officials had the opportunity to exchange experiences, good and bad practices relevant for formulating guidelines to address specific challenges and strengthen system resilience in strategic and operational terms. "Behind the scenes of the struggle against the virus, various other battles are being fought, geopolitical, socio-psychological, media ... And the production of vaccines has turned into a fierce geopolitical competiotion," said prof. dr. sc. Elizabeta Ristanović, moderator of the second day of the Conference, while the leading experts from the region - prof. dr. sc. Ana Gligić, a distinguished virologist and heroine in the fight against the smallpox epidemic in 1972, dr. sc. Nela Sršen, surgeon and honorary consul of the Republic of Croatia in Italy, prof. dr. sc. Velo Markovski, infectologist from the Medical Faculty of Goce Delcev University in Štip (Northern Macedonia), prof. dr. sc. Gordan Lauc, scientist, visiting professor at Johns Hopkins University and member of the Scientific Council of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, as well as members of the crisis staff - dr. sc. Damir Trut, Assistant Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia and Deputy Chief of the Civil Protection Headquarters, Dr. Verica Jovanović, Director of the Institute of Public Health of Serbia "Dr. Milan Jovanović Batut", Miljan Rančić, representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) Office in Serbia, Dr. Nebojša Kavarić, director of the Health Center Podgorica and a member of the Crisis Medical Staff of Montenegro, doc. dr. sc. Golubinka Bosevska from Northern Macedonia, advisor to the WHO Office in Serbia - tried to answer the uncertainties of the fight against the pandemic in the winter ahead. Mirsada Hukić, a specialist in microbiology, a member of the European Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as prof. dr. sc. Drago Nedić, professor at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Belgrade, and member of the Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Srpska for COVID-19.

**The most important messages of the international scientific-professional video conference "Security Crises in the 21st Century and How to Manage Them",**

1. **Climate, environmental, demographic, geopolitical, and other changes occurring in the modern world, with security implications in the form of epidemics and pandemics, migrant, biotheoretical and other threats produce dramatic consequences in terms of their controllability. In addition, new dimensions of uncertainty following the COVID-19 pandemic have been achieved and continue to advance in molecular biology, biotechnology, nanotechnology, and other achievements of the technological revolution with far-reaching consequences for human civilization.**
2. **The biggest consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, apart from health, are suffered by economic and educational systems.**
3. **In anticipation of a rapid growthof the number of patients, followed by the introduction of even more restrictive measures, while weakening the health and economic system to effectively withstand more severe and complex scenarios, and a marked confidence decline in the institutions of the system, societies are less prepared today, than we were at the beginning of a pandemic.**
4. **There are no universal solutions: where there are strong systems and stable institutions, as well as a high degree of social consensus, including security as a matter of personal responsibility, COVID 19 crisis response mechanisms will be less repressive and response of key actors more balanced.**
5. **Despite all the challenges, raising public and decision-maker awareness, strengthening of the system, strong leadership, and citizens' trust in the institutions of the system, relying on their own strength, are the safest strategy in facing modern security challenges.**
6. **Health systems, authorities, as well as the population, are key links in the fight against COVID-19.**
7. **Involvement of the academic community is crucial for the management of the COVID-19 security crisis.**
8. **Strengthening of regional response to the COVID19 pandemic, to which this conference should contribute, would allow countries in the region to take more balanced approach in dealing with the pandemic, while contributing to a faster recovery of the devastated health, social and economic system and quality of life,and higher level of preparedness and response to the crises that await in the future.**

**Conference Organizing Committee**