

Commission: OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Council

Subject: « Towards a strategy of cooperation between the OSCE and the European Union to counter terrorism and cyberwarfare ? »

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We are one of the successor states of Yugoslavia, from the which we gained our independence in 1991. Our current government is the [Republic of Macedonia](#), which is a Parliamentary Republic. It is based on the Constitution adopted in 1991, which established a parliamentary representative democratic republic, with separation of powers, **guaranteeing democratic freedom**. Our **Chief of State** is the **president Stevo Pendarovski**, and our **Head of Government** is the **prime minister Dimitar Kovacevski**. Our 4 deputies represent different areas that are crucial to the well functioning of our government: **political system and inter-community relations**, good **governance policies**, **economic** affairs/coordination of economic sectors investments, and **European Affairs**.

In fact, we are a **candidate for joining the European Union**, and are **continuously improving** our political system as well as our economy and inter-ethnic relations. The OSCE has come for missions and ensured that we are doing the elections correctly. We are very keen to the **EU**, of the which we hope to make part of soon, and to the **OSCE** (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Council), as these two organizations **fight for peace in Europe**, trying to make it a more united, less austere place where citizens have freedom.

Nowadays, **cyberwarfare and terrorism** are starting to be the most prominent ways of breaking the peace in our world. That is why these two organizations which have the **same ending goal** should **work together against those constraints** to achieve a more secure Europe. The OSCE counting with over 57 participating states in North America, Europe and Asia, and the UE counting with 27 European countries; the **union** of these 2 organizations could be very **powerful**.

Towards a strategy of cooperation between the OSCE and the European Union to counter terrorism and cyberwarfare?

This suggests that we need to start the path to this cooperation, going in the right direction, forwards and not backwards in time and in progress. It all is a process, and a **plan of action** involving a **relationship between those two organizations** needs to be **designed** to achieve our **long-term aim: to counter terrorism and cyberwarfare**.

But what are terrorism and cyberwarfare and how do they affect our country?

According to the [FBI](#), terrorism is defined as “violent, criminal acts committed by individuals and/or groups who are inspired by, or associated with, designated foreign terrorist organizations or nations”.

[Cyberwarfare](#) is when are produced one or multiple **cyber attacks**, attempts to damage a computer network or system, aiming at the **government** or at the **civilian infrastructure** of a country. These attacks can **distort critical systems** such as healthcare, banks, or online and even physical supermarkets, due to the increasing technology surrounding them. This can lead to a poor quality of life of the population that is deprived from their basic needs, even in some cases leading to death.

As the world becomes more **interconnected**, this way used by nations to attack other nations is a growing concern. **Cyberwarfare is more and more prevalent**, especially now in the **period of war**

between Ukraine and Russia: these cyber attacks are a new form of war, and are very dangerous. We haven't yet realized the real danger of those types of offense, and it is essential that **we, as a community, act now to counter them**. In fact, Russia has already attacked the power services in Ukraine, and spread a virus on the Ukrainian computers erasing all of the data in them.

Our country's **ministry of health and education** as well some **websites with our domain** have suffered **cyberattacks from multiple groups**, such as a Greek hacking group calling itself the "Powerful Greek Army". We have formed a [National Council for Cyber Security](#), bringing together our ministers of interior, defence and information society. Additionally, we are part of the **NATO**, to the which belong cyber-security experts who can help us in case of emergency. But we need more defences against these attacks, and building relationships with other countries can help them and us too.

On another hand, **terrorism** is also an issue in North Macedonia. The main group that affects our country is the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (ISIS). We have [therefore cooperated with U.S. CT efforts](#); and are a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Our ministry of Interior's (MOI's) named "Terrorism and Violent Extremism Sector" has performed law enforcement-related counter-terrorism functions. We have a National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism (NCCVECT), which was established in 2017. In partnership with the OSCE, the NCCVECT has organized a series of roundtables across the country to raise awareness around the national counter terrorism strategies and action plans.

Additionally, our country has adopted and signed a counter terrorism action plan among **Western Balkan countries** (Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Republic of Kosovo, Republic of North Macedonia, and Republic of Serbia).

In conclusion, North Macedonia is constantly working towards progress, and is active in numerous organizations such as the OSCE and the NATO. We are making efforts to counter terrorism and cyberwarfare, but **we believe that joint efforts yield better results**. We are therefore interested in further cooperation against terrorism and cyberwarfare, and in building stronger cyber-security legislation and international agreements. As a country having suffered the war and in the brink of entering the European Union, it offers the perfect point for agreements. As the Geneva convention established rules for the war, new international agreements are needed for the cyberspace, especially in the recent context of war. Recent nation-state attacks require a new call for defence and dialogue.

For all of the countries, especially the ones in the European Union or that are part of the OSCE: North Macedonia is willing to **make connections** with **you** in order to **promote security and fight against terrorism and cyberwarfare!**