



**REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR
Deputy Minister**

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**Address by the Deputy Minister of Interior of the Republic of Albania,
Mr. Gent Strazimiri,
at the OSCE Follow-up Public-Private Partnership Conference:
“Partnership of State Authorities, Civil Society and
the Business Community in Combating Terrorism”**

September 15, 2008,

Distinguished Excellences,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor and privilege to present to this very honorable audience, endeavors and results achieved by the structures of the Ministry of Interior concerning the very sensitive topics we are discussing, and challenges they face.

We are living in a world that is developing and changing rapidly, with the rhythms of technology and communication. We live “online”, we face challenges for security “in real time” and this is why the reaction to them shall be very prompt. Timing, incertitude, disagreements in reaction might be fatal for all of us.

In this context, allow me to identify some of the main threats for the security and stability in our region:

1. Ongoing consolidation of Democratic Institutions;
2. Corruption;
3. Organized Crime and Illegal Trafficking;

These threats, along with the global risk of terrorism, make a very complex challenge for each of us.

Strengthening of new democracies through strengthening and functioning of democratic institutions; supporting nations and governments lead by principles of democracy, human dignity, philosophy of LIFE protection; unity of all of us in

the battle against kleptocracy and anarchism, fight against terrorism and organized crime, it is at the same time Challenge and Solution.

Fight without compromise against organized crime, a main efficient tool of terrorism for „transactions of necessary logistic“; strict border control, which cannot be achieved without a „zero tolerance“ approach; fight against corruption, in all governmental and political levels, and against its ties with the organized crime, is the only solution.

We believe the control of the territory, in particular borders control, as an obligation of every country, is of an extraordinary importance. If, what I would call „Culture of Death“, finds even a secure corner in this planet, the security of each of us, of the whole mankind, would be in danger.

What we also consider a key to success, is the exchange of information among specialized agencies in all the corners of the globe, as well as a coordinated reaction of operational structures in the field.

For many years my country has been classified on the top of the list of problematic countries, regarding the level of criminality, criminal organizations that direct illegal trafficking in the region and in Europe, as an exporting country for drugs, prostitutes, arms, clandestine, etc.

But, the network of terrorism and crime can not be more organized than the network of strong institutions of democratic states. It is under this philosophical conviction that the Albanian Government has undertaken a range of reforms, in the central and local levels of the whole public administration.

It is under the platform “Small and efficient Government, zero tolerance against corruption and organized crime”, of the Albanian Government, that the Ministry of Interior is undertaking a whole range of reforms.

The Ministry of Interior was established in 2005, and incorporated the Ministry of Public Order and the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization. Being entirely reformed under a new concept, the Ministry of Interior is bearing the heaviest burden of the legal institutional transformation of the public administration, and it is a promoter and implementer of a number of very important actions, such as:

Slide 2: The Sector which has gone under the hugest changes, qualitative and quantitative ones, is the Department of Border and Migration. It functions as a pyramid with direct command and control, independent in managing its human, financial and logistical resources. It is spread and functions in 8 regions of the territory of Albania, according to this diagram.

Slide 3: Compiling of the electronic register of citizens, along with the digitalization of data for the existing addresses.

Slide 4: By concluding this process we will be ready to start to produce and distribute Identity Cards and Electronic Passports. The whole system is planned to be completed before the parliamentary elections of 2009.

The Identity Card will be made of Polycarbonate, with two chips, with and without contact. This card will have three functions: the main as an priority is "Identification" card, secondly it will be valid for all "e-government" services, and thirdly it will serve as a trust travel document.

Slide 6: The Biometric Passport will be one of the most secure ones, since the technology to produce them is of the present - day.

Slide 7: Considering the Readmission Agreements as important tools for the prevention of illegal migration, Albania has signed agreements with a number of European Countries, which are completed with protocols of implementation. During the last years of co-operation, a considerable number of Albanians were readmitted and a number of foreigners with illegal stay in Albania were returned.

Slide 8: Furthermore, we are experiencing the expertise of the joint management of the border crossing points with our neighboring countries. The first example is the border crossing point of Muriqan, in border with Montenegro. In the near future we hope to accomplish the same experience with Kosovo, FYROM, and Greece. Now we are in the phase of implementing agreements regarding joint border crossing points.

Slide 9: The most dynamic sector of the State Police is of course the Anti - Organized Crime Sector. The results have vertical line towards the fight against drugs and illegal trafficking, in particular arms trafficking and smuggling of persons.

Illegal border crossing: Concerning this period these are the data from the Department of Border and Migration regarding persons returned, in different categories, in the border crossing points.

2006	-	61884
2007	-	62426
2008 (up to 8. 9.2008)	-	50779

Arms trafficking: During this period there were identified 21 cases, out of which 3 in 2005, 4 in 2006, 8 in 2007 and 6 in 2008.

Slide 10: These results have been achieved due to a very serious work carried out by anti - drugs and anti - trafficking structures. Very important has been the very

intensive and successful co - operation with homologous structures of the European Union Countries. Bilateral Agreements of Co-operation are signed with the countries showed in the presentation, and are being very efficiently implemented.

Slide 11-12-13: Here are some concrete results from the police co-operation, exchange of information and the joint activity of operational structures. Joint under - coded, Italian - Albanian operation "Harem", has been successfully accomplished in December 2005. This operation lead to 4 other operations initiated by the Albanian Police. During the period 2006 - 2007 up to February 2008, a number of considerable European police operations were carried out, suppressing some criminal organizations spread from Turkey to Scandinavia, from the coasts of Atlantic to Moldavia.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

These were, in brief, some of the results achieved by the Albanian Government, in the implementation of the platform, "zero tolerance" against corruption and organized crime, with a direct impact in the fight against terrorism. Although we are in the middle of the road and we are aware of this, our will to progress does not change, and the positive results are an encouragement to go on.

I thank you!