

FIRST CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT FOR BULGARIA UNDER THE EC "PREVENTION AND FIGHT AGAINST CRIME" PROGRAMME

- ☒ Last week, Bulgaria signed the first co-operation agreement under the European Commissions' (EC) "Prevention and fight against crime" programme for the period 2007 – 2010 . The aim of the program is to build partnership among EU member states and to develop common strategies in crime fighting. According to Bulgarian daily Trud, the draft documents on the new national security agency are already prepared and will be submitted to Parliament in September. This was a project initiated by Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev and it should unite the functions of the National Security Service from the Interior Ministry, the military Counterintelligence Service from the Defense Ministry and Financial investigation Bureau from the Finance Ministry. [SEETimes; BNA 21/08/07]

CRITIQUES FOR BOSNIAN SERB ENTITY'S PRIME MINISTER

- ☒ The international envoy in Bosnia and Hercegovina, Miroslav Lajcak, warned Republika Srpska Prime Minister, Milorad Dodik, to stop with

provocations that are questioning the constitutional order and by that questioning the sovereignty and territorial integrity of BiH, as well. The critique comes as a response to Prime Minister Dodik's suggestions that the entity could secede. On Monday, he said in an interview that RS is a "permanent category, while BiH is unlikely to last long as a state." Also, in his recent Interview for BiH daily "Dan" he repeated threats to call an independence referendum in Republica Srpska that would allow it to secede from BiH. According to Lajcak, this will destroy ongoing reforms towards Euro-Atlantic integration and reminded that in a declaration signed ahead of the October 2006 elections in BiH, Dodik pledged that his Alliance of Social Democrats would "fully comply" with the Dayton Accords and that he would accept sanctions if he fails to abide by its terms. Mr. Lajcak added that international community "will not tolerate any attempts to undermine the Dayton Peace Agreement and it will not remain passive in the face of provocative statements and acts". BiH has not signed SAA yet and probably it will not happened by the end of this year. First priority on BiH agenda are police reforms in the country. [SEETimes 23/08/07; Reuters 22/08/07]

HAGUE IS SATISFIED WITH SERBIA'S PROGRESS

- ☒ Serbian War Crimes Prosecutor Vladimir Vukčević announced that Chief Hague

Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte is very satisfied with Serbia's war-crime prosecution results and she will soon visit Belgrade. He underlined that progress has been made towards finalizing the cooperation with Hague Tribunal which is one of the priorities of Serbian Government. One of the major reasons for this, he added, was the arrest of Zdravko Tolimir and it is an important step for arresting the remaining fugitives. [B92, 24/08/07]

TURKEY TO FINALIZE FOUR-MONTHS-LONG ELECTION PROCESS

- ☒ Turkish Daily News announced that the country will at last finish the long election proces and will finally elect the 11th President. The third round will take place on Tuesday where 276 votes (simple majority) will be necessary to elect the head of the country. It is expected that the ruling Justice and Development Party's (AKP) candidate and current Foreign Minister, Abdullah Gül, is likely be elected on Aug 28, which will also open the way for Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to announce his second cabinet. His opponent in final round is Nationalist Movement Party's (MHP) Sabathattin Cakmakogu. [Turkish Daily News 27/08/07]