

The Border Security System of the Republic of Montenegro – Current State and Further Development Perspectives

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Introduction

Since 31 December 2003, the Republic of Montenegro has been implementing the Project on Border Security on its territory, implying integrated and civil border control, which presents a step forward in creating an atmosphere of trust, cooperation and progress in the region in general, and which has confirmed our decision to accept the values and standards of Euro-Atlantic integration.

Objectives

Objectives of establishment of an own Border Security System are:

- Protecting of Montenegrin economic interests;
- Enhancing of the public order;
- Democratization and demilitarization;
- Dealing with border security issues in accordance with widely accepted standards in the field of border security;
- Active participation in and contribution to the combat of organized crime;
- Achieving of professional and democratic standards within the field of border security;
- Simplification of the State border crossings and preventing of illegal crossings;
- Establishing of the Border Security System according to European Union (EU) and Schengen standards.

For the implementation of above-mentioned objectives and for carrying out established tasks for the needs of the Border Police, based on the

allocated funds in the budget of Montenegro and donations of EAR and the U.S. Government, the equipment was procured, making the border security system in Montenegro more efficient, effective and complete.

General Characteristics of the Territory

The Republic of Montenegro covers the territory of 13,812 sq km, and has a population of around 700,000 inhabitants.

Total border length is 840.4 km (land 571.6 km, sea 137 km, lake 50.5 and river 81.3 km).

Out of the total border length towards:

- Republic of Croatia 41.7 km (land 19.7 km and sea 22);
- Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina 254.4 km (land 204.5 km; river 38.2 km and lake 11.7 km);
- Republic of Albania 207.2 km (land 113.3; sea 22 km; lake 38.8 and river 33.1 km);
- Republic of Serbia 244.1 km (land 234.1 km and river 10 km) out of which 75.6 km towards Kosovo (land 72.4 km and river 3.2 km);
- At the open sea 93 km.

Duties

Duties of the Border Police of the Republic of Montenegro are:

- State border surveillance;
- Control of border crossings at border crossing points;
- Prevention of illegal migration of persons and illegal traffic of goods through green and blue border outside of border crossing points;
- Prevention of all forms of cross-border crime;
- Prevention of international terrorism;
- Undertaking operational police actions in order to detect criminals related to border and aliens;
- Visas issuing;

- Procedures on asylum;
- Organizing and performing search and rescue operations at sea;
- Participation in prevention and detection activities on sea pollution;
- Intelligence and security aspects of the control over the aliens' stays;
- Taking measures towards aliens;
- Control of the construction of facilities near the border;
- Partially vehicle inspection and control, and traffic regulation at border crossing points;
- Assisting other MoI services in preserving stable public peace and order and participation in state defense activities;
- Providing all necessary information related to legal requirements on state border crossing, movement and taking up residence; and
- Cooperation and information exchange with all relevant law enforcement agencies on crime suppression and detection of all forms of cross-border organized crime.

Part of the Results Achieved in the Prevention of Cross-Border Crime in the First Six Months of 2006

Preventive Measures

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|-----------------------------|--------|
| • Identified persons: | 13,451 |
| • Searched persons: | 4,646 |
| • Inspected motor vehicles: | 10,988 |
| • Controlled vessels: | 3,440 |
| • Controlled aircrafts: | 5,832 |

Prevention of Illegal Crossings of the State Border

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|---------------------------------------|-----|
| • Detected false travel documents: | 49 |
| • Prevented illegal border crossings: | 160 |
| • Searched wanted persons: | 126 |

Measures taken regarding Aliens

- Offences: 298
- Criminal charges: 56
- Termination sojourn: 178
- Not permitted entry into Montenegro: 597

Temporarily Seized

- Narcotics “marihuana”: 387.576 kg
- Guns: 10 pieces
- Pistols: 2 pieces
- Ammunition of different caliber : 189 pieces
- Cigarettes: 18,367 boxes
- Travel vehicles: 41 pieces
- Trucks: 13 pieces
- Vessels: 12 pieces
- Currency:
 - € 474
 - \$ 45,700

Besides the above-mentioned goods, also temporarily seized were larger quantities of spirits, coffee, different kinds of technical equipment, food products, agricultural products and other goods.

Legal Reform

In order to harmonize national legislation with international standards in the field of border security we are conducting a legal reform.

In the frame of this reform the Parliament of the Republic of Montenegro adopted the Law on State Border which promotes following principles:

- Borders must be open for legal trade and movement of people and regional cooperation; and

- On the other hand, borders must be closed for all criminal activities and other activities that could endanger the stability of the region.

The Parliament of the Republic of Montenegro also adopted the Law on Asylum.

The Law on Aliens was approved by the Government of the Republic of Montenegro, and subsequently after its adoption by the Parliament, we will finalize the national legislation in the field of border security.

International Cooperation

Cooperation with border services of neighboring and other countries is a fundamental principle that is of special importance for a successful protection of the State Border.

In order to achieve better prevention and better success in the fight against all forms of cross-border crime, the Border Police of the Montenegro very successfully develop and improve cooperation at local, coordinating and command levels with border services of neighboring countries and the international forces in Kosovo (KFOR and UNMIK).

In order to institutionalize international cooperation we complied and delivered to competent authorities the Drafts of Agreements on trans-border cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Montenegro and Governments of neighboring countries.

Representatives of the Directorate for State Border and Border Affairs actively participate in international meetings, seminars and presentations of plans and projects in the field of border security, which is very important for recognizing experience and accepting recommendations and best practices within the field of border security.

Integrated Border Management

The basic goal that we set for the development of the Border Police is creating optimal conditions to keep our border open for legal trade and movement of people but at the same time closed for all criminal and other activities which could endanger the stability of the region.

We plan to achieve the defined goal through coordination of activities between all services that are involved in border management, within the state and at international level, in order to establish an efficient and risks-oriented system of integrated border management, harmonized with the European Commission and Schengen guidelines.

Therefore, the Parliament of Montenegro adopted the National Strategy on Integrated Border Management, which we see as a much efficient and more functional system of organizing border surveillance and border control. It also demands changes in the organization, better ways of recruitment and education and training of staff and purchasing and use of technical devices.

Integrated Border Management will also create better conditions for cooperation with competent law enforcement agencies of the neighboring countries, and especially in the field of information exchange, joint risk analyses, joint patrols and joint operations.

In order to implement the Strategy on Integrated Border Management we have prepared Draft of Action plan for implementation of the Integrated Border Management Strategy.

Projects

We have prepared a project on “Integrated Police Communication Network”, which will enable continuous data exchange and data processing at all command levels and implementation of tasks.

Within the process of establishing this system technological and methodological solutions are built, which will allow undisturbed entering into Schengen Information System.

We have also prepared three projects for equipping and improving of the working conditions of the border police, which are going to be presented to eventual donors.

The projects are the following:

1. Technical modernization of the state border surveillance and control.
2. Developing and equipping of a maritime unit.
3. Surveillance of the state border under all conditions.

With these projects we have planed all costs for staff training, IT, radio and radar technique, telecommunication devices, helicopters, vessels for blue border, motor vehicles and other needed equipment.

The implementation of these projects depends on financial possibilities of Montenegro and potential donors.

Ongoing Tasks

- Demarcation of the borderline between Montenegro and neighboring countries and signing of international Agreements on State Border.
- Implementation of the Action Plan for reinforcement of the Strategy on Integrated Border Management.
- Continuation of activities on building infrastructure facilities for the needs of Border Police, Customs and Inspection services which work at the border.
- Continuation of activities on compiling sub law documents for the implementation of the Law on State Border.
- Implementation of prepared projects.
- Construction of the Reception Centre for asylum seekers.

- Continuation of activities on the fight against corruption and crime in our own organization.
- General and special education and training of the Border Police officers.
- Improvement of international police cooperation through: signing Agreements on international cross-border police cooperation, appointment of liaison officers, delegating national contact points.