

*Master in State Management and Humanitarian Affairs**

The generous idea upholding the meaning of *South-East Europe Rectors and Diplomats' Meeting* in the beautiful city of Rome points out to the need of working together for greater stability in this part of the world and responsibility sharing in shaping the future of Europe. Higher Education is not only a means of acquiring knowledge as such, but it is also a unique spiritual universe capable of forging a strong partnership between the international community and the states of Southeast Europe. This can only advance our shared commitment to political and economic reform, accelerate the region's integration with the rest of Europe and promote greater stability throughout the area.

The *Master in State Management and Humanitarian Affairs* as a project to be addressed in this broad format, with a generous participation of leading Universities from South-East Europe, can be a path among others to strengthen democracy, economic development and security all over the area. It can enhance public awareness of the need to develop a new philosophy of togetherness and tolerance in a growing globalized world, which includes practical components beyond the academic approach such as specific commitments and actions by the states of the region to improve their investment climate and combat corruption. It can provide the missing link to understanding humanitarian needs and the role to be played by the young educated generation of today in facing the challenges of the political environment.

Co-ordination between the states of the region and the EU and NATO member states and structures, as well as with specialist humanitarian agencies simply does not provide enough support for development and stabilizing endeavours. If there is to be a lasting solution that can prevent the region from drifting towards new human rights abuses and from turning thousands of defenceless human beings into refugees and displaced persons, the developments and changes we need will have first to make their way into people's mind. And this can only occur as a consequence of persevered and resolute action in schools and universities where the philosophy of hatred and intolerance is to be challenged with rational tools which have to replace the irrational disputes on the battlefield.

I am strongly of the opinion that we all need a new partnership with the countries of South-East Europe, a partnership of science and cool judging minds, a real working arrangement in which the European Union, NATO and other major players can bring their share. It is the only way we can further our projects that are to bring the countries of the region into the European and transatlantic mainstream, and that make these countries create conditions by which full integration is possible.

**PILOT UNIVERSITY REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME ON STATE MANAGEMENT AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, University La Sapienza of Rome, 10-11 December 2001, Rome*

We have good examples to follow and to elaborate on in any academic framework. The exceptional struggle against violence toward minorities and the atmosphere of intolerance, which have blemished the regional political environment, constitute a good case. The achievements of the NATO missions under the aegis of the UN (IFOR and SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the UN mission (UNMIK) and NATO's KFOR in Kosovo are valuable assets in this respect. The superb leadership Italy provided as an individual country in mounting Operation Alba, whose aim was to stabilize the situation in Albania in 1997, was all the more remarkable since this operation took place outside the NATO framework and it drew on the lessons learnt in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I think it is time to lay even more emphasis on the need to bring the debate on these very sensitive issues where it belongs: the academic circles and the University. It is the only way we can provide the future of the region with the tools it needs. Our students are the leaders of tomorrow and it is our responsibility to make sure they will have the opportunity to choose among decent options of governance with clear minds, as knowledgeable as they can be and definitely more open to diversity and tolerance than our generation is. In fact, democracy is how we learn to live together, but, above all, democracy is about learning, which brings us to our job: teaching.

If our job is teaching, our goal here is to promote integration into Europe. The countries of the region can come together, and they each will be better candidates for full integration into Europe and into the transatlantic community inasmuch as they can develop a culture of togetherness and tolerance based on national cultures and common understanding of the common good. And this is precisely where we have to work. It is our duty to students and the institution we proudly serve: THE UNIVERSITY.

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