

## **STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR DRAGAN ZUPANJEVAC OF SERBIA**

MADAMME CHAIRPERSON,  
EXCELLENCES,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

AT THE OUTSET I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SWITZERLAND AND THE UNDP OFFICE IN GENEVA FOR ORGANISING THIS REGIONAL REVIEW CONFERENCE ON THE GENEVA DECLARATION ON ARMED VIOLENCE AND DEVELOPMENT.

THE TIMING OF THIS CONFERENCE IS INDEED HIGHLY FITTING AS THE NEGOTIATIONS OF THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS POST 2015 ARE REACHING THEIR CULMINATION IN NEW YORK AND THE 13<sup>TH</sup> LAST SESSION OF THE OWG ON SDGS IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN MID JULY, A FEW DAYS FROM NOW.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ARMED VIOLENCE AND DEVELOPMENT IS AT THE CRUX OF THE GENEVA DECLARATION AND IT IS VITAL THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE GENEVA DECLARATION, PEACE AND STABILITY AS A PREREQUISITE OF DEVELOPMENT, IS INCLUDED IN THE SD GOALS.

IT IS EVIDENT THAT THERE CAN BE NO DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT PEACE AND SECURITY. INDEED COUNTRIES THAT HAVE SUFFERED VIOLENT CONFLICT HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO RECORD ANY SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING ANY OF THE MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS WHETHER THE HALVING OF POVERTY AND HUNGER, ERADICATION OF DISEASE, REDUCTION OF MATERNAL OR CHILD MORTALITY OR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE GLOBAL SDGs FOR THE NEXT 15 YEARS IT IS CLEAR THAT A GREAT EFFORT MUST BE INVESTED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENEVA DECLARATION IN ALL ITS ASPECTS.

AS A COUNTRY THAT IN THE LAST TWO DECADES HAS BEEN EXPOSED TO REFUGEES, IDPs AND MISSING PERSONS AS A RESULT OF ARMED VIOLENCE, SERBIA KNOWS TOO WELL HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO RECOMMENCE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT AFTER A PERIOD OF STRIFE AND CONFLICT. THE GDP OF THE COUNTRY HAS STILL NOT ATTAINED THE LEVELS REACHED IN 1989.

ECONOMIC GROWTH, ATTRACTION OF FDI AND PRODUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT IS A LONG AND ARDUOUS PROCESS AND IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ERADICATION OF VIOLENT CONFLICT IS A PREREQUISITE FOR GROWTH AND A CONDITIO SINE QUA NON FOR DEVELOPMENT.

THE GROWTH OF URBAN VIOLENCE IS INDEED A NEW GLOBAL CHALLENGE ESPECIALLY SINCE BY 2015, 70 PER CENT OF HUMANITY WILL LIVE IN CITIES. THE CONTROL OF SMALL ARMS TRAFFICKING IS AN IMPORTANT PRECONDITION FOR REDUCING VIOLENCE IN URBAN SOCIETIS AND IT MUST BE SERIOUSLY ADDRESSED.

THANK YOU