

The 3rd Common Security and Defence Policy Olympiad

Just like the first two CSDP Olympiads, which were held in Cyprus in 2012 and in Greece in 2014 respectively under the auspices of the country that held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the 3rd CSDP Olympiad was also organized under the auspices of the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The CSDP Olympiad is a knowledge contest designed for cadets of the military educational institutions from EU member countries and its aim is to motivate the cadets to study security and defence policy; to exchange knowledge and experience in this field.

The 3rd CSDP Olympiad consisted of 3 phases – Internet-Based Distance Learning (IDL) Course; Essay Writing Phase and Residential Phase, which included Essay Presentation and Knowledge Quiz Competitions.

The first phase started in January 2016 when participants' task was to pass the IDL Course.

Those who were successful were then offered 10 topics related to CSDP issues and their task was to choose one topic and write an essay. All topics were approved by the ESDC and the members of the Implementation Group for the European Initiative for the Exchange of Young Officers Inspired by Erasmus (EMILYO). The essays were evaluated by experts from EU member countries and the military educational institutions. Ten authors of essays who achieved the highest score got opportunity to compete in Essay Presentation Competition during the Residential Phase.

Furthermore, all participants present in the Residential Phase in Liptovský Mikuláš had chance to set their wit to work during Team Knowledge Quiz Competition – cadets were divided into five international teams. Members of the best team then competed among each other in Individual Knowledge Quiz Competition and the winner became “The winner of the 3rd CSDP Olympiad”. The level and the extent of knowledge of cadets during the Residential Phase were evaluated by an international committee of experts on CSDP issues chaired by Mr. Dirk Dubois, the Head of the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) in Brussels and Colonel Harald Gell, Chairman of the Implementation Group for the European Initiative for the Exchange of Young Officers Inspired by Erasmus (EMILYO) and led by Mr. Symeon Zambas from the Secretariat of the ESDC.

The Residential Phase of the 3rd CSDP Olympiad was attended by 40 cadets from 15 EU member countries who tested their knowledge of Common Security and Defence Policy Issues especially - *History and Context of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP); The European Security Strategy; The Role of the EU Institutions in terms of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Treaty of Lisbon and its implementation to the CFSP or CSDP.*

The Residential Phase of the 3rd Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Olympiad took place at the Armed Forces Academy of General M. R. Štefánik in Liptovský Mikuláš, Slovakia from 4th to 7th October 2016.

The opening speech was delivered by the State Secretary at the Slovak Republic Ministry of Defence Mr. Robert Ondrejcsák, who among other things stated that one of the objectives of the European Union is to strengthen its ability to respond to crisis situations

through the Common Security and Defence Policy, regardless of geographical constraints. "This objective can be achieved only if the European Union will be proactive and cohesive. In this context, the Slovak Republic's continued commitment is to participate in events and key initiatives of the EU CSDP in order to contribute to the shaping of its further development," said Mr. R. Ondrejcsák. He added that he welcomes the initiative to organize such an Olympiad and considers it to be very useful because it leads cadets to follow the security issues; to monitor and evaluate the development of international security and political situation; to learn how to express their opinions. "Furthermore, the Olympiad provides opportunity for cooperation and healthy competition among the future military leaders of the European Union," said the State Secretary at the Slovak Republic Ministry of Defence.

Among the invited honoured guests at the Opening Ceremony there were Chiefs of the Departments of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic and representative of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic Brigadier General Ľubomír Gacko. There were also the representatives of the military diplomatic corps - Defence Attachés of Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany and Hungary who were not only present at the Opening Ceremony but also stayed throughout the whole Essay Presentation Competition.

The exceptional moments of the 3rd CSDP Olympiad were expressed by the bearers of the flags of all participating countries during Opening and Closing Ceremonies; anthem of the Slovak Republic as well as the anthem of the European Union; introduction of sights and beauties of Liptov Region and Slovakia via short movies; national traditions such as dances and songs performed by the folk group Majerán and musical performance of art septet Nicolaus from the Art and Music School.

Results of the 3rd CSDP Olympiad:

- **Winner of the Cover Page Design Competition:** *Ionut-Sebastian Enache* from Romania.
- **Winner of the Essay Writing and Essay Presentation Competition:** *John Michael Nevin* from Ireland.
- **Team Knowledge Quiz Competition:** Team No 2 - members: *Alexander Ivanov Monov* (Bulgaria), *Georgios Karavias* (Cyprus), *Haldo-Rait Harro* (Estonia), *Daniel Popławski* (Poland), *Marcelo Aparício* (Portugal), *Ionut-Sebastian Enache* (Romania), *Alexander Botoš* (Slovakia) and *Joaquin Alfaró Pérez* (Spain).
- **Winner of the Individual Knowledge Quiz Competition / Winner of the 3rd CSDP Olympiad:** *Joaquin Alfaró Pérez* from Spain.

The awards were handed over to the winners by Assoc. Prof. Jozef Puttera – Rector of the Armed Forces Academy of General M.R. Štefánik; Col Harald Gell - Chairman of the Implementation Group for the European Initiative for the Exchange of Young Officers Inspired by Erasmus and Mr. Ján Blcháč - Mayor of town Liptovský Mikuláš.

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