



LAUNCHING REUNION OF THE SEEN NETWORK AND THE II. INTERNATIONAL BALKAN CONFERENCE

Foreign Influence and
Transformation in the Armed
Forces of Southeastern Europe

**6-9 OCTOBER 2025
İSTANBUL, TÜRKİYE**

**LAUNCHING REUNION OF THE SEEN NETWORK AND
THE II. INTERNATIONAL BALKAN CONFERENCE**

**FOREIGN INFLUENCE AND TRANSFORMATION
IN THE ARMED FORCES OF SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE**

6-9 OCTOBER 2025

**Turkish National Defence University Conference Halls
Yenilevent, İstanbul**

07 OCTOBER TUESDAY

(Turkish National Defence University Main Campus)

09:00 – 10:00 – Registration

10:00 – 10:30 – Opening Remarks

- Rear Adm. Erhan AYDIN (Vice President, Turkish National Defence University)
- Prof. Dr. Gültekin YILDIZ (Turkish National Defence University)
- Dr. Carmen-Sorina RÎJNOVEANU (Director, Institute for Defence Policy Studies and Military History)
- Prof. Dr. Muzaffer ŞEKER (President, Turkish Academy of Sciences)

10:30 – 10:45 – Keynote Speech - Colonel Assoc. Prof. Dr. Barış ATEŞ (Türkiye) – *Why Militaries Change: Theories, Drivers and Foreign Influence*

10:45 – 11:00 – Group Photo & Coffee Break

OPENING SESSION (11:00 – 12:45)

**Foreign Military Missions and the Transformation
of Southeastern Europe Armies**

Chair: Dr. Carmen-Sorina RÎJNOVEANU (Romania)

11:00 – 11:20 – Dr. Efpraxia S. PASCHALIDOU (Greece) – *Strategic Transition: American Military Advisory Missions and the Withdrawal of British Forces from Greece, 1947*

11:20 – 11:40 – Dr. M. Fatih BAŞ (Türkiye) – *Alliance-Driven Modernization: The Turkish Army Under US and NATO Influence, 1947-1992*

11:40 – 12:00 – Dr. Boyan ZHEKOV (Bulgaria) – *The Soviet Military Advisors and Instructors in the Bulgarian Armed Forces, 1944–1948*

12:00 – 12:20 – Res. Asst. Cemil SAĞLAM (Türkiye) – *Modernizing Society through the Military: The Social Impacts of U.S. Military Aid to Türkiye after World War II*

12:20 – 12:45 – Discussion

12:45 – 14:00 – Lunch

SESSION I (14:00 – 15:45)

Military Alliances and Defense Policies

Chair: Dr. Efpraxia S. PASCHALIDOU (Greece)

14:00 – 14:20 – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Adrian-Bogdan CEOBANU (Romania) – *From the Warsaw Pact to the First Negotiations on NATO Membership. Unpublished British Documents on Romania's Military Alliances*

14:20 – 14:40 – Dr. George KALPADAKIS (Greece) – *Commons of Security: NATO, EU, and the Southeastern European Defense Space*

14:40 – 15:00 – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Etleva SMAÇI (Albania) – *Albania and the Warsaw Pact: Strategic Implications of the Pashaliman Naval Base*

15:00 – 15:20 – Lt. Colonel Dr. Kalin RANCHEV (Bulgaria) – *Warsaw Pact and the Participation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria*

15:20 – 15:45 – Discussion

15:45 – 16:00 – Coffee Break

SESSION II (16:00 – 17:10)

Military Reforms and Defence Policies in Southeastern Europe During Interwar Period

Chair: Prof. Dr. Gültekin YILDIZ (Türkiye)

16:00 – 16:20 – Colonel (Ret.) Iulian MĂCREANU (Romania) – *Defence Policy and Armed Forces Budget in Romania during the Interwar Period (1920–1940): myths, realities, achievements, and perceptions*

16:20 – 16:40 – Dr. Blerina KUQË (Albania) – *Geopolitics and the Architecture of National Security: The Organization of the Albanian Armed Forces in the Interwar Period*

16:40 – 17:00 – Colonel Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dalibor DENDA (Serbia) – *Motorization and Mechanization in the Royal Yugoslav Army between World Wars (1918–1941)*

17:00 – 17:15 – Discussion

18:00 – 19:00 – Dinner

19:00 – 20:00 – Departure to Hotel

8 OCTOBER WEDNESDAY

(Turkish National Defence University Main Campus)

SESSION III (09:00 – 10:15)

Modernization and Force Development

Chair: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Etleva SMAÇI (Albania)

09:00 – 09:20 – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gürhan YELLICE (Türkiye) – *From Goltz to Eydoux, Eydoux to Sanders: The Strategic Role of Foreign Military Missions in the Ottoman–Greek Rivalry (1883–1913)*

09:20 – 09:40 – Dr. Bogdan-Alexandru SCHIPOR (Romania) – *The Rearming of the Turkish Republic in the Romanian Diplomatic Reports, 1924–1934*

09:40 – 10:00 – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Evren MERCAN (Türkiye) – *Charting a National Course: Transforming the Force Structure of the Turkish Navy (1952–1974)*

10:00 – 10:15 – Discussion

10:15 – 10:30 – Coffee Break

SESSION IV (10:30 – 12:00)

Contemporary Security Challenges and Reforms in Southeastern Europe

Chair: Colonel Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zhivo PETROV (Bulgaria)

10:30 – 10:50 – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Salim AYDIN & PhD. Cand. Aysel CAMCI (Türkiye) – *Effects of Belt and Road Initiative on Balkan Maritime Security and Military Perspectives*

10:50 – 11:10 – Colonel (Ret.) Dilaver HOXHA (Albania) – *Albania and NATO: 31 Years of Foreign Influence, Strategic Transformation, And Regional Engagement (1994–2025)*

11:10 – 11:30 – Dr. Ivan LAKOVIĆ (Montenegro) – *Reform of the Montenegrin Military After Gaining Independence in 2006. Through the Lens of OSCE Mission*

11:30 – 11:50 – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aleksandar GRIZHEV & Prof. Dr. Andrej ILIEV (North Macedonia) – *From Yugoslav Legacy to NATO Standards: The Transformation of the North Macedonian Armed Forces and Its Socio-Cultural Identity*

11:50 – 12:00 – Discussion

12:00 – 12:30 – Conclusion

12:30 – 13:45 – Lunch

SEEN NETWORK MEETING (14:00 – 16:00)

14:00 – 14:30 – Signing Ceremony for the Establishing South-Eastern Europe Network of Institutes of Military History and Strategic Studies

14:30 – 16:00 – Round Table

17:00 – 18:00 – Dinner