

# BISC

BELGIAN  
INTELLIGENCE  
STUDIES  
CENTRE

***Conference invitation***  
***7 May 2024***  
***Club Prince Albert, Brussels***

**Bridging Divides.**  
**Exploring the legacy of Conflict in the Western Balkans**  
**and its impact on European Security today.**



**Conference organized in collaboration with BISC partners:**  
**HWRI, Hybrid Warfare Research Institute (Croatia)**  
**RUSRA-KUIAD, Royal Union of Intelligence and Action Services**



Hybrid  
Warfare  
Research  
Institute



RUSRA

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With the support of the  **KONRAD  
ADENAUER  
STIFTUNG**

## **Bridging Divides. Exploring the legacy of Conflict in the Western Balkans and its impact on European Security today.**

The lingering scars of past conflicts in the Western Balkans region continue to echo through the corridors of policy making, posing multifaceted challenges to the stability and cohesion of the European Union and its neighboring regions. As we navigate the nuanced terrain of European security, it becomes increasingly evident that the Western Balkan is a cornerstone of broader international peace and stability. The prospect of EU membership is what the European Commission calls “*a geostrategic investment in a stable, strong and united Europe based on common values*”. Indeed, the Western Balkan regio has a big geostrategic importance to the European Union, not only for its security, but also for its economic prosperity. But a path towards a more resilient and inclusive security architecture for Europe and beyond an only be achieved by fostering dialogue, cooperation and mutual understanding.

### **PROGRAM**

- 09.00 – 09.15: Arrival of the guests
- 09.15 – 09.20: *Opening conference*  
**Mr. Guy Rapaille**, President BISC (Belgium)
- 09.20 – 09.40: *The Partnership:*  
- BISC: **Prof. Dr. Pieter Leloup**, Ghent University (Belgium)  
- HWRI: **Prof. Dr. Gordan Akrap**, University North (Croatia)  
- RUSRA-KUIAD: **Robin Libert**, President (Belgium)  
- KAS: **Holger Haibach**, Director, Foundation Office Croatia and Slovenia
- 09.40 – 10.20: *Military security and protection considerations during the NATO-led missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina.*  
**Drs. Elke Boers**, PhD candidate, University of Groningen (The Netherlands)
- 10.20 – 10.40: Coffee break
- 10.40 – 11.20: *The Belgian military participation in the Western Balkans.*  
**Major General (ret.) Philippe Boucké** (Belgium)
- 11.20 – 12.00: *NATO and security policies.*  
**Dr. Vira Ratsiborynska**, Free University of Brussels (Belgium)
- 12.00 – 13.00: Lunch
- 13.00 – 13.40: *Chechen’s and Night Wolves in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Vectors of Russian influence.*  
**Prof. Dr. Darko Trifunović**, Institute for National and International Security (Serbia)

- 13.40 – 14.20: *Russian vectors of influence against Montenegro. Activities & consequences. Lessons Identified & Lessons Learned.*  
**Ljubomir Filipović**, PhD candidate (Montenegro)
- 14.20 – 15.00: Hybrid Threats & Challenges. The Western Balkans and the EU.  
**Prof. Dr. Gordan Akrap**, University North (Croatia)
- 15.00 – 15.20: Coffee break
- 15.20 – 16.20: *Panel discussion:*  
- Elke Boers  
- Vira Ratsiborynska  
- Philippe Boucké  
- Darko Trifunović  
- Ljubomir Filipović  
- Gordan Akrap  
**Chair:** Prof. Dr. Marc Cools
- 16.20 – 16.30: *Presentation of BISC Cahier 13: 'Our Men in Brussels.'*  
**Drs. Mathias Desmet & Mr. Robin Liefferinckx** (BISC)
- 16.30 – 16.40: *Conclusions and closing remarks*  
**Prof. Dr. Marc Cools**, Ghent University (Belgium)

Presidents of the conference:

- Kathleen Van Acker (BISC)
- Robin Libert (BISC)

## MEETING DATE & PLACE

Tuesday, 7 May 2024  
Club Prince Albert  
Karmelietenstraat 20 / Rue des Petits Carmes 20  
1000 Brussels

## BISC WORKING GROUP

Gordan Akrap (HWRI)	Marnix Beyen (UAntwerpen)
Chris Bombeke (ADIV/SGRS)	Philippe Boucké (BISC)
Marc Cools (UGent)	Emmanuel Debruyne (UCLouvain)
Mathias Desmet (UGent)	Robin Libert (RUSRA-KUIAD)
Robin Liefferinckx (NCCN)	Guy Rapaille (BISC)
Kathleen Van Acker (ADIV/SGRS)	Karin Van Peteghem (UGent)

## TARGET AUDIENCE

Members of intelligence and security services, defense, federal and local police services, Belgian and EU authorities, political decision makers, NATO, embassies, academics, students...

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

**Cost:** 115 euro.

Included: drinks, three course lunch and the book: *'BISC Cahier 13: Our men in Brussels'*.

Students: 60 euro with book, 25 euro without book. (Proof of active enrollment in an academic institution must be able to be demonstrated.)

**Registration:** people who are interested must register at the following website:

<https://congresso.ugent.be/bisc-conference-052024/>

You will receive a confirmation e-mail. The subscription is definite after payment.

Please, subscribe quickly as seats are limited. **Participants need to be able to present their proof of payment at the entrance.**

**Language:** The presentations will be given in English.

**Dress code 'Prince Albert Club':** city attire or uniform. Not allowed: jeans, sports shoes, T-shirts...

**During this conference the "Chatham House Rule" applies!**



**Voorwoord** Marc Cools, Emmanuel Debruyne, Mathias Desmet, Robin Liefferinckx, Pieter Leloup & Vincent Seron

**Lezing naar aanleiding van de bevelsoverdracht van de Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsschool (IVS) – te Heverlee op 26 januari 2023** Marc Cools

**Les affaires Grégoire et Gantois, symptômes d'une absence de culture du renseignement en Belgique ?** Lionel Kaëns

**The Name is Brussels, Target Brussels. Stijgende grootmachtencompetitie en de Europese hoofdstad als (hernieuwd) broeinest voor spionage** Tom Van Rentergem

**Analytic Black Holes: A Data-Oriented Perspective** Giliam de Valk

**L'Organe de Coordination pour l'Analyse de la Menace et la « communauté » du renseignement belge** Chloé Thomas

**Le Roi Salomon a mis ses gros sabots** Derrick-Philippe Gosselin & Robin Libert

**Interview with Roger Baron Coekelbergs (August 10, 2018)** Anne Griffin

**Interview avec Roger Baron Coekelbergs (26 avril 2019)** Bernard Balteau

**Interview with Robin Libert and Guy Rapaille. Belgian Intelligence and Counterintelligence**

Giangiuseppe Pili

## CONTACT BISC

If you wish to receive information about BISC conferences and publications, send an email to:

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