



In 2018, representatives of the Security Policy Sector of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in a number of panels, roundtable and public discussions on the priorities of the security policy of the Republic of Serbia, the current situation and prospects for the development of Serbia-NATO partner relations based on the position of Serbia to pursue a policy of military neutrality, Serbia's participation in the Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy of the EU and the issues related to addressing the current security challenges. These events were organized by either the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE) or the Institute for European Affairs from Belgrade in line with their respective programmes, while one of the latest events, held at the Faculty of Law in Nis, was co-hosted by these two civil society organizations.

In the first half of the year, panel discussions were held in Novi Sad, Novi Pazar and Sabac, and in November and December 2018 similar events took place in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac, Nis, Zajecar and Sremska Mitrovica, each with participation of a representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The events featured as panellists and keynotes the following MFA representatives - Ambassador Branimir Filipovic, Acting Assistant Foreign Minister for security policy, Minister Counsellor Zoran Jovanovic, Head of the NATO and Partnership for Peace Department, Minister Counsellor Branislav Pekic and First Counsellor Sasa Kostic.

In addition to the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs all of the above events included the participation of Dragan Sormaz, MP and Head of the National Assembly's standing delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Brigadier General Cesare Marinelli, Chief of NATO Military Liaison Belgrade, as well as representatives from the NATO member and partner countries' embassies, the civil society and the academia.

The goal of these events was to present to the representatives of the academia, students in particular, as well as to the representatives of the civil society, the media and the wider public the key elements of the foreign, security and defence policy of the Republic of Serbia, the country's positions concerning its neighbourhood and beyond, the partner relations of Serbia with NATO, and also to create opportunities for a more immediate communication between the public and the representatives of national authorities and the diplomatic corps in order to discuss particular issues related to the national policy pursued by Serbia, but also the positions

of other countries and international organizations concerning security policy, bilateral relations in this context as well as the mechanism of the collective security system in the world at large.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs regularly carries out the above public diplomacy activities in cooperation with civil society and other organizations, accepting their invitations to participate in the events they host. The 2018 season showcased the largest number of such events in a year so far, held both in Belgrade and other cities throughout Serbia.