

countries next year; the ill-defined situation concerning the relationship between Serbia and Montenegro; and the uncertainty surrounding the status of Kosovo.

Dr. Mircev underlined that the therapies and strategies of the international community aimed at addressing and resolving interethnic conflicts should not be defined only from a political perspective. These activities should be mainly socio-economic. Dr. Mircev warned that Brussels is not aware of the consequences of different statuses and positions of the countries in the region in relation to the European Union and NATO. In order to stabilize the region in the long run, the international community should harmonize the policies of even regional development.

Nicolae Ropotean, Director of the Regional Political Cooperation Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, stressed that his country, as other states in Southeastern Europe, occupies a strategic location on the West side of the Black Sea. Romania is a country which is both exporting and importing energy (although it can be self-sufficient in energy supplies for several decades). Its geographical location allows it to transport Russian natural gas to Western Europe and Turkey; it is also a potentially significant transit region for Caspian oil exports to Europe. Romania believes that its energy sector is attractive for foreign investment and sees possibilities for mutually beneficial cooperation.

Mr. Ropotean underlined the need for cooperation in the energy field between Canada and the countries in the region. He noted that the first Western-designed nuclear reactor in Eastern Europe was supplied by Canada to Romania. Currently, one of the priorities of the Romanian government is to ensure high standards of nuclear safety and security of nuclear materials and installations. Cooperation with Canada in this respect would be highly beneficial for Romania.

According to **Dimitar Stoyanov Savov, Head of the Investment Policy Department of the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Bulgaria**, the present transport policy of Bulgaria consists of three major sections. Firstly, there is the objective of integration into the European Union. In this respect, harmonization of national legislation and transport regulations with those of the EU member states is needed.

Secondly, there is a need to develop the transport infrastructure. Bulgaria's transport infrastructure should become an integral part of the Trans-European Network. The country's network has to be transformed into a competitive and effective "bridge" between Western and Central Europe and the Middle and Far East countries, as well as along the North-South direction, between the Baltic and the Adriatic Sea. The existing transport infrastructure has to be reconstructed and modernized in accordance with the standards and requirements of the European Union, as well as NATO. In addition, an environmentally friendly transport system should be created.

The implementation of the above-mentioned goals, Mr. Savov underscored, is based on the third priority of the transport policy, namely financing transport infrastructure projects. As available resources set limits on investments into infrastructure, the priority should be given to Pan-European transport corridors. According to Mr. Savov, Canada's opportunity to take part in economic development in the region is through financing transport infrastructure projects.