As Greece belongs to the Balkans, it acknowledges its responsibility to help other countries in the region and does so, said **Pavlos Oikonomou, Director of the Press Office of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece**. The Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans is the first systematically planned effort of Greece to help its neighbours.

In conformity with its obligations as a member state of the European Union and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Greece has committed itself to allocating annually 0.2% of its GDP to international development aid. The Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans will provide 550 million Euro for a period of five years (2002-2006) to six countries in Southeastern Europe: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia, Romania and Serbia-Montenegro. Approximately half of the available funds will be made available to Serbia-Montenegro, as – according to Mr. Oikonomou – this is the country with the greatest need for assistance at the moment.

The assistance provided through the Hellenic Plan, Mr. Oikonomou added, is foreseen for several areas, such as infrastructure development (energy and transport), investments, public administration, democratic institutions, rule of law, welfare state, economic (in)equality and education.

Dr. David Carment of Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University in Ottawa and Dr. Atanas Gotchev of the Department of International Relations Association in Sofia provided a critical overview of risk assessment projects on Southeastern Europe.

Dr. Carment argued that risk assessment reports, drawing on international, rather than local, experts, are too long, while policy recommendations are too broad and fragmented. On the other hand, the Government of Canada needs to develop the capacity to draft and implement recommendations formulated by organizations or departments working in this area. Still, Dr. Carment added, recommendations often rely on narrow information sources (polls and statistical data were mentioned as examples) and do not contain direct linkages to analyses of public opinion or to response strategies.

Dr. Gotchev observed that the need for risk assessments and early warnings on Southeastern European issues is underscored by an existing instability in some countries of the region. These instruments could serve to strengthen the capacity of public administration in Southeastern Europe to deal with crisis situations and to react to emerging threats in a stable and coherent manner. Dr. Gotchev recommended that government agencies consider developing internal frameworks for early warning analyses and early action, while the NGO sector should continue to play a significant role in this area as well.

Panel 3. States in Transition: Building Governance Structures

The objective of the third panel was to provide an assessment of the steps being undertaken to develop effective governance structures that will assure realization