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Foreword



Many a times it has been said that the Balkans is a powder keg in which neighbours talk little and would rather shoot at each other. Although this picture seems terrifying and does not correspond completely with reality, it nonetheless speaks about the bad image of the Balkan region. Despite the ongoing build up of this negative image, many efforts have been undertaken to reject it and to build a new, positive image in the Balkans which will ease the journey to uniting with the more developed part of the continent. Yet it seems that this positive image does not stick so easily.

One of the more important reasons to initiate the project of Karavan was the fact that although everybody in the Balkans speaks about regional cooperation, it is still being conducted through third parties, even though we all know that without direct communication you cannot expect tangible cooperation.

Although efforts have been made to fill the information gap, what makes Karavan special is the fact that the information about the Others does not come from our journalists, but from the same country where the information originates. The main point lies in the fact that foreign journalists look upon events and proceedings in other countries from a perspective which does not always correspond to the local context. On the other hand, Karavan journalists have an authentic approach when writing about the events in their country for readers in other countries.

The magazine that you now have in your hands is a selection of texts that have been published and distributed in Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro in the course of the past three years. Its aim is to give a broader picture of the region through topics selected in cooperation with journalists and editors from all participating countries.

Ibrahim Mehmeti