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## **13TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL MASTER IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE, A.Y. 2013-2014**

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On the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2014, at the premises of the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in Sarajevo took place the 13<sup>th</sup> graduation Ceremony of the *European Regional Master in Human Rights and Democratization in South East Europe* (ERMA), double degree program by University of Sarajevo and the University of Bologna, co-financed by the European Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy.

During the Ceremony 29 students coming from 7 countries who have successfully completed the program have been awarded with the ERMA double diploma. At the same time the new class of 2014/15 has been welcomed, thus opening the 14<sup>th</sup> Academic Year of the Master Program. The international board of professors has also decided to select the five best dissertations on the base of their outstanding academic quality and originality, to be included within a Master Series of books where are published the best theses of the previous 12 generations.

The new ERMA graduates came across a very intensive, dynamic and diversified 12 months-long master course. This international group of students attended a full time interdisciplinary program structured in 3 terms. During the first part, the students followed courses in Sarajevo taught by 30 professors and guest lecturers coming from 14 countries within the “International Network Europe and the Balkans” and were assisted by a team of three Academic Tutors. In the second term, students participated in seven-week internships period at selected IGOs, NGOs, think-tanks and research institutes working in the field of human rights and democracy across South East Europe. Finally, during the third term, the master candidates reconvened to Italy to focus on the finalization of their theses accommodated at the CEUB University Residential Centre of Bertinoro, University of Bologna.

As a long-standing tradition, the Ceremony represented the occasion to gather students, professors, institutions and donors. The welcome addresses of the Ceremony were delivered by Prof Dr.Ugo Vlasisavljevic, Vice-Rector for International Relations of the University of Sarajevo, followed by the speeches of Mr Massimo, Mina Head from the Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina; Mr Stefano Stucci, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the Republic of Italy in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Mr Raoul Mosconi, Council member for Social Policies, Integration and Human Rights of the city of Forlì; Mr Giampaolo Amadori CEO, of the University Residential Centre of Bertinoro, University of Bologna.

The Ceremony was also the occasion for the co-director of the Master Prof Dr Stefano Bianchini, to recall the remarkable accomplishment obtained by the program since its first edition in 2000/01, one above all the success in job career attained by the ERMA alumni. By this point of view, the Master can be said to be fostering a significant *brain gain* for the Region since almost 400

graduated enjoy high rate of job placement, often holding very prestigious posts. Currently among them are ambassadors and high state officials who relevant positions at the ministries of foreign affairs, at governmental offices or at the parliamentary assemblies of their respective countries; others became scholars or assistant professors, work for OSCE and in other international organizations or are leaders in NGOs. A former ERMA student has represented till recently Bosnia and Herzegovina at the UN Security Council.

Behind the outstanding achievements obtained by ERMA stands definitely its main asset, namely the combination of academic education and research with field-based internships in the region, what has proven to be particularly successful, as recently recognized by the independent monitoring commission appointed by the EU to assess the implementation of the project. In line with this, it is worth stressing also the participation of ERMA to the [\*Global Campus of Regional Masters in Human Rights and Democratization\*](#) coordinated by the European Inter-University Center based in Venice, a new strategy of the European Commission aimed to strengthen worldwide the cooperation among the network of Master programs in democracy and human rights based in Venice, Sarajevo/Bologna, Pretoria, Sidney, Yerevan, Buenos Aires.

With the graduation ceremony held on the 25<sup>th</sup> October, the academic year 2013/14 is officially closed. Through ERMA, the long time standing cooperation between University of Bologna and University of Sarajevo shows that it is possible to invest positively to the future, by developing a high-level educational program, aimed at forging among young generations a new European élite, namely a transnational group of educated citizens able to operate in support of insightful alternative behaviors to the benefit of democracy, human rights protection, tolerance, respect of diversities and European integration in SEE.

From early November the new ERMA Class of 2014/15 entered its academic year in Sarajevo where will stay for lectures and seminars till June 2015, before moving to their internship destinations and finally to Italy for the finalization of their theses. Best of luck to all of them!

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*\*ERMA is a double degree program by University of Bologna and the University of Sarajevo, co-financed by the European Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy. The program promotes the creation of a young generation of perspective officials for state management, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, universities and think-tanks in Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo, as well as in the countries belonging to the EU, the rest of Europe, and worldwide.*

*ERMA is a joint activity realized by: University of Bologna - IECOB Institute for Central Eastern and Balkan Europe, University of Sarajevo - CIS Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Belgrade, University of Graz, University of the Ruhr, University of Peloponnese, University of Zagreb, New Bulgarian University, London School of Economics, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Higher School of Economics, Moscow. ERMA is also part of the Global Campus of the Regional Master Programs and Diplomas managed by EIUC.*

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For more information please visit [cips.unsa.ba](http://cips.unsa.ba) or contact the ERMA Coordination Team

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