

THE BARI DECLARATION

Adopted at the 5th Adriatic and Ionian Council
(Bari, 13 May 2003)

We, the Members of the Adriatic and Ionian Council:

- **Albania**, represented by the Deputy Head of Government and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ilir Meta;
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mladen Ivanic;
- **Croatia**, represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Tonino Picula;
- **Greece**, represented by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ioannis Magriotis;
- **Italy**, represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Franco Frattini;
- **Serbia and Montenegro**, represented by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Luksic;
- **Slovenia**, represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Dimitrij Rupel

Guided by the Ancona Declaration of May 19-20, 2000 and the principles expressed by it, by the Split Declaration of May 25, 2001 and by the Athens Declaration of May 22, 2002:

Condemn in the strongest terms the assassination of the Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic and strongly support the determination of the Serbian Government under the leadership of Mr. Zoran Zivkovic to vigorously pursue the reform policies, in particular the relentless fight against crime and corruption, the comprehensive democratization of the State structures and the full co-operation with ICTY, promoted by Zoran Djindjic.

Underline the importance of closer political co-operation among the Member States to promote democracy and market economy and to strengthen the rule of law and stability in the region.

Welcome the upcoming entry of Slovenia into the European Union as a further

step towards the complete integration of the region with the EU.

Take note with satisfaction of the request for the avis from the EC for the accession of the Republic of Croatia to the EU.

Welcome the starting of the negotiations for the Stabilization and Association Agreement between Albania and EU.

Emphasize the progress achieved in the Stabilization and Association Process throughout the region.

Welcome the accession of Serbia and Montenegro to the Council of Europe.

Stress the importance of the co-operation among the national Parliaments and welcome the meeting of the Presidents of the Parliaments of the AII Member States that will take place in Ravenna on May 16th, 2003.

Welcome the progress achieved in the co-ordination process among the main regional and sub-regional Initiatives, such as the Stability Pact, CEI, SEECF, BSEC, SECI and the Danube Co-operation process.

Emphasize that all the Member States should mobilize adequate financial resources in order to ensure significant progress in projects of common interest.

Urge and Encourage the participation of the European Commission in regional projects with a view to developing the economies of the Member States in a homogeneous manner through the EU programmes.

Stress the importance of launching of the Transadriatic co-operation within the framework of Interreg III A Italy-Adriatic Cross-border Programme.

Take note of:

- The Joint Declaration and the Plan of Action signed by the Ministers of Interior in Lecce on the 13th of November, 2002.
- The Protocol of Co-operation setting up a network of SMEs support

services signed in Rome by the Ministers of Productive Activities on the 31st of March, 2003.

Express appreciation for the reports of the Chairpersons of the Round Tables on Fight against Organized Crime, Economy, Tourism and Small and Medium Enterprises, Education and Inter-University Co-operation, Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, Transport and Maritime Co-operation, Culture and congratulate Italy for the results achieved in the year of Presidency of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative.

In particular:

Declare their will to deepen the co-operation in the fight against organized crime and terrorism through better co-ordination of the respective national institutions and the harmonization of the national legislations with EU and international standards.

Stress the importance of the Regional Anti-trafficking Centre of Valona.

Underline the necessity of a wider exchange of information, as an essential precondition towards the dismantling of trafficking networks.

While welcoming the progress achieved, reaffirm that a particular emphasis shall be dedicated to illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings.

Recognize the paramount importance of the co-operation among the Adriatic and Ionian institutions responsible in each Member State for the SMEs and call for setting up an information network both to support the activities of the SMEs in SEE and to connect them to the international markets.

Stress the vital importance of the co-operation in the energy sector in order to link the national nets to the European system, to develop renewable sources and to speed up the modernization of the infrastructures.

Suggest the implementation of a closer co-operation in developing touristic programmes in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas taking advantage both of the natural resources and of the monumental sites of the region. In this frame

they support the project "Adriatic and Ionian: Seas of Europe".

Recognize the importance of developing regional co-operation in the field of public utilities also by implementing the project called "Agency of fair territorial management" aimed at creating a distance supporting service in the fields of the cycle of the water, waste management, local distribution of energy, transports and thermal resources.

Note with satisfaction that the Virtual University of the Adriatic and Ionian Basin (UNIADRION) has already started its activity promoting a closer co-operation among the Academic Centres of the Member States, carrying on i.a. a course on the use of Multimedia Technologies and a training course for Experts in Development, Programming and Management of Cultural Tourism.

Underline the importance of fostering the inter-university co-operation and of developing integrated curricula. In this perspective UNIADRION has carried out master courses on International Co-operation and sustainable development of Agricultural, Environmental and Rural Systems, on Rehabilitation and Conservation of Historical Buildings and on Rural areas Sustainable Transport Development, recognized by all the 25 Universities which participate to the UNIADRION network.

Encourage the schools of the region to develop common projects to teach history and culture of the AII area in primary and secondary education for better cohesion and mutual understanding among young people.

Invite the competent authorities of the Member States to further co-operate in the elaboration and implementation of integrated river basin management systems based on common criteria and taking into account the Water Framework Directive (WFD 2000/60/CE) objectives.

Encourage the introduction and enlargement of innovative approaches for an integrated marine ecosystem observing and modeling system, as a tool to apply the principle of the WFD such as the project ADRICOSM (ADRIatic sea integrated COastal areaS and river basin Management system pilot project) so

that environmental threats (such as pollution from rivers, ballast water and oil-spills) could be tackled at an early phase.

Welcome the ongoing initiatives to strengthen the sub-regional co-operation dealing with accidental marine pollution primarily caused by oil spills and hazardous substances release (Contingency Plan) and with preventive activities to address the ballast water problem technically coordinated by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for Mediterranean (REMPEC/UNEP-MAP).

Express appreciation for the work done by the Italian Government for the establishment of the Secretariats of the Pan-European Corridors 5 and 8 and call for a rapid start of their activity.

Take note with satisfaction of the endorsement by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) of the Ship Reporting System in the Adriatic Sea and welcome the presentation to the IMO of the project for the establishment of Traffic Separation Schemes.

Urge the Member States to take the appropriate measures aimed at improving safety at sea and based on the relevant principles agreed within the IMO and the European Union.

Note that the development of Short Sea Shipping is a key factor for the Countries of the region and that co-operation among operators, carriers and port terminals in promoting the creation of joint companies able to offer new services of maritime links should consequently be encouraged.

Stress the necessity to provide financial support, namely the institution of a "revolving fund" at European level, to develop pilot projects in the frame of the motorways of the sea.

Recognize the importance of the project of the so-called Adriatic-Ionian Motorway.

Underline the need to safeguard the common cultural heritage in the region by carrying out research in fields relating to the preservation and the knowledge

of the historical roots of the region.

Stress the need to enhance the co-operation in the use of the information technologies in the management of the archives.

Express their appreciation for the contribution given by the experts from the member States to the activity of the AII and support the implementation of the common projects listed in the Joint Statements of the Round Tables.

Express their gratitude to Italy for its outstanding contribution to the Initiative over the period of its Presidency and for organizing successfully the meeting of the Council.

Entrust Slovenia with the next AII Presidency until May 2004.