



# C E T I N J E D E C L A R A T I O N

---

7th Adriatic and Ionian Council  
Cetinje, June 7, 2005

We, the Members of the Adriatic-Ionian Council:

Serbia and Montenegro, represented by Minister Mr Miodrag Vlahović, Albania, represented by Deputy Minister Mr Luan Hajdaraga, Bosnia and Herzegovina, represented by Assistant Minister Mr Nedžad Hadžimušić, Croatia, represented by State Secretary Mr Gordan Bakota, Slovenia, represented by State Secretary Dr Božidar Cerar, Greece, represented by Director General for Economic Affairs Mr Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos and Italy, represented by National Coordinator Mr Pierandrea Magistrati,

In the presence of representatives of the Central European Initiative (CEI), the South-East European Co-operation Process (SEEC), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Danube Cooperation Process (DCP), as the special guests of the AII Presidency,

Guided by the Ancona Declaration of 19 and 20 May 2000 and the principles expressed therein, the Split Declaration of 25 May 2001, the Athens Declaration of 22 May 2002, the Bari Declaration of 13 May 2003 and the Portorož Declaration of 23 May 2004,

We have reviewed the political and economic situation in Europe, as well as the state of affairs in the region with special regard to the developments affecting stability, prosperity and cooperation in the Adriatic-Ionian region. We are conscious that common understanding, economic welfare and full cooperation can only be achieved by means of enhancing and improving our good neighbourly relations, promoting democracy and reforms, market economy, security, rule of law and human rights. This Council presents yet another opportunity to contribute to the realisation of our joint commitments.

To this end we emphasise the importance of permanent exchange of ideas and dialogue among the Member States of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative. The process of confidence building in the region should bring about a higher level of European and Euro-Atlantic integrations and enable all the Member States to fulfil the high objectives of democracy, political stability, security and economic development.

We express our firm belief that the process of EU enlargement should be continued and intensified in the forthcoming period. This process is to contribute to the full inclusion of all the countries of the region in the European structures and integrations.

We support an early accession to the Euro-Atlantic structures of all the countries in the region ready to join. Thus, we hail the efforts of Albania, Croatia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in their process of becoming full members of NATO and reconfirm our support to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro to become the members of the Partnership for Peace Programme.

We welcome the participation of the European Union in an enhanced cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian area. AII shall continue its endeavours for a more active and effective involvement of the European Union in its activities, programmes and projects.

In this respect, we note with satisfaction the efforts made by the Serbia and Montenegro Presidency on future development of the Initiative towards a more dynamic and active role in bringing together the countries of the Adriatic-Ionian basin, especially in view of their European and Euro-Atlantic integrations.

We welcome the proposal made by the Committee of Senior Officials and agree to establish the

We welcome the proposal made by the Committee of Senior Officials and agree to establish the Adriatic-Ionian Troika mechanism in order to provide for continuity of joint priorities and enhanced activities in fields of common interest.

---

We welcome further progress in the process of coordination and project cooperation with and among the various regional initiatives and organisations in the area such as the Stability Pact (SP), the Central European Initiative (CEI), the South-East European Co-operation Process (SEECP), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) and the Danube Cooperation Process (DCP).

We are conscious of the fact that regional partnership among the various factors of cooperation in South-East Europe has been gaining in importance and weight in the last years. Therefore, we welcome the participation of the representatives of the CEI, BSEC, DCP and SEECP at the Council, which has enabled us to discuss possible areas of cooperation improvement.

We consider that there is a strong need of sharing the ideas, experiences and best practices in this field. We would like to see a much higher level of interregional cooperation in this respect and we are ready to try to offer a potential framework of interconnexion among all of them. This would be beneficial for both the AII and for the other regional players for it will show a high level of regional conscientiousness and responsibility of the South-East Europe.

We welcome the establishment of the Migration, Asylum and Refugees Regional Centre in Skopje. We are confident that it shall contribute to the regional cooperation in the context of European integrations of its Member States.

In this regard, we stress our readiness to co-ordinate the AII activities with other initiatives in Central and South-eastern Europe; as well as our interest in exchanging information with the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the Euro-Arctic Barents Council (EABC).

---

We have reviewed the results achieved in the course of the past year within the framework of the round tables of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative and other forms of cooperation within the Initiative. We express our satisfaction over the increasing all-round and enhanced cooperation among the AII Member States. We appreciate the results achieved during the Serbia and Montenegro AII Presidency within the Round Tables on the Fight against Organised Crime; Economy, Tourism and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises; Education and Inter-University Cooperation; Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development; Transport and Maritime Cooperation; Culture, and support the implementation of joint projects stated in joint statements.

In particular:

1. We welcome the activities of the Round Table on Economy, Tourism and SME Cooperation. We express our appreciation for the Declaration on Cooperation in the field of Tourism among the AII Member Countries approved during this meeting, which has placed great importance in improving cooperation between the AII countries in the field of economy, tourism and SMEs, in increasing the value of historical, cultural and natural heritage, in increasing growth from the tourism industry, creating new jobs and improving human resource management by focusing on the following projects – Adriatic and Ionian Seas of Europe, Development of nautical tourism, Development of sustainable tourism, and Education and training system in the field of tourism.

We recognise AII cooperation in the energy field where the Member States representatives have shared their experiences, knowledge and best practices in solving the energy challenges, urgent measures for the reduction of transmission and distribution technical losses and commercial loss reduction and the Regional Electricity Market – Construction and operation of the HVL 400kV between Albania and Montenegro (Elbasan – Podgorica), Italy being one of the main donors.

We consider the efforts in the field of institutional support to SMEs, their organisational structure and access to finance in the AII countries in order to exchange best practices extremely important

for any future activities in this field.

2. We welcome the efforts of the Round Table on Transport and Maritime cooperation, especially strategic cooperation in the area of search and rescue on bilateral and regional level, opening up the negotiation processes of signing bilateral agreements on mutual recognition of seafarers' certificates, which are based on STCW Convention. We note with satisfaction joint activities of all the AII Member States on establishing of the European Union fund for the support of linking up of transport-seas, rail and inland motorways.

We greet the idea of inclusion of the Adriatic-Ionian Transport Corridor into the Pan-European Traffic Corridor Network, and especially the establishing of the Expert Coordination Committee for Adriatic-Ionian Traffic and Adriatic-Ionian motorway, at the level of Ministries of Transport of the seven Adriatic-Ionian countries and a Joint Expert Team for preparation of concepts, studies and designs and for harmonisation of the Adriatic-Ionian route and the supporting road network from Trieste-Italy to Kalamata-Greece. We are convinced that it would have a wider regional and European significance for stabilisation and development of the region.

3. We are particularly pleased with the cooperation in the Round Table on Culture, mostly on research, protection, valorisation and presentation of the cultural heritage of the AII Member States. This especially holds true of the joint projects dealing with the establishing of a network of institutions dealing with underwater archaeology, cultural itineraries as a model of linking the cultural potential in AII countries through projects, such as the Tabula Peutingeriana, contemporary art creativity and cooperation between ethnographic, natural and maritime museums and resources exchange in the field of librarianship and publishing, as well as mechanisms of promotion of cultural tourism.

4. We highly appreciate the actions and initiatives made by the Round Table on Education and Interuniversity Cooperation on improving co-operation, networking, exchange and mobility of people, ideas and projects in the field of education among Adriatic-Ionian countries, particularly through the network of UNIADRION. We encourage the conclusion of bilateral agreements on the recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications among the countries of Adriatic-Ionian Region, when appropriate.

5. We accentuate the dialogue made under the Round table on Fight against Organised Crime towards promoting better cooperation among countries from Adriatic-Ionian Region by introducing and implementing ideas and projects which will lead to joint and more efficient fight against all types of organised crime in this region, especially in fighting illegal migrations, trafficking of human beings and drug smuggling. The exchange of information and building network among police units from different countries has been recognised as a first step in that direction.

6. We encourage the activities of the Round Table on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, and stress the importance of the Declaration on cooperation in the field of Environmental Protection, as well as the Statement on the Extension of the Sub-regional plan for prevention of, preparedness for and response to major marine pollution incidents in the Adriatic that have been adopted at this meeting.

We take good note of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative, led by Greece since 2002, as a framework for strategic partnerships among countries in the region, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and Johannesburg water related targets and to promote implementation of demand driven activities and donor coordination.

7. We reaffirm the importance of cooperation among the AII parliaments and express our gratitude to the Serbia and Montenegro Presidency of the AII in organising the meeting of the speakers of parliaments and the meetings of parliamentary committees on foreign policy, defence, economy, education and environmental protection during its term in office. We are very satisfied with the results achieved in this field in the course of the past year and we emphasise the need to continue with strengthening of parliamentary regional cooperation in the Adriatic Ionian basin.

Finally, we express our sincere gratitude for the participation of the experts from the Member States in the work of the round tables and support the implementation of common projects included in all the Joint Statements of the Round Tables.

We place full trust in Albania that is to assume the Adriatic-Ionian Presidency for the period May 2005 - May 2006.

We express our gratitude to Serbia and Montenegro for its outstanding contribution to the Initiative over the period of its Presidency and for organising successfully the meeting of the AII Council.

Cetinje, 7 June 2005