

THE SARAJEVO DECLARATION

Adopted at the 9th Adriatic and Ionian Council
(Sarajevo, 01 Jun 2007).

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs or Heads of Delegations of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia and representatives of European Commission attended the meeting in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and guided by:

The Ancona Declaration of 20 May 2000 and the principles expressed therein,

The Split Declaration of May 25, 2001,

The Athens Declaration of May 22, 2002,

The Bari Declaration of May 13, 2003,

The Portoroz Declaration of May 23, 2004,

The Cetinje Declaration of June 7, 2005,

The Tirana Declaration of May 26, 2006,

The principles and guidelines of the European Union,

Noting that after dissolution of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, and establishment of independent and sovereign states of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro, the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative will be composed of eight member states: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia;

Emphasizing the specific role of the AII in promoting cooperation among the Member States, in various areas in order to reach the target of strengthening peace and stability in the entire Adriatic-Ionian area;

Realizing that the main objective of the establishment of this Initiative is development and prosperity, an uninterrupted and substantive reform process, through a close cooperation, aiming at European Integration;

Conscious of the fact that such an integration could be reached through

common understanding, boosting good neighbourly relations, promoting democracy and reforms, security, market economy, rule of law and respect of human rights;

Acknowledging with satisfaction the general progress achieved so far in different domains, mainly through the meetings of the streamlined Round Tables;

Welcoming the efforts being made in transformation and reforms of the important regional initiatives, such as SEECF and CEI, and, in particular, the decision on transformation of the Stability Pact into the Regional Co-operation Council, take note with satisfaction that the seat of the RCC will be in Sarajevo;

Taking into account the discussions and opinions expressed by the Senior Officials and participants of the Round Tables concerning the need to further strengthening and promoting AII activities, as well as reorganizing the Initiative in line with reforms of other regional initiatives;

Urging the Senior Officials to prepare, upon the recommendations of the 9th Meeting of the AIC, held in Sarajevo, guidelines for AII reforms, in line with new needs and perspectives of AII;

Acknowledging the necessity to establish an AII Permanent Secretariat;

Taking note of the official proposal by Italy of Ancona as the Seat of the AII Permanent Secretariat.

Have Agreed:

To reconfirm our belief that process of the EU enlargement will be pursued in the forthcoming period, within the established rules and procedures.

To support the engagement of Albania, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in their NATO membership process and welcome

admission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia into the Partnership for Peace Program.

To establish, also in line with the recommendations of the Neum Declaration of the Speakers of Parliaments of AII Member States, an AII Permanent Secretariat. The Seat of the Secretariat will be determined, as soon as possible, by exchange of Notes Verbales, on the initiative of the Croatian Presidency. The modalities of establishment of this Secretariat and its functioning, as well as other practical issues, will be determined at the next meeting of the AII Committee of Senior Officials under the Croatian Presidency.

To intensify our efforts for a strengthened cooperation with the EU institutions, including the participation of the European Commission in the AII meetings, and the implementation of EU programmes and projects in priority sectors, in order to well prepare the progressive integration of all AII Member States to the EU policies.

To encourage a better coordination of the activities among the various regional organizations and initiatives in the area such as the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), the Stability Pact (PC) and in the future Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Migration, Asylum and Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI), the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI), the Central European Initiative (CEI), and the Danube Cooperation Process (DCP).

To appreciate the results achieved during the Chairmanship of Bosnia and Herzegovina of the AII within the Round Table on the Fight against Organized Crime; the Round Table on Economy and Tourism; the Round Table on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development and the Round Table on Culture, and to support the implementation of the joint conclusions of the Round Tables.

In particular:

To appreciate the activities of the Round table on Economy and Tourism and the joint conclusions approved during these meetings. Countries with an enormous deficit in international exchange of goods and services, among which Bosnia and Herzegovina, must invest maximum efforts in order to increase export, and to attract tourists, for which purpose strengthening of business cooperation in the field of tourism with AII Member States has a special importance.

To welcome the successful activities of UNIADRION and its enlargement to other three Universities from the member states decided in the Bologna meeting of the 13.th of Aprile.

To welcome a close cooperation among the AII Member States in order to enhance the protection of heritage areas in our region and for creating a model for linking the cultural potentials of our states.

To encourage the activities of the Round Table on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development in promoting countries' efforts for environmental protection, pollution prevention, biodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources and information exchanges. We share the opinion that environmental protection offers a good opportunity for cooperation and exchange of experiences.

To support the efforts of the Parliaments of AII states to be actively engaged in these processes, expressed at the Meeting of the Speakers of Parliaments of AII Member States, held on May 17, 2007, in Neum under the Chairmanship of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We consider the Neum Declaration adopted at the Meeting as a significant contribution to the activities aimed at organizing an even more efficient fight for environmental protection and sustainable development.

To recognize the necessity of upgrading legal framework and institutional capacities in terms of fighting against organized crime: the member states that have signed the Convention on Police Cooperation for South Eastern Europe should accelerate the process of ratification; to initiate negotiations and sign

bilateral agreements on police cooperation among the AII Member States; to use current agreements on police cooperation in the process of fighting against organized crime.

To support the conclusions that enriching exchange of information and communication structures in the member states is one of the main prerequisites for a successful cooperation.

To underline the confidence that this Council meeting was another opportunity to the realization of our joint commitments.

To place full trust in Croatia that is assuming the Adriatic-Ionian Presidency for the period June 2007 – May 2008.

To express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to Bosnia and Herzegovina and in particular to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for its excellent contribution to the Initiative over the period of its Presidency, for organising successfully the meeting of the AII Council and for the warm hospitality extended to us in Sarajevo.