



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND  
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION



ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE  
CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
JUNE 2007 – MAY 2008

**The 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Adriatic and Ionian Council**  
**The Zagreb Declaration**  
Zagreb, May 27<sup>th</sup> 2008

**We, the Members of the Adriatic and Ionian Council: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia,**

**Guided** by the Ancona Declaration of May 20<sup>th</sup> 2000 and its basic principles, and the principles and statements expressed and confirmed by the Declarations of the AICs from 2001 to 2007, as well as the principles and guidelines of the European Union:

**Emphasize** the significant role of the AII in strengthening cooperation and prosperity in the region as well as in the Mediterranean, good neighbourly relations among the Participating States, and their bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and in fostering economic development in the region;

**Reaffirm** that enhanced regional cooperation is an effective incentive that is instrumental to fostering political and economic stability, thereby making it the most solid basis for progress in the European integration process;

**Express** our satisfaction concerning the progress so far made in transformation of the AII into a project-oriented initiative and stress the need for further active and strong commitment of each Participating State;

**Take note** of the discussions and the opinions expressed on the meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials during the Croatian Chairmanship concerning further improvements of the performance of the AII, redefining of the fields of cooperation, including the use of appropriate mechanisms of cooperation, designed to accomplish our priorities in the fields of common interest;

**Welcome** the decision to focus the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative in the future to specific priorities included in the following Round Tables:

1. Round Table on Small and medium sized enterprises
2. Round Table on Transport – Maritime cooperation
3. Round Table on Tourism – Culture – Inter-university cooperation
4. Round Table on Environment – Protection against fire

**Acknowledge** with great satisfaction the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat of the AII, with the seat in Ancona, and the appointment of Minister Plenipotentiary Alessandro Grafini as the first Secretary General of the AII-PS;

**Thank** Italy and the Region Marche for their support in providing the necessary facilities and financial means for the AII-PS to be functional in a short period of time;

**Express** our firm belief that the AII-PS, with the adopted Guidelines and Rules of Procedure, and streamlined work by the Participating States, and guided by the Secretary General will contribute to better coordinated project-oriented activities of the AII and assist efficiently the Participating States in their AII regional cooperation in a systematic way;

**Agree** to explore possibilities for mobilizing adequate financial resources in order to ensure significant progress in projects of common interest;

**Recognise** that the EU enlargement is the essential instrument to achieve political, economic and social stability;

**Recall** our agreement in Ancona on the need for deeper involvement of the EU in the Adriatic and Ionian area and our invitation to the European Commission to continue the co-operation already undertaken within the AII through complementary EU programmes;

**Task** the Committee of Senior Officials to undertake steps to encourage the participation of the European Union in the improved and project-oriented cooperation within the AII;

**Reiterate** our determination to improve cooperation among the local and regional level of authorities within the AII;

**Welcome** the cooperation of the AII with all other regional organisations and initiatives in order to establish a more coordinated regional cooperation;

**Express** satisfaction regarding the reports of the Round Tables on Transport and Maritime Cooperation; Economy, Tourism and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises; Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development; and Culture;

In particular:

**Realise** the significance for the Adriatic-Ionian area of close cooperation in the field of protection against fire;

**Recommend** to AII Permanent Secretariat's consideration the Croatian Fire-Fighters Association's proposal for joint efforts at obtaining EU funds for projects aimed at solving issues of common regional concern in the area of their operations;

**Express** our appreciation for the participation of the experts from the Participating States at the Round Tables and support the implementation of the common projects contained in the Joint Statements of the Round Tables;

**Take note** of activities of other fora of the Adriatic and Ionian area (the AIC - Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce, Forum of the Adriatic-Ionian Cities and Towns

and UniAdrion) and urge the Committee of Senior Officials and the AII-PS to strengthen the cooperation with these bodies;

**Thank** the Republic of Croatia for the outstanding contribution to the Initiative over the period of its Presidency and the excellent organisation of the 10<sup>th</sup> Adriatic and Ionian Council;

**Entrust** Greece with the next AII Presidency until May 2009.