



**10 YEARS**  
**ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE**  
  
**ITALIAN CHAIRMANSHIP**  
**2009-2010**

**MEETING**  
**OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS**  
**Ancona, 16.6.2009**

**Agreed Minutes**

The first meeting of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative (AII) Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) under the Italian Chairmanship was held on June 16<sup>th</sup> 2009 in Ancona. The meeting was chaired by Minister Plenipotentiary Guglielmo Ardizzone of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic.

The committee adopted the agenda of the meeting.

The Chairman introduced the meeting by giving a general framework of the priorities of the AII Italian Chairmanship.

According to the Chairman, the AII should enhance and support the European perspective of those AII participating states which are still not part of the EU. The AII should work for making of the Adriatic Ionian region a more important focus of the EU. The participating states should work in order to push the EU to design an Adriatic Ionian strategy as it is the case for the Baltic Sea and for the New eastern Partnership.

In order to obtain this aim it is important to continue on the path of a project oriented approach of the initiative that was started by the Croatian Chairmanship and had its first results during the last Hellenic Chairmanship. Having a European strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian seas could facilitate the access to EU funds.

It is necessary, during the Italian Chairmanship, to strengthen the cooperation with local authorities, municipalities, universities, chambers of commerce with the coordination of the AII PS. They have an important experience in developing trans-border EU projects and they should be involved more in AII Round Tables.

The Chairman pointed out the importance of continuing the experience of the AII Parliamentary Dimension which can give a framework for the AII strategy, taking into account, with appreciation, the meeting of the presidents of the Parliaments held in Athens on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2009. The Montenegrin delegate, Minister Scepanovic, suggested to make of it a permanent appointment of the AII.

Finally, Minister Ardizzone announced that it is foreseen to organize, by the end of the Italian Chairmanship, a special event to celebrate 10 years from the creation of the Adriatic & Ionian Initiative (19-20 May 2010).



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The AII PS Secretary General, ambassador Alessandro Grafini pointed out the importance of having a Permanent Secretariat which make possible to give continuity to the activities of the AII from a presidency to another. The participants approved this line of the AII PS.

The Serb Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Stanimir Vukicevic appreciated the fact that a priority of the Italian Chairmanship is the support to the EU integration of all AII participating states and affirmed that also the cooperation with other regional organisation can help in reaching this scope.

This stance has been shared also by the Croatian delegates which have expressed their particular interest for the Sustainable development of the AII area.

The AII Italian Chairmanship indicated some fields of activities which are considered a priority: Transport logistics, particularly related to port infrastructure; Small and Medium Enterprises, industrial districts and energy; Environment, particularly combating sea pollution; Development of sustainable tourism; the cultural dimension, projects could be developed together with the universities. The University of Teramo has proposed to extend the university cooperation to the Mediterranean dimension organizing a conference on the item.

The Greek delegate, mr. Makrynicolas, stressed the essential role of the CSO for enhancing multilateral cooperation and particularly its opportunity to attract the attention of the European Union, but also the importance to involve the civil society, the business community, the local authorities of all participating countries in order to strengthen the project oriented approach of the AII. There should be a rule of presenting projects to the AII. They should be presented first to the Round Tables, than to the CSO and finally to the AI Council of Ministers for approval. Finally, a follow up should be given to the ANSA project for a Adriatic Ionian communication platform and to the Hellenic Civil Aviation project of an Adriatic Ionian flight network.

The Montenegrin delegate supported the programme of the Italian Chairmanship and remarked that to the text should be added that also Serbia and Montenegro joined the AII.

The Albanian delegate, Ms. Ada Shehu, agreed on the Italian programme, but expressed some scepticisms on a European strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Area. As a matter of fact, the EU Commission was invited to the events in Ancona, but no delegate appeared. The AII PS will insist in keeping these contacts. She also



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proposed that participating states should start thinking also about financing directly AII activities, not only through EU funds.

The programme of the AII Italian Chairmanship (see annex) was approved by all participating countries together with the Programme of the activities of the AII-PS which constitute an addendum to the general programme already mentioned. In this document it is underlined that the AII PS will have a project oriented approach developing the relations with local and regional authorities as well as with the three Adriatic Ionian Fora located in Ancona.

The meeting was followed by a visit to the seat of the Permanent Secretariat and by a working lunch among Vice Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other heads of delegations.

The list of the delegates present in Ancona is annexed.