



**REPUBLIC OF ITALY  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**



**ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE  
CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY  
JUNE 2009 – MAY 2010**

**MEETING  
OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS  
Ancona, 4 May 2010**

**Agreed Minutes**

The fourth meeting of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative (AII) Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) under the Italian Chairmanship was held on May 4<sup>th</sup> 2010 in Ancona Portonovo. The meeting was chaired by Minister Plenipotentiary Guglielmo Ardizzone of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic.

Min. Ardizzone introduced the meeting by proposing the Agenda that was approved and gave the floor to Mr. Andrea Cascone from the Italian MFA in order to present the results of the Adriatic-Ionian Baltic workshop held in Ancona on the 28-29 April 2010.

Mr. Cascone explained that the workshop focused mainly on three areas of possible cooperation ( Institutional Cooperation, Sustainable Development/University Cooperation and Civil Society Dialogue). There are many differences between the Adriatic-Ionian and the Baltic regions, however, there are some similarities such as the fact that both are developed around semi-closed seas and the presence of thematic fora or networks of Chambers of Commerce, of Cities, Universities etc, that can be exploited for improving development policies. At the institutional level it has been decided to improve exchange of information, use of best practices and mutual working visits among the Permanent Secretariats of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative and the Council of Baltic Seas States (see attached text prepared by the CBSS Secretariat).

On the matter of cooperation with other regional organizations, Amb. Grafini anticipated that at mid June the annual Regional Coordination Meeting at the level of Secretary Generals will have place in Ancona.

Mr. Garcevic from Montenegro welcomed and supported the intention to strengthen regional cooperation in particular with the CBSS bearing in mind the similarities between the two basins but also the differences. He stated that it would be crucial to focus on 1 or 2 priorities in order to achieve effectiveness and that CBSS expert could be invited to participate to some Round Tables that could be of common interests.

According Mr. Makrynicolas (Greece) the CSO should be a facilitator for the realization of common projects between the AII and CBSS and task the thematic Round Tables to propose common project ideas.

Under point 3 of the Agenda was discussed the formulation of the Declaration of Ancona to be approved the following day during the Adriatic Ionian Council. One of the crucial points of the declaration has been to reaffirm as a priority of the AII the support to the accession process of all Participating States as well as to accelerate visa liberalization of Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Under point 4 of the Agenda it was discussed the Declaration on the support to the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region. The Italian delegation has stressed the fact that the document was built taking into account the indication of the EU Commission on the establishment of a Macro-Regional Strategy and after a trip of State Secretary Mantica to all AII countries in order to present the idea. The process for the eventual EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region will have special support by the Greek and Italian Chairmanship of the EU in 2014.

The Croatian delegation has made no objection on the political basis, but at the same time underlined that the process for a EU Strategy should involve all AII Participating States to the decisional process. This point has been made more clear in the declaration.

Under point 5 of the Agenda the recommendation to the AIC for an amendment to the Guidelines and Rules of Procedure of the AII-PS was presented and approved by the delegates with a rewording proposed by Croatia.

Under point 7 of the Agenda, Amb. Alessandro Grafini presented the Annual Report of the Results of the Activities of the AII Permanent Secretariat under responsibility of the Chairmanship-in Office and the Secretary General. During the last 12 months the AII-PS have supported the activities of the Italian Chairmanship in Office particularly in terms of its classical secretarial activities insuring continuity with the previous Greek Chairmanship and keeping and circulating all documents produced during the year. The AII-PS has supported and is continuing to support the AII Chairmanship-in-Office in all process of definition of the AII cooperation Protocols from the drafting to the signature. The AII-PS has, furthermore, continued to stay in contact and cooperation with local authorities and Adriatic-Ionian Fora having seat in Ancona. Finally the AII-PS, considering its project oriented approach has given an important contribution to the start up of the works for the future establishment of an EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region.

The report was approved by the CSO and endorsed by the AIC.