



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE
CHAIRMANSHIP OF SERBIA
JUNE 2011 – MAY 2012

July 12, 2011

MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE ADRIATIC - IONIAN INITIATIVE

June 21, 2011

Agreed Minutes

The first meeting of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative (All) Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) under the Serbian Chairmanship was held on June 21st, 2011 in Belgrade. The meeting was chaired by Amb. Dušan Gajić of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia with the assistance of the All Permanent Secretariat.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Chairman introduced the meeting welcoming the presence of both the outgoing (Amb. Alessandro Grafini) and the incoming (Amb. Fabio Pigliapoco) Secretary General of the All-PS. Subsequently, he proposed the Agenda that was approved.

Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina were not represented to the meeting. The representative of Croatia informed however through the Presidency, that its Country accepts the Agenda, supports the Priorities of the Serbian Presidency with some (but not specified) reservations as far as the All-PS Programme of Activities.

2. Presentation of the Priorities of the Serbian Chairmanship and Calendar of Events

The Chairman delivered priorities and calendar of events to the delegate and confirmed that the top priority of the All, also during Serbian Chairmanship, remains the establishment of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region. For this purpose the work of the three EU members (Greece, Italy, Slovenia) will be crucial. A Conference for the support of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region will be organized in Athens (February-March 2012).

Furthermore, the Chairman informed that, since Serbia is a landlocked Country, a Round Table on Maritime Cooperation will be organized at the beginning of December in Ancona by the All Permanent Secretariat and that even though topic of "Fight Against Organized Crime" has been removed in the past years among the priorities of the All, still remains a critical problem of all All Participant Countries, therefore Serbia will organize a "Forum on Fight Against Organized Crime" in November.

All participants approved and supported the Programme of Activities of the All Serbian Chairmanship.

3. Programme of activities of the Permanent Secretariat of the All under joint responsibility of the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General

Amb. Grafini exposed the Programme of Activities of the All Permanent Secretariat by pointing out that it is a direct consequence and it is strictly linked to the Programme of the newly established All Chairmanship. The All-PS will continue to strengthen its already excellent relation with Adriatic-Ionian Fora of cooperation seating in Ancona fostering common activities. Furthermore, the All-PS will be a point of reference for information about the process of approval of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region and will work, together with Participating States for ensuring the follow-up of the Declaration on the Support of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region (Ancona, 5 May 2010) and the Brussels Declaration (23 May 2011).

Finally, the All-PS will work together with the competent authorities for the follow-up of the already signed Protocols of Cooperation in the framework of the All and will support the redrafting of the Protocol on Culture that was announced during the Italian Chairmanship, considering to change the topic from "Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage" to another field of cooperation in culture.

Italy informed the CSO of a meeting at the UNESCO office in Venice where he got the suggestion to work on a Protocol on preservation of art pieces after earthquakes or natural disasters. All participants agreed on the proposal.

4. Projects in framework of Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Region with contribution of the All-PS

Under point 4, two project proposals by the All-PS were delivered to the participants. Amb. Grafini reminded art. 7 of the Guidelines and Rules of Procedure of the All-PS giving it the opportunity to propose the implementation of projects to be approved by the CSO and endorsed by the AIC. At this point, the All-PS (Foundation) disposes of some funds that can be used for funding projects aiming at supporting the process for the establishment of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region.

Italy, pointed out that has already delivered 600.000 euros and will deliver in short time new funds to the All-PS, to be used for common, Transborder projects. Italy asked therefore to

the Serbian Chairmanship to give a mandate to the All-PS to prepare some guidelines for regulating the procedures for presenting the above mentioned projects. The Serbian Chairmanship asked if all participants were in favour of this proposal. There was a general agreement on that and the All-PS was charged to prepare relevant guidelines.

ADDRESS BY SERBIAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS VUK JEREMIĆ

Minister Jeremić addressed to the CSO by affirming that Regional Cooperation is for Serbia a priority, particularly during this year when Belgrade is taking over the presidencies of All, CEI, SEECP and MARRI, as well as BSEC next year.

Concerning All Chairmanship. Serbia considers strategically important to strengthen cooperation in all priority fields of activity of this organization, but there is the will to strengthen cooperation also in other fields such as fight against organized crime which is a top priority for Serbia. Jeremić has assured the full support of Serbia for the process of establishment of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region. Serbia is already part of the Danube Macro-Region and such instrument could be crucial also for the Adriatic Ionian area, opening up great opportunities for development and giving also a boost to the EU integration process. The Minister of Foreign Affairs affirmed that he will sponsor such Macro-Region in each contact he will have with EU institutions.

5. EU Strategy for Adriatic-Ionian Macro Region (Information by the representatives of Italy, Greece and Slovenia)

Under point 5 Greece took the floor by giving the participants four news about the process of establishment of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region:

- Right after the Ministerial meeting in Brussels (23 May 2011) the three Vice Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Slovenia and Greece met Commissioner Hahn to support the idea of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region also on behalf of the 5 non EU member States of the All;
- The following day (24 May) the representatives of the three governments met officials of Commissioner Damanaki to confirm that the Maritime Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region will be an integral part of the EU Strategy for the Macro-Region.
- The Prime Ministers of Italy, Greece and Slovenia signed, in the first part of June, a common letter supporting the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region to the President of the Commission Barroso and the President of the European Council Van Rompuy (**See attachment**). The aim is to obtain that next year the European Council will instruct the EU Commission to start the works for the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region.
- The Polish Embassy in Athens has asked the Greek representative information about the process for establishment of the European Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-

Region (Poland will take over EU presidency after Greece and is supporting our initiative).

Amb. Grafini added that on the 24th of June the EU Council will approve the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and at the same time will encourage, for the first time, the continuation of the works for the establishment of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region. This way, after the Baltic and the Danube, the Adriatic Ionian will officially be considered the third possible Macro-Region to establish in Europe.

6. All enlargement possibilities (Report of the Secretary General)

Under point 6 Amb. Grafini took the floor reminding that for the first time a country has applied for membership at the Adriatic Ionian Initiative. He reminded the interlocutory letter sent after last AIC in Brussels and signed by the All-PS Secretary General and former Chairman Montenegrin Minister of Foreign Affairs Roćen and presented the Comparative Study for the Enlargement of the All (see attachment).

Amb. Grafini reminded that the All is a maritime organization, all members are coastal States with the exception of Serbia that is member because of the right of succession after the dissolution of the State Union of Serbia & Montenegro in 2006.

The conclusion of the Comparative Study is that, since no other Regional Initiative as in its Rules of Procedure a paragraph regulating the process of enlargement, it is not necessary to add a specific article to the AIC Rules of Procedures on the matter.

All participants agreed to the proposal. Furthermore, the Chairman added that since no answer by Minister Milososki has been received to the interlocutory letter there is no need to write a new letter to inform that, for now, the All does not foresee new enlargements.

7. Inauguration of the new All-PS Secretary General – Transfer of Powers between the new and the former Secretary General

Mr. Makrynicolas (the dean among the Senior Officials) took the floor thanking Amb. Grafini for his work and his effort during his successful mandate. In particular he pointed out that with the first All PS Secretary General the All has visibly improved thanks to 5 factors: Institutional memory; Continuity to the All works; the realization of technical papers to support the Chairmanship-in-Office; the annual reports of the All-PS and transparency; the constant relation with civil society, Fora seating in Ancona and local authorities. Finally, Mr. Makrynicolas congratulated the All-PS Secretary General and his staff for their efficient work during these three years even tough with a very small structure.

The Chairman and later all participant congratulated Amb. Grafini for his successful three years mandate. The Chairman pointed out the important results of the All-PS,

particularly the creation of the Foundation economically supporting the All-PS and for the input to the process for the establishment of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region.

Finally, the Chairman gave the floor to the new All-PS Secretary General, Amb. Fabio Pigliapoco.

Amb. Pigliapoco affirmed to be very grateful to all Participant Countries for its appointment. All government have accepted the proposal by Italy in short time and with no objections. He assured the best possible collaboration with the Chairmanship-in-Office and with all Participant Countries, since the All-PS is an instrument in the hands of All governments.

Amb. Pigliapoco expressed his gratitude to Amb. Grafini for having left a solid structure and organization, particularly with the establishment of the Foundation that is going to receive an important economic contribution by the Italian government that will be at disposal of the All for common projects of cooperation in the framework of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region. The first task of the All-PS under guidance of the new Secretary General will be to prepare a Guideline for presenting projects proposal indicating profiles, areas of interventions and possible partners.

The EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region will remain the priority for the All-PS in Amb. Pigliapoco three years mandate. The aim is to see approved the Strategy in 2014 when both Italy and Greece will take over the EU Presidency with the help of all eight All Participant Countries. This will be an important test in order to pave the way for the accession of all All Countries to the EU as soon as possible.

All participants congratulated Amb. Pigliapoco for his new post as All-PS Secretary General.

8. Any other business

Under any other business, the Chairman announced that the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia has applied for membership within the Adriatic Ionian Forum of Chambers of Commerce and is waiting for a reply.

Mr. Di Paola informed that the All-PS has taken information at the Secretariat of the Forum AIC concerning the application of Serbia for membership and that there have been very positive reactions. During next Council in October or November 2011 the question will be discussed and most probably the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia will accede to the Forum.