



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



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

Committee of Senior Officials Belgrade, 30th April 2012

Agreed Minutes

The third and last meeting of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative (AII) Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) under the Serbian Chairmanship was held on April 30th 2012 in Belgrade. The meeting was chaired by Amb. Duško Lopandić of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia with the assistance of the AII Permanent Secretariat.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Chairman introduced the meeting welcoming the presence of Senior Officials in Belgrade. The Agenda was approved with no objections.

2. Report of the All Serbian Chairmanship

Amb. Lopandic reminded to the Senior Officials all the activities carried out during the period of Serbian Chairmanship, in particular the meetings and Round Tables on Small and Medium Enterprises, Maritime Cooperation, Environmental Protection and Rural Development, as well as the meetings organized in cooperation with other regional initiatives chaired by Serbia, such as the Ministerial meetings on Fight Against Organized Crime, on Prevention of Natural Disasters and the Ministerial meeting in the margin of the UN General Assembly, with the participation of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Secretary Generals of AII, CEI, RCC and SEECP (New York – September 23, 2011).

The chairman considered that the current week was very intense for the Adriatic Ionian Initiative in Belgrade, taking into account that – apart from today's meeting - on April 26 the Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and the Conference of the Speakers of the All Parliaments took place. The Parliamentary Conference was very factual and the participants

proposed many initiatives, among them the establishment of national parliamentary delegations to the All.

Concluding, the Chairman expressed satisfaction for the new Regional Cooperation Programme for co-financing trans-border projects on the basis of the three All protocols on SMEs, Tourism and Rural Development, as well as of the future macro-regional strategy and thanked Italy for the budget put at disposal for the programme.

3. Annual Report of the All-PS

The Secretary General took the floor by stressing the central role of the All-PS in assisting the Chairmanship.

The Annual Report of the All-PS was circulated to the Senior Officials in the previous weeks. Therefore, Amb. Pigliapoco underlined that, apart from the secretarial activities, the All-PS is now working with a strong project oriented approach, assisting the presidency in its activities at support of the process of establishment of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region and by managing the new Regional Cooperation Programme for co-funding All projects. In this regard, he added that a certain number of institutions, universities, association have already shown their interest in presenting projects.

The Chairman gave the floor to the participant for a *tour de table*.

All participant States expressed their gratefulness to Serbia for the excellent work and the excellent cooperation with the All-PS. The Annual Report of the All-PS was approved.

GREECE considered that the intense activities within the All attracted the interest of the EU Commission (DG MARE) for working on the maritime strand of the future EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region. Furthermore, GREECE informed that the 3 EU Member States of the All and Croatia are preparing a letter to the EU Commissioners Hahn, Füle and Damanaki in support of the process of establishment of the Macro-Region (the draft letter was delivered).

ITALY expressed support to the letter mentioned by Greece and added that next workshop of the stakeholders of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region – on the line of the meeting hold in Athens – will take place in Trieste next June 5th and will be opened by the President of the Region Friuli Venezia Giulia, Mr. Renzo Tondo.

CROATIA noticed that the All is starting having some influence and this means that our work is going in the right direction.

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA asked to modify a phrase in the annual report of the All-PS in “The period of the Serbian Presidency has been a period of next rapid growth for All”, considering that the work of the new Secretary General has been crucial for such growth in particular in relation with the start-up of the new Regional Cooperation Programme.

ALBANIA asked to the participant to work for a better coordination of dates of the events of the regional initiatives in the region, in order to avoid overlapping. Concerning the Regional Cooperation Programme, ALBANIA asked to postpone the deadline for presenting projects from May 18 to June 30.

The SECRETARY GENERAL explained that the idea was to give 2 months for preparing and presenting project proposals in order to start co-financing within the year 2012 and gave the floor to the Presidency and the Senior Officials for the decision.

The CHAIRMAN proposed, not to give a precise date, but to keep a certain degree of flexibility “for the projects recommended by the Senior Officials”. The CSO agreed on this point.

SLOVENIA informed that preparation is going on for the next period of Presidency starting from June. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is discussing the programme with the other ministries and the focus will be on environment and the macro-regional process.

4. Presentation and Final Drafting of the Belgrade Declaration

The draft Belgrade Declaration was analysed point by point by the Committee of Senior Officials and finally approved for the endorsement of the Adriatic Ionian Council.

The Chairman expressed thanks to all participants and closed the CSO.