



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE
CHAIRMANSHIP OF ALBANIA

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

May 13, 2014
Agreed Minutes

The last meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative under the Albanian Chairmanship was held in Brussels on May 13th 2013. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Agim Pasholli, Albanian Senior Official and Chairman in Office, with the assistance of the AII Permanent Secretariat.

1. Adoption of Agenda

The **Chairman** introduced the agenda that was adopted with no objection. After adopting the agenda, he reminded the events organized by the Albanian Presidency during last year particularly mentioning the “Special AIC Meeting of Athens” (6 February) officially confirming the role of the AII as the “intergovernmental anchorage” to the EUSAIR and the XII Conference of Speakers of the Parliaments of the AII held in Tirana on April 28 which decided upon the creation of permanent parliamentary representations to the AII.

All Senior Officials praised Albania for carrying out a successful and committing Presidency. Particular appreciation was given to the “Special AIC Meeting of Athens”, which was considered a milestone for the preparation of EUSAIR, and to the mentioned Conference of the Speakers.

2. Finalization of the XVII AIC Declaration

The **Chairman** reminded the Senior Officials that the draft declaration had already been circulated and approved by silent procedure. Nonetheless, he gave the opportunity for a last minute comment or modification to the text. Since no delegation took the floor, the text was approved by unanimity.

3. Adoption of the “Permanent Secretariat Annual Report”

The **Secretary General** reminded that the Annual Report of the AII-PS had already been circulated previously. He said he was grateful to the Albanian Chairmanship for the excellent cooperation during last year, and particularly for the successful “Special AIC Meeting” of Athens where AII Ministers of Foreign Affairs solemnly declared the AII as the “intergovernmental anchorage” of the EUSAIR. The “AII-PS Annual Report” describes all the activities of the AII-PS during the year, ranging from secretarial activities, to assisting the presidency in the organization of meetings and Round Tables, to managing the “Regional Cooperation Programme”,

to assisting the Presidency in the preparatory phase of the EUSAIR, to cooperation with regional fora, etc. (The Annual Report is Enclosed).

4. Report on the Regional Cooperation Program

The **Secretary General** informed the Senior Officials about the continuation of the Regional Cooperation Program started in 2012.

At present, most of the applicants have already received their first “tranche” of contribution and are implementing their projects. The AII-PS monitors their follow-up through mid-term progress and financial reports and constantly keeping contact with project applicants, asking for information on the activities and the budget when needed.

The following two projects have already been successfully concluded:

- **Sustainable Child and Youth Tourism in function of Rural Development of the Region** (Lead Applicant - National Tourism Organization of Serbia). The project, including partners from Serbia, Croatia, Italy and Slovenia, aimed at improving cooperation through exchange of know-how and practices among the partners and service providers in the field of Child and Youth Tourism
- **Promotion of eco-remediation in national parks and camps** (Lead Applicant - ChargoNet, Slovenia). The project, realized with the partnership of associations from Slovenia, Croatia and Montenegro, was aimed at changing the culture of decision-makers on the protection on environment in national parks.

All other projects, except one, are in their implementation phase and will soon be concluded.

5. Short presentation of the future BiH - Presidency

The delegate from **Bosnia and Herzegovina** confirmed his commitment for the new AII Chairmanship from June 2014 until May 2015 and asked for the support of the Permanent Secretariat in the organization of the activities.

BiH will follow the path of the Albanian Chairmanship by organizing meetings and Round Tables in line with the EUSAIR pillars and trying to contribute to its implementation.

BiH will try to give the highest visibility to AII meetings (taking also example by the RT on Tourism during the Albanian Chairmanship) and to focus on few issues in order to be as effective as possible.

Amb. Orlic finally informed the Senior Officials that the first CSO meeting under BiH Chairmanship should take place in Sarajevo on June 17 together with a Workshop on Health Mobility (organized by the Federal Ministry of Health and Region Marche) and a Cultural event. Confirmation about the meeting will be sent as soon as possible.

6. Renewal of the Mandate of the Secretary General.

The **Chair** informed that the proposal put forward by Italy for the renewal of the mandate of the Secretary General was welcome by all Governments and letters of approval were sent by all AII Participating States .

He asked again for the approval of the new mandate for Amb. Pigliapoco.

All delegates took the floor and praised the Secretary General for the work done during his three years mandate.

The Italian Senior Official took the floor expressing his satisfaction for the approval of the Italian proposal and added that the task of the Secretariat will be even more demanding this coming year since EUSAIR will be in its implementation phase and the AII will have to perform its role as the “Intergovernmental Anchorage” to the EUSAIR.

The **Secretary General** thanked all Senior Official for their expression of trust and through them their Governments.

6. **Any Other business**

- Under any other business, the **Albanian Senior Official** informed that the Bulgarian Ambassador in Tirana contacted him to request the “observer status” to the AII for his Country. The Chair reminded that the status of observer is not foreseen in the “Rules of Procedure” of AII. Only after a future examination of the matter by Senior Officials an answer could be given.

- The **Chair** also informed that FYROM asked for Albanian support for “membership in the EUSAIR”. It was generally agreed (and Italy in particular stressed the point) that the issue would be better tackled after the beginning of the EUSAIR implementation phase.

- The **Secretary General** informed that the Youth Adriatic Ionian Games are being organized in Ancona from 5 to 8 June and will see the participation of more than 1000 young athletes coming from all AII Participating States.