



MONTENEGRO
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION



ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE
CHAIRMANSHIP OF MONTENEGRO
JUNE 2010 – MAY 2011

The 13th Meeting of the Adriatic and Ionian Council
The Brussels Declaration 2011
Brussels, 23 May 2011

We, the Members of the Adriatic and Ionian Council:

Albania: Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Foreign Affairs Edmond Haxhinasto

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Minister of Foreign Affairs Sven Alkalaj

Croatia: Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Gordan Jandroković

Hellenic Republic: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Spyros Kouvelis

Italy: Minister of Foreign Affairs Franco Frattini

Montenegro: Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Milan Roćen

Serbia: Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremić

Slovenia: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Dragoljuba Benčina

Approve the following:

Guided by the Ancona Declaration of May 20th 2000 and its basic principles, the principles and statements expressed and confirmed by the Declarations of the Adriatic Ionian Councils from 2001 to 2010, as well as the principles and guidelines of the European Union:

Recalling the Declaration of the Adriatic Ionian Council on the support to the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region adopted last year in Ancona, whereby the EU Member States of the AII, in close coordination with the other AII Participating States, were asked to take all contacts at EU level to promote an EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian region with the EU institutions;

Commending the numerous successful activities subsequently carried out during the Montenegrin Chairmanship of the AII, such as

- the meeting of the representatives of the Governments of Italy, Greece and Slovenia with the Members of the European Parliament of the three Countries, held in Brussels on June 8, 2010;
- The AII Committee of Senior Officials with the participation of Commissioner Damanaki, Ancona on February 16, 2011;

- the special event on the Strategy, organized in the framework of the EU Open Days in Brussels on October 6, 2010;
- the high level meeting supporting the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region held in Jahorina, Sarajevo on January 25, 2011.

Taking note of the ongoing consultations at technical level between the EU Member States of the AII and the Commission, that led to the drafting of a comprehensive *reflection paper* which will be the basis for further developments of the Strategy, including its maritime dimension

Welcoming the initiative of the President of the Committee of the Regions, to host this meeting in Brussels, thus highlighting the AII aspiration to fully cooperate with EU institutions and to enhance the EU dimension of the Strategy:

- 1. Reaffirm** the support to the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Macro-Region;
- 2. Confirm** their readiness to cooperate with the EU Commission, on the preparation and implementation of the Strategy, involving national, regional and local administrations;
- 3. Welcome** the Conclusions of the Council of the European Union of April 13 2011, whereby Member States are invited to continue to work on future macro-regional strategies in cooperation with the Commission;
- 4. Take note** of the Committee of the Regions' opinion on "Territorial cooperation in the Mediterranean through the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region", which has recently been presented and is expected to be approved in the forthcoming months;
- 5. Encourage** EU Member States of the AII to continue their contacts with EU Institutions with the aim of soon obtaining a formal acknowledgement of the Strategy at the highest level, in the light of its maturity, solid grounding in full consistency with the EU 2020 Strategy;
- 6. Underline** that the Strategy, thanks to its inclusiveness and comprehensiveness, will be highly beneficial for non-EU member States as it reaffirms that their future lies in the European Union and since it will allow them to advance on the path towards EU accession through a structured framework based on the EU *acquis*;

7. **Acknowledge** that the inauguration of the Montenegrin Chairmanship in Podgorica, on June 28, 2010, marked a significant step forward in further strengthening of overall cooperation within the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative;
8. **Emphasize** the importance of intergovernmental cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian basin, as a tool for fostering balanced and sustainable development in the region, and reaffirm their commitment to the AII as an important platform for achieving that scope;
9. **Acknowledge** the work done within the Round Tables on University Cooperation, on Tourism, on SMEs, on Maritime cooperation, on Environmental Protection, with particular attention to the Sub - Round Table on Tourism with important results, such as an establishment of the university networks and a promotion of tourism products;
10. **Underline** the significance of contacts between representatives of the Parliaments of the Participating States. The last meeting of Speakers of the Parliament held in Budva, Montenegro, on April 11 to 13, 2011, has demonstrated a common will to cooperate and establish a mutual understanding on the path of reaching European goals;
11. **Emphasize** the importance of regular contacts with other organizations and initiatives active in our broader region, such as the Central European Initiative, the Regional Cooperation Council, the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the Council of the Baltic Sea States, in order to exchange information on activities and best practices, explore possible common grounds for concerted action and avoid duplication;
12. **Take note** of the activities of other Fora of the Adriatic and Ionian area, namely, the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce, Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns and UniAdrion, and urge the Committee of Senior Officials and the AII Permanent Secretariat to support the strengthening of cooperation with these bodies;
13. **Register** with satisfaction the approval by the CSO of the annual report of activities of the Permanent Secretariat of the AII;
14. **Thank Montenegro** for its highly considerable contribution to the Initiative over the period of its Chairmanship and for the organization of the XIII Adriatic and Ionian Council;
15. **Entrust** Serbia with incoming AII Chairmanship from June 1, 2011, with firm belief that the next one – year period will mark a new phase in reaching visible success of the AII.