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CPMR BALKAN & BLACK SEA REGIONAL COMMISSION (BBSRC)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

26 JUNE 2008 – RHODES (SOUTH AEGEAN, GREECE)

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## MINUTES

### MORNING SESSION

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The meeting was opened by Mr **Anthony Papadimitriou**, Executive Secretary of the BBSRC. He welcomed in the lovely and historic island of Rhodes, on behalf of the BBSRC, all distinguished members and observers participating to the BBSRC General Assembly. Mr G. Bunduc, Interim President of the BBSRC and President of the Tulcea County Council (Romania), was intended to open and chair the first part of the meeting. However, during the recent elections in Romania his party was not successful enough to be re-elected. Mr **Victor Tarhon** was elected President of Tulcea. BBSRC is looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with the new administration in Tulcea in the coming years. Mr Papadimitriou thanked President Bunduc on behalf of the delegates for his contribution and commitment to the work and objectives of the BBSRC over his term in office and underlined his vision for an integrated inter-regional cooperation in the Balkan and Black Sea area.

Present in the meeting are (please refer to annex 1):

The floor was then given to Mr **Charalambos Kokkinos**, Secretary General of the South-Aegean Region (Greece) for the official opening of the works of the BBSRC Rhodes General Assembly and to chair the first part of the meeting. Mr Kokkinos welcoming all participants expressed his great satisfaction for hosting the BBSRC General Assembly in the insular and Mediterranean Region of South-Aegean and most particularly in the historic island of Rhodes. He stressed that once again Europe is in a critical moment after the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty following the Irish referendum and said that the ratification process should go ahead in the remaining Member States in order Europe to go forward in the process of European integration. He also said that another effort for drafting a new Treaty should be excluded and that the adoption of the Reform Treaty as soon as possible will also allow the continuation of the enlargement process of the E.U. making reference to the fears and concerns of Croatia and the other countries which are in the process of accession. He then went on referring to the Mediterranean Summit which will be organised by the French Presidency targeting a more integrated Mediterranean Policy and the creation of a Mediterranean Union expressing his hope that this initiative will contribute to a closer cooperation of the people and Regions in the Mediterranean, a policy in which CPMR is involved since many years. He then referred to developments in the Black Sea Basin which is becoming a region of peace and progress and on the recent discussion for upgrading relations between the Black Sea states and the E.U. He stressed that Greece supports a closer institutional cooperation between BSEC and the European Union, especially after the adoption by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the E.U and the members of the Black Sea Basin of the Kiev Communiqué on February 14, 2008 where the will for closer cooperation in several fields has been expressed. He also expressed his will for an eventual cooperation between BSEC and CPMR in domains of special interest for the member regions of BBSRC. He then assured the importance the Region of South Aegean dedicates to the European cooperation and informed that an important Conference will take place on an Integrated European Policy for the Islands in Kos on 28 and 29 June. S.G Kokkinos then said that he is looking forward to the debate and decisions to be taken during the G.A as they will constitute the basis for the work of the BBSRC for the next year.

Mr Kokkinos chairing the meeting read the message received from Mr **Nicusor Daniel Constantinescu**, re-elected President of the Constanta County Council, Romania (see **annex 2**) and Mr **Y. MILDON**, the newly

elected President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe which reads as follows:

*"Merci pour l'invitation que vous m'avez adressée pour participer à l'Assemblée générale de la Commission Balkans / Mer Noire qui se déroule le 26 juin 2008 à Rhodes. Je suis retenu par le Bureau du Congrès et ne serai malheureusement pas en mesure de participer à vos travaux. En tant que nouveau Président du Congrès, je souhaite poursuivre et développer les relations de travail entre le Congrès et la CRPM et en particulier avec la Commission Balkans / Mer Noire, à laquelle j'ai participé à plusieurs reprises en tant que Président de la Chambre des régions. Je profite de cette occasion pour vous informer de la tenue de la Conférence de lancement de l'Eurorégion Mer Noire qui se tiendra à Varna (Bulgarie), le 26 septembre prochain. A cette occasion, l'acte constitutif de l'Eurorégion devrait être signé. Le projet de créer une Eurorégion Mer Noire est née après la tenue de 3 grandes conférences organisées par le Congrès (Constanta, Samsun et Odessa) et auxquelles la CRPM avait été associée. L'initiative de l'Eurorégion de la Mer Noire s'efforce d'encourager une prise de conscience accrue, une exploitation réfléchie et une gestion durable des ressources de la Mer Noire ainsi que la mise en place de processus de régionalisation dans la zone. J'espère que la Commission Balkans /Mer Noire pourra continuer à s'associer à nos travaux et que la coopération entre le Congrès et la CRPM va se développer dans l'avenir. Je considère que votre Commission va continuer à jouer un rôle important pour mettre en oeuvre différents projets dans le but d'assurer le développement économique et régional des Balkans et de la Mer Noire. Je remercie tous les membres et le Secrétariat qui ont contribué aux travaux de votre Commission. Suite aux changements de présidence de votre commission, je serais heureux de pouvoir continuer à coopérer avec votre nouveau Président et les nouveaux Vice-Présidents. Je souhaite plein succès à vos travaux.*

The floor was then given to the **representatives of the Local & Regional Authorities of the Dodecanese** i.e. the representative of the Prefect Mr Machairides, the President of Local and Regional Authorities of Dodecanese and Mayor of Petaloudes Mr Kountinas and the Mayor of Rhodes Mr Hatziefthimiou, who welcomed in the name of their citizens the participants in Rhodes, the island of Kleovoulos and Diagoras, in the south east edge of Europe and stressed the importance of such meetings which help the discussion on E.U policies like the trans European networks, tourism, environment, competitiveness, the special disadvantages with which insular and peripheral regions are faced with as far as development is concerned and bilateral contacts and extended a special welcome to the delegations from neighbouring Turkey. They all expressed the wish that policies dealt within the BBSRC can be pushed forward on a E.U level.

Mr **Xavier Gizard**, Secretary General of CPMR, after expressing his thanks to S.G Kokkinos for hosting both the BBSRC GA and the CPMR Political Bureau meetings said that the BBSRC is the newest of the CPMR Geographical Commission and thanked all participants and observers present in the meeting. He then explained which are the other CPMR Geographical Commissions and went on through the main policies and priorities of CPMR for the next 2 years taking into account the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty by Ireland. Among these priorities are the future profile of the E.U Regional Policy in relation to Territorial and Financial Cohesion where CPMR is implicated by contributing to the consultation process, subject which will also be dealt during the next CPMR General Assembly in Bayonne next October. He also spoke about the future of the CAP and the actions taken by CPMR contributing to the reform of CAP in order to reflect the aspirations of the regions, Innovation, Maritime Policy, Trans European Networks, Energy, Climate changes, Globalisation with special mention to FOGAR where CPMR is actively involved. He then informed the participants about the St. Malo 1<sup>st</sup> World Summit of Regions on Climate change which will take place on 29/30 October 2008 and on the remaining issues which will be discussed during the Political Bureau meeting in Rhodes. In conclusion he said that CPMR expects the active contribution of the BBSRC to CPMR policies despite the fact that BBSRC is a difficult Commission as among its member regions are 3 categories of regions: regions coming from E.U member states, regions from applicant states and regions from states participating in the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Adoption of the Agenda: The agenda was unanimously adopted.

Approval of the minutes of the Florence Pre-Assembly Meeting (17 October 2007): The minutes were unanimously approved.

Presentation and admission of a new member region; Samsun (Turkey)

The chairman gave the floor to Mr Hasan Basri GÜZELOGLU, Governor of Samsun, who after greeting the members of the BBSRC and all the participants and officials representing the local authorities of Dodecanese made a presentation of Samsun region which lies along the Black Sea with 3 major ports and its capital under the same name being the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest city in Turkey. Samsun has a major economic, social and cultural interest for Turkey and its participation to the BBSRC will also contribute to the further development of the BBSRC. Governor Guzeloglu officially applied for membership of Samsun with the BBSRC and stressed that

he is confident that Samsun will play an important role within the BBSRC and thanked in advance for the warm welcome their candidature received.

**Following a vote Samsun was unanimously accepted as a new full member of BBSRC.** Chairman Kokkinos expressing all participants extended his congratulations.

Activity Report "From Florence to Rhodes" by A. Papadimitriou, Executive Secretary of BBSRC

During the past seven months and under the leadership of its Interim President Mr Gheorghe Bunduc, until recently President of Tulcea County Council, Romania, the BBSRC has been engaged in the following areas:

**Involvement with the work of the CPMR** The work of CPMR and its other 5 geographical Commissions has been followed closely promoting the special interest and political priorities of the wider Balkans and the Black Sea area.

The Executive Secretary of the BBSRC Mr Anthony Papadimitriou took part to the following CPMR meetings:

- CPMR Political Bureau Meeting and Joint CoR/CPMR Seminar on "What future for regional policies after 2013" - Seville (Spain), 18-19 January 2008
- Meetings of the CPMR Extended Management Committee CPMR - Rennes (France), 10-11 January and 21-22 May 2008.

This is the staff meeting of the secretariat of CPMR, which prepares and coordinates the future policies and activities of CPMR and its 6 geographical Commissions. It meets twice a year in Rennes.

- "The Future of CPMR", Executive Secretaries Meeting - Paris (France), 4-5 February 2008

This was a special meeting of the Executive Secretaries together with the *rapporteur* of the future of CPMR project Mr Jean-Didier Hache. The task was to bring the special contributions from the GC and coordinate the whole effort.

- Presentation of the CPMR's 2008 Work Programme to Regional Offices in Brussels and meetings with the RELEX commission of the Committee of the Regions - Brussels (Belgium), 10-13 March 2008.

This is an important annual activity of CPMR in order to present its policies and activities to interested people in Brussels (Representation of Regions, diplomatic missions, journalists, NGO's, etc.).

At the same time, BBSRC participated actively as an integral part of the CPMR in all administrative and other day to day issues in close co-operation with the CPMR secretariats in Rennes and Brussels.

**Member Regions of the BBSRC participating in CPMR working groups** For the first time member regions of the BBSRC became actively involved in the CPMR working Groups on Energy and Tourism. More specifically Primorsko-Goranska County is our Commission's representative in the working group on energy. A very successful seminar was also organized by Promorsko-Goranska on "How to effectively promote sustainable energy at Regional level" on 8-9 November 2007, in Opatija (Croatia). Tulcea County Council, Romania and the Region of Central Macedonia, in Greece are our two representative member Regions in the working group on Tourism.

**The future of CPMR** The enquiry into the future of CPMR aims to give the organisation a clear vision of the nature of its membership, and of the political goals commonly shared by its members. It intends to assess the organisation's past strengths and weaknesses, and draw lessons from them. It will outline the main objectives which its members wish to pursue in the forthcoming years, as well as define the main fields of activities where they wish to see CPMR involved, within or outside the geographical scope of the EU. The CPMR Political Bureau which met in Seville in January 2008 agreed that it was useful to hold such an enquiry from time to time and gave mandate to the General Secretariat to do so. This enquiry is to be led by Islands Commission Executive Secretary Jean-Didier Hache, in collaboration with the Executive Secretaries of the other geographical Commissions as well as with the General Secretariat. It is due to be concluded by February 2009.

**Contacts with member Regions of the BBSRC:** BBSRC Executive Secretary Anthony Papadimitriou visited Primorsko-Goranska County last November taking part in the Seminar on "How to effectively promote Sustainable Energy at a regional level» and the Tekirdag Region following the kind invitation of its Governor Mr Aydin Nezhir Dogan to take part in the 1<sup>st</sup> International Balkan Congress aiming to develop interaction among the Balkan countries and to determine the existing conditions in political, economic and

cultural co-operation. In the next months a visit will be organised to Varna and Burgas, our member regions in Bulgaria, and to our member regions in Romania to meet the newly elected regional authorities.

**BBSRC membership policy:** The policy of increasing BBSRC membership has continued mainly with contacts to the Diplomatic Missions of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Russia in Brussels and Athens. The visit to regions in Georgia has been postponed due to the elections and the political situation in this country. A trip to the Krasnodar Region in Sochi is planned for the coming September on the occasion of the CoR Relex Commission bilateral EE/Russia meeting. We are also looking forward to a trip to the maritime regions in Ukraine in the near future and for this we will be very grateful to Governor Serduyk if he would be kind enough to provide his assistance in preparing this trip.

**Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe:** The close cooperation of the Congress and especially its Chamber of the Regions has been continued during the past months in their policy to create a Black Sea Euroregion. Our good friend of our Commission and former president of the chamber of the Regions Mr Yavuz Mildon was unanimously elected on 27 May 2008 as President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe for a two year term. We are confident that during his presidency the already good relations between the Congress and both CPMR and the BBSRC will improve even more. On 26 September 2008, the Conference on the Launching of the Black Sea Euroregion and the signature of its Constituent Act will take place in Varna (Bulgaria). The BBSRC needs to be present at this important event.

**Relex Commission of the Committee of the Regions of the EU:** Contacts have been made with the RELEX Commission of the CoR. Mr A. Papadimitriou together with the Head of the CPMR office in Brussels Mrs Carol Thomas have met on 12 March with Dr. [Silke Toenshoff](#), Head of Unit of the Relex Commission, and Mr [Branislav Stanicek](#), Administrator at the secretariat. It has been decided that BBSRC will be invited to meetings and events related the Black Sea and the Balkans (meeting in Sochi, etc). It has also been discussed a possible visit of representatives of our member Regions to the CoR in Brussels. The nine policy areas which the RELEX Commission deals with are:

- Enlargement process, Relations with regional and local authorities in the applicant countries and in non-EU countries, Neighbourhood policy, Euro-Mediterranean partnership, Europe's Northern Dimension, Balkans, Decentralised cooperation, WTO, Cooperation at the Union's external borders.

This means that 6 out of the 9 policy areas fall within the work of our Commission. On 6-7 February 2008 during its 73<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Session the CoR adopted an opinion on the "BLACK SEA SYNERGY - A NEW REGIONAL CO-OPERATION INITIATIVE" following a report with the same name by Mr Krasimir MIREV, from Bulgaria. The special interests of the local and regional authorities on the subject are reflected in this report.

**Follow up with the Black Sea Synergy Policy of the EU - Contacts with the Commission of the EU:** Mr Patrick Anvroin, CPMR Director in charge of following the BBSRC, met in Brussels with Mr Fernando Garcés de los Fayos, from the Northern Dimension & Black Sea Regional Cooperation Unit. We were informed that the Commission is currently preparing a communication reporting to the Council about the first year of implementation of the Black Sea Synergy. This is an exercise that involves several services in the Commission; this inter-service Group is chaired by the DG RELEX Principal Adviser, Mr Janos Herman. The report is planned to be ready this summer. The report on the implementation of the first year of the Black Sea Synergy was requested by the Council when it welcomed the Black Sea Synergy Communication in 2007. The report will be comprehensive, but one has to bear in mind that new initiatives/policies take some time to reach a mature point and that the launching of the Black Sea Synergy initiative was only done at high political level at the Kyiv meeting of the Ministers of the EU and of the wider Black Sea Region on 14 February 2008.

**The Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme 2007-2013:** Just to remind you that the Black Sea Joint Operational Programme 2007-2013 is a programme under the European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument (ENPI) of the EU. It aims to contribute to "A stronger and sustainable economic and social development of the regions of the Black Sea Basin". The programme's three specific objectives are:

1. Promoting economic and social development in the border areas
2. Working together to address common challenges
3. Promoting local, people-to-people cooperation

It is important to know that finally the programme will be submitted to the European Commission this month provided that Russia and Azerbaijan will send their letters of Agreement to Joint Managing

Authority-Black Sea ENPI CBC programme. Given the fact that it will take about three months for the European Commission to approve it, the EC decision will be taken in September/October 2008. Consequently, under the circumstances, it is estimated that the 1<sup>st</sup> call for proposals will be launched by the end of this year. It will be good if the BBSRC Technical Commission would deal with this programme at its first meeting and try to benefit as much as possible promoting interregional cooperation in the Black Sea Region.

**BBSRC Technical Commission (T.C.):** Finally the long expected BBSRC Technical Commission could start its work. Just to remind you that during the Canakkale BBSRC General Assembly, it has been decided the establishment of a "Technical Commission of Senior Officials" with 1 or 2 representatives from each BBSRC Member Regions in order to deal with specific projects and policies. This would be a flexible working body. Its working language will be English. Following an invitation of the Central Macedonia Region, it can meet for the first time in Thessalonica in autumn. The Secretary General of Central Macedonia has addressed a letter to the secretariat on 19 May 2008, supporting the idea and besides hosting the first meeting they are ready bringing their expertise on the points with which the T.C. will deal.

**Administrative matters:** The Executive Secretary has run the-day-to day business of the Commission and the contacts between both the Region members and potential members and the CPMR dealing as well with several secretarial matters together with the valuable assistance of Mrs. Catherine Petiau from the Rennes CPMR Secretariat.

The floor was then given to Mr **Aristotelis Pavlidis**, MP from the Dodecanese, a former Minister for the Aegean Archipelago and Greek Islands, member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation who spoke about the historic ties over the centuries of Greece with the Black Sea area. He also referred to Christianity and most specifically the influence of the Greek Orthodox Church in the Black Sea Region countries. He then went on to speak on the issue of the economic development of coastal and insular regions and stressed his personal ties with CPMR over the years and especially with Mr J.D. Hache, its executive secretary of the islands commission. Mr Pavlidis went on to say that with his parliamentary capacity will still work for the development of the Balkan and Black Sea Area and thank BBSRC for inviting him to address the BBSRC G.A meeting.

Mr **C. Kokkinos** thanked Minister Pavlidis for his presence to the meeting despite of his heavy agenda saying that he has always been a close ally in dealing with all kinds of issues to the benefit of the regions.

Mr **S. Tsokas**, Secretary General of Crete and President of the CPMR Islands commission expressed his gratitude to Mr Pavlides for the reason that when he was a Minister of the Aegean Archipelago he helped tremendously the Islands Commission of CPMR advocating an initiative directed to identify the special character of the islands and the necessary policies needed for their development.

Mr **C. Maniatis**, General Secretary of Attica, also acknowledged the remarkable contribution of Minister Pavlides towards the establishment of a special policy within Regional Policy in favour of the islands stressing that Attica Region has islands as well.

**Election of the President and two Vice-Presidents of the BBSRC. Appointment of an alternate representative of BBSRC to the CPMR Political Bureau.**

The executive secretary of BBSRC Anthony Papadimitriou announced that there is only one candidature for the Presidency of the BBSRC, namely of Professor **Georgios Tsiotras**, General Secretary of the Region of Central Macedonia, (Greece) having its capital in Thessalonica.

S.G **G. Tsiotras** presenting his candidacy said that the BBSRC is at first a challenging Commission faced with difficult tasks. For this reason the Region of Central Macedonia is expressing its interest to chair it and invited all members of the BBSRC to demonstrate by voting for himself the confidence to the Region itself. Central Macedonia is one of the largest regions in Greece after that of Attica with an important strategic role to play in the Balkans, the Black Sea region and the SE of Europe. He said that has a keen interest on the BBSRC and if he will be honoured to be elected he will try to contribute as much as possible.

As there is no other candidacy the election of Mr Tsiotras is submitted to a vote by hands lifting.

**Mr Georgios TSIOTRAS were unanimously elected president of the CPMR BBSRC.**

For the election of the 2 Vice-Presidents of the CPMR BBSRC there were two candidates for election. First was Mr **Aydin Nezh DOGAN**, Governor of Tekirdag, Turkey and second Mr from Mr **Nicusor Daniel Constantinescu**, President of the Constanta County Council, Romania.

**Governor Dogan** presenting his candidacy after thanking the members of the BBSRC G.A said that Tekirdag, is an important town and region between Europe and Asia and very close to Istanbul and becoming a vice-president is ready to work with all members of BBSRC to the benefit of inter-regional cooperation in the area.

The representative of Constanta County Council Ms Gabriela IORDANOV, after expressing her thanks for the invitation to be present in this important meeting she read the message of Mr Nicusor Daniel Constantinescu, President of the Constanta County Council, Romania. Please refer to **Attachment No 2**.

As there were no other candidates the candidatures of Messer's. Dogan and Constantinescu were submitted to a vote.

**Messer's Dogan and Constantinescu were unanimously elected vice-presidents of the CPMR BBSRC. It has also been decided that Mr Dogan will be the alternate representative of BBSRC to the CPMR Political Bureau.**

Mr **Xavier GIZARD**, Secretary General of CPMR said that he is happy for the active interest of Constanta for the BBSRC. However, he said that Constanta has not submitted its dues to CPMR and expressed his hope that this issue will be settled as soon as possible. .

Mrs **Christel LILJESTRÖM**, President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission was then invited to address the BBSRC G.A. She first expressed her congratulations to the new President Mr Tsiotras and Vice-Presidents elected and referred to the good cooperation with the BBSRC Executive Secretary Mr Papadimitriou over the last years. She went on saying that she believes and hopes that this good cooperation will continue in the future underlining the fact that both Geographical Commissions are faced with similar issues in their Agenda despite the fact that there are in the opposite sides of Europe. So, she looks forward to a good cooperation and to deal together with issues of common interest both between our Commissions and within CPMR Mrs.Christel LILJESTRÖM in congratulating the new President of BBSRC offered him a pen as present on behalf of the Baltic Commission.

**President Kokkinos** expressed also his congratulations to the new elected President Mr Tsiotras and the 2 Vice-Presidents and adjourned the meeting for a coffee break.

**Mr G. Tsiotras**, the newly elected BBSRC President assumed the chair of the meeting and thanked the member regions for his election mentioning that he will deliver an acceptance speech in the afternoon session.

#### Amendment of the BBSRC Statutes.

The President said that there is a need to proceed for some amendments to the BBSRC Statutes in order to serve better the requirements and function of the Commission. He then proposed that specific proposals will be presented for initial discussion at the Bayonne Pre-Assembly meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The discussion then could continue having as a target the final approval and adoption of the amended statutes at the Odessa General Assembly in June 2009.

**Mr Aydin Nezhil DOGAN**, Governor of Tekirdag, Turkey, made the following intervention:

Dear President, Dear Delegations,

At the very beginning of my speech, I would like to express my thanks to our Greek friends for their perfect hospitality. We know that the Balkans and Black sea Regions have been the place of birth of great civilizations and great statesmen and philosophers who addressed the humanity their messages of universal values since the first periods of the history. But at the same time, the history has witnessed the beginning of bitter conflicts which has given great sorrow to all humanity. Therefore, by accepting the specific characteristics of this region, we have to discuss how to make use of the existing potential of the region to achieve sustainable peace in the region. Any attempt to establish peace and stability in the region means to serve to the peace in world indeed. What kind of a mission should we as the local and regional authorities, undertake in such an uneasy region? What instruments do we have to serve permanent peace? It is obvious that we have to answer these questions by taking the current developments in the world into consideration. While looking for answers to these questions, we the local governments can not forget that our first priority is to be to bring prosperity to our people and improve their living conditions. It is obviously clear that to disseminate prosperity we need stability and for stability we need peace. Under the circumstances local and regional authorities' making any necessary efforts for permanent peace is indeed an indispensable need for the people at whose service we are. Distribution of the economic prosperity which is our first priority can not be thought separately from the globalization. In my opinion, globalization presents two basic

components to the humanity. The first one is day by day increasing dimensions: For example in political field supers nationalist organizations, in economical field multi-national corporations and new mergers, in cultural field intercultural dialogue and affinity between people. The second one; respect for the smaller ones: in political field an increasing understanding of the local values, in economics the increasing number of small businesses, and an increasing awareness of threatened cultures. Enlargement and super structural designing on one side, respect for the different, and creating opportunities the smalls to express themselves on the other side. I believe that from this paradox we can derive positive results for our peoples. I think we can intervene in this situation by seeking new partnership opportunities on local and regional level and adding our local and regional colours and values into the existing translational and supra-national partnerships. Besides, we can voice this under the principle of subsidiarity which is one of the important components for cohesion in E.U. Herein I think the local administrations have to work more efficiently. As a matter of fact many of the attempts to seek solutions for universal problems would prove futile without our active involvement. Since we could involve the local and regional colours and values into the solutions of universal problems, we can definitely play a more active role in the problems of Balkans and Black Sea. We appreciate the local and regional authorities' efforts to create opportunities to discuss our problems by giving the first priority to the local and regional partnerships. Naturally, we consider it as a prerequisite to derive positive results from these partnerships in the name of the economic prosperity of our people. We believe that it would be a rationalistic method to abstain from any attempt which might have harmful content for our cooperation and partnership and prefer the practical areas for our collective work. So, with this statement, we consider any decision which might be taken in the Local Councils and might have harmful effects on national level as well very discouraging in terms of local initiatives. As we pointed out above, we live in a region which is really difficult but also have an enormous potential. Forming closer partnerships is a must to promote our advantages and overcome the challenges. We know for sure that one of the most important mechanisms which will ensure the sustainable partnerships is the Balkans and Black Sea Commission of the CPMR, of which general assembly we are holding today. Moreover, there are numerous benefits to seek for cross-regional partnership opportunities. The Commission could play a more active role in establishing these partnerships. The geo-strategical position of the region offers to the private entrepreneurs a fertile area of investment. And to promote this in terms of the global concepts of competitiveness, cooperation and innovation would be a reasonable choice. The positive atmosphere which will be created through the developing trade relations should be the most important mean for sustainable peace. In this respect, the Balkans and Black Sea Commission should promote the inter-regional trade relations. As the governor of Tekirdağ, I announce that I am ready to share the economic potential which our city has gained with the other actors of our region to improve the commercial importance of our region and to promote the inter-cultural relations. With the ongoing projects, in a few years time, Tekirdag will be one of the most important commercial centres in the region. We are in the opinion that as the economic prosperity increases it will promote pluralistic democracy and this in turn will enable us to reach the regional and global peace.

#### The future of CPMR by Mr J-D HACHE, Executive Secretary, CPMR Islands Commission

**Mr Jean-Didier Hache** explained in details the reasons and the procedure which has been decided to be implemented in relation to the survey on the future of the CPMR. The final report will be presented at the Bayonne CPMR G.A. The task is to bring the organisation to the requirements of today in order to serve as much as possible its objectives, aspirations and expectations of its members. He also stressed the importance of the contribution of the BBSRC member regions and urged all BBSRC member to answer the relevant questionnaire reflecting among others the points of specific interest among member regions of BBSRC i.e whether CPMR should play an active role in territories covered by the E.U neighbourhood policy or even further on a global level.

#### CPMR Working group on energy. Contribution by Jean-Didier HACHE and Mr Zoran SKALA, from Primorsko-Goranska (Croatia) BBSRC representative to the CPMR Energy Group

**Mr Jean-Didier Hache** referred to the work and activities of the CPMR Energy Working Group in the recent months. He reminded about the important Conference hosted by the Primorsko Goranska Region in Opatja at the end of 2007. He then referred to the recent action of the EU called "The Energy and Climate Change Package" with 3 main chapters on: a. the use of Energy from renewable sources, b. the geological storage of carbon dioxide and c. the issue of green house gasses emission. The legislation which will be introduced is going to affect the industry, air transport, sea transport, etc. having a direct impact especially to the maritime regions with huge financial and social implications as well.

Mr **Zoran SKALA**, referred as well to the Opatjia Conference on “How to Effectively Promote Sustainable Energy on Regional Level” and the work done by Promorsko-Goranska Region in the field of saving Energy and the protection of the Environment. This long term policy could also be implemented by other BBSRC member Regions and it could constitute a very important field of cooperation in the area.

CPMR Working Group on Tourism. Contribution by Ms T. Avgoulidou, BBSRC representative, Central Macedonia Region, Greece

Ms **Th. Avgoulidou** presented the work so far of the newly established CPMR W.G on Tourism. Besides Central Macedonia, Tulcea County Council is also participating on behalf of BBSRC. She went on defining the targets of said group which are among others to define the positions to be submitted to CPMR organs for approval. She then gave details of a report on the regional impacts of tourism in costal areas which was presented to the European Parliament on 5 June 2008 and the contribution of the CPMR Tourism Group. (See **annex 6** “Report on the hearing before the E.P”). Mr Avgoulidou stressed that BBSRC member regions would be asked to contribute to the work of the Tourism group in order to reach better and effective conclusions.

Mr **Mykola KISEOLAR**, Deputy Head of the Odessa Regional State Administration intervening on the WG on Tourism said that concrete action on tourist development needs to be taken in order among others to solve existing problems which are common to all regions. However, a common approach necessitates identifying these problems and its solutions and by working together this could also promote cooperation among regions. A common issue is the VISA problem of tourists travelling from one country to another. He also went on suggesting opening and organising of representative offices or information networks of the Balkan and Black Sea Commission in every region member having as a task to coordinate and promote tourism in the regions. Odessa is ready to examine this initiative if there is a support from other regions as well.

**Ms. Avgoulidou** invited Odessa to submit all proposals to the CPMR WG on Tourism for discussion.

**Mr Gizard** reminded that concrete proposals, reports etc. to be submitted to the CPMR G.A need to be tabled long in advance in order to be translated to all working languages of CPMR

Practical steps for the implementation of the BBSRC Technical Commission (T.C) of Senior Officials for Inter-regional Co-operation among member regions.

**Mr A. Papadimitriou** taking the floor stressed that the first meeting of the BBSRC T.C will take place in Thessaloniki during the first two weeks of November, following the kind invitation of President Tsiotras, and needs to be well prepared. For this reason, members will be asked at the Bayonne Pre-Assembly meeting to identify the domains which the T.C will deal with and in general what are the expectations of the member Regions out of the T.C. in general. Suggestions for the Agenda will also be highly appreciated. Then it was decided to have another meeting of the BBSRC T.C in March or April 2009 in a place which will be decided by the T.C itself during the Thessalonica meeting.

**Mr Patrick ANVROIN**, CPMR Director, reaffirmed that the CPMR General Secretariat in Rennes is ready to help to organising the first meeting of the BBSRC T.C and support its future function having experience from other CPMR Geographical Commissions and stressed the importance of such a commission for the future of the BBSRC and its expansion and effectiveness. He then referred to the CPMR Atlantic Commission which started back in 1989 its own T.C, which functions ever since in close synergy with relevant players. In the very beginning, the Atlantic Commission drafted with the help of member regions and experts a long term development policy plan, a kind of business plan which was even consulted by the European Commission in formulating the INTEREG B programmes. A BBSRC T.C has to seek cooperation with several partners in its area of competence and be active in existing international and inter-regional co-operation projects including the Black Sea Co-operation Programme financed under the European Neighbourhood Policy. The task will be that BBSRC member regions participate in common projects.

Grounds of co-operation between the RELEX Committee of the CoR and BBSRC. Intervention by Mr X. GIZARD, CPMR Secretary General

Mr **X Gizard** referred to the recent Marseille summit of cities and regions of the Mediterranean which was organised together with the CoR just before the July 13<sup>th</sup> European Summit on the establishment of the Mediterranean Union. He then went on saying that a priority of the CoR is the implication of the local and regional authorities with the neighbourhood policy of the E.U. not only in the Mediterranean but also in the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. He also said that three fora involving local and regional authorities will be organised by the CoR, the first being on local and regional authorities in the E.U where CPMR will be also

associated. The CPMR Secretary General also informed that a Memorandum of co-operation has just been signed between CPMR and the CoR covering a two years period. In this memorandum emphasis has been given to the pre-accession regions and in areas related to the external policy of the E.U.

**The President Mr G. Tsiotras** expressed his satisfaction for the signing of the co-operation memorandum between the CoR and CPMR and also thanked the RELEX Commission which is willing to associate the BBSRC with its work, extending an invitation to the BBSRC to participate to the bilateral meeting between CoR and Russia which will take place later this year in Suchi and to Brussels to attend a session of the Relex Committee.

The Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC) – Application by BBSRC for Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status with BSEC

Mr **Anthony Papadimitriou**, BBSRC Executive Secretary introduced briefly the BSEC organisation and reminded that its Secretary General Ambassador Chrysanthopoulos took part to the 2007 BBSRC General Assembly in Canakkale where it was decided to increase BBSRC cooperation with BSEC, especially after the growing synergy between the E.U and BSEC in the Black Sea Wider Area. He then went on explaining the possibility for BBSRC to obtain a Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status according to article 9 of the BSEC statutes with the meaning of an official cooperation between the two organisations on specific policies of particular interest for BBSRC member regions. This will give the possibility for regional authorities to present the point of view of the regions – the regional dimension - in the different policies discussed within BSEC. He then went on as an example referring to the BSEC initiative on the creation of the Black Sea ring road where the voice of the regions concerned could be rather useful. He also referred that in order to obtain Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status in certain fields of the work of the BSEC, an application is needed to be submitted to the International BSEC secretariat and a decision to be taken by the BSEC Committee of Ministers. The application has to be made by CPMR itself which will then authorise BBSRC to represent CPMR as BBSRC by itself lacks of legal personality. The BBSRC Executive Secretary went on presenting the BSEC organisation, its structure, membership, organs like the Black Sea Business Council which could be interesting for BBSRC or the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank, main policies and working groups. An organisation for example which enjoy SDP status with BSEC is the Union of Road Transport Association of the Black Sea, and stressed the advantages for CPMR to be closer associated with BSEC through the BSRC by obtaining SDP status. He also mentioned the BSEC project Development Fund which was established for the purpose of facilitating the elaboration of regional projects of cooperation at their early stage of conception under the guidance of the relevant BSEC working group something which also can be of interest for member regions of BBSRC. In concluding he asked member regions to give a mandate to the BBSRC President to examine together with the executive secretary of BBSRC all necessary requirements of an eventual application for SDP status with BSEC, so as an official CPMR decision could be taken at the Bayonne CPMR Political Bureau in early October 2008.

**The BBSRC General Assembly unanimously agreed to go on seeking Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status with BSEC**

Contribution of BBSRC member regions towards its expansion to new member regions in the Black Sea and Balkan area

Mr **A. Papadimitriou** stressed the importance for BBSRC to expand to as many regions as possible in order to play a more important role in the area and be able to better coordinate its decision and policies. To this direction, BBSRC needs the assistance of existing member regions. He then referred to discussions with Odessa Regional State Administration and their will to assist in organising an official BBSRC visit to all the maritime regions in UKRAINE with view for them to join BBSRC. He also said that BBSRC has to be more active in attracting member regions from the Balkans like Croatia and the former Yugoslavia asking for the assistance from Primorsko-Goranska Region and from Albania.

Mr **Mykola Kiseolar**, Deputy Head of Odessa Regional Council after presenting briefly his region he stated that they will be happy to assist BBSRC to integrate more maritime regions from Ukraine with CPMR and BBSRC namely Cherson, Nikolaiv and Crimea something which will help to increase good co-operation and practices to the benefit of all parties concerned. He then invited the BBSRC President and Executive Secretary to visit Odessa Region in order to discuss all these questions before the end of the year, the target being to decide on the accession to the BBSRC of the maritime regions from Ukraine during the 2009 BBSRC General Assembly. He then went on expressing that Odessa region together with Ukraine have a European aspiration of becoming member of the European Union in the future and also reassured the will of Odessa to be actively associated with the work of BBSRC.

Decision of the venue and main theme of the 2009 General Assembly meeting.

**Following an invitation form the Odessa Regional State Administration it was decided that the 2009 BBSRC General Assembly will take place in Odessa, in June 2009.**

## **AFTERNOON SESSION**

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Mr **Andreas Fouras**, Mayor of Patras, Greece. and member of the RELEX Commission of the CoR presented the Committee opinion on the new E.U policy called "Black Sea Synergy - A New Regional Cooperation Initiative" drafted by Mr Kasimir Mirev, which was adopted by the plenary of the Committee on February 6-7, 2008 aiming to establish a more comprehensive E.U policy towards the Black Sea wider area following the accession of Bulgaria and Romania in the E.U. He also stressed that the Opinion supports the process of further enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy as well as the development of a partnership with the Russian Federation. The opinion makes reference to other issues like the protection of the environment, the establishment of a Maritime identity for the Black Sea, the preservation of the traditional cultures, the role of transport with the completion of maritime terminal stations, etc. Also highlights the need for the participation of local and regional authorities in the formulation and implementation of E.U policies and the necessity to built trust and confidence among states as a perquisite for the peaceful settlement of frozen conflicts in the area. Other issues which are treated in the report are migration and migrating flows in the region. The partnership of local and regional authorities either for the social integration of migrants or of combating illegal migration are of major importance. He then referred that the Opinion is in favour of the regional institutions like BSEC and the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC. In conclusion he stressed the important role of partnership between local and regional authorities and the development of a civil society which can promote an even better inter-regional co-operation and solving of problems outside of the intergovernmental level. Broader collaborations and partnerships are a prerequisite to the successful development of policies and practices. To this end, the efforts and policies of the BBSRC are of considerable importance. Finally he extended conveying the greetings of the citizens of the city of Patras to BBSRC member regions and wished for the best success to the work of BBSRC..

Mr **Dimitris Triantafillou**, Director General of the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) spoke about promoting synergies between the E.U and the wider Black Sea Area. Starting his contribution he first thanked BBSRC for the invitation and went on presenting in brief the (ICBSS) which is a related body with BSEC being it official think tank. He then went on speaking about the other BSEC related bodies which are the Parliamentary Assembly, the BSEC Business Council, the Black Sea Trade & Development Bank, the International Secretariat and the ICBSS. The ICBSS has been very active in promoting relations between BSEC and its member states and the European Union. On April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008 a new working group was established called the Ad Hoc group of experts on BSEC - EU interaction having as its main goal to ensure that many of the policies which are promoted by the EU through its Black Sea Synergy policy and many of the areas of co-operation within BSEC coincide at large and there is interaction between EU and BSEC in fields such transport, the protection of the environment, science and technology, energy, etc. He then went on reminding that the EU's interest on the Black Sea Region dates back in 1997 and that over the past 2-3 years has been an even greater development of EC involvement in the area. The E.C. became observer of the BSEC in June 2007 and since then close discussions between the 2 organisations are taking place in order to ensure that this synergy takes place in practice. In the recent Communication of the Commission which came out in June 2008 and assesses the development of the Black Sea Synergy policy on 2007, the BSEC is given a special consideration on several matters as well as in promoting scientific co-operation in the region in the fields of research, science and education. Another keynote event for the developing of Black Sea partnerships was the meeting in Kiev of 14 February 2008 where Black Sea Synergy was officially launched and the Ministers of the E.U member states and the States of the wider Black Sea area issued a Joint Statement referring to the will of both sides that the Synergy functions. One of the things that is very clearly stated in the Joint Statement is the need of Black Sea Sectoral Partnerships. A lot of work has been done trying to develop Black Sea Partnerships in the area of Transport especially because the BSEC has 2 Memoranda of Understanding on: a creating the Black Sea Ring Highway and b: on the extension of the motorways of the Sea. This interest is going on by supporting both land and sea transport and the protection of the environment. These actions are planned with common resources from International financial institutions in the region. The creation of targeted steering Committees to implement specific action plans are foreseen through the involvement of all interested stakeholders (countries, international organisations, cooperation initiatives, relevant NGO's, financial institutions, etc.). The KIEV Joint Declaration has also underlined the importance of Parliamentary co-operation for promoting regional cooperation in the area. A lot of discussion is going on, on how to enhance parliamentary cooperation between the BSEC and the European Parliament.

These issues were recently discussed in Athens during the meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC. In the field of energy which is another field of cooperation, partnerships are more difficult however the target is to elaborate some sets of common principles within the 12 member states of BSEC together with the E.U. An attempt to see how interaction and synergy at the regional and sub-regional level can be promoted and how regions can be involved in the process, was discussed at the 1<sup>st</sup> BSEC / EU interaction Ad Hoc group. A plan of action was drafted and even with the opposition by some member states, cooperation in regional and sub-regional level was included. The idea is how an organisation like BBSRC can actually be involved in the work of BSEC. This issue was also included in the KIEV Joint Ministerial Declaration of 14 February which supports civil society and local level cooperation in Black Sea Coastal areas and the first steps for cross border cooperation. The ICBSS supports the idea of the involvement of the regions as well and a lot of support was expressed mainly from representatives for the E.U. This means that organisations like the CPMR/BBSRC deserve to be included in the work of the BSEC with the cooperation of the E.U. Mr. Triantafillou went on saying that BSEC is committed to assuring that the SYNERGY goes forward and he expressed his wish that by September or the very latest by the end of the year some progress will be made in promoting the interest of organisations like CPMR/BBSRC to participate to the work of BSEC. He then went on saying that he show in the BBSRC G.A. Agenda that there is a proposal to apply for Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status with BSEC and said that many member states of BSEC look forward to receive an application from an organisation like CPMR/BBSRC representing regional authorities and today even states apply for Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status approach with BSEC. The sectoral approach focusing on certain issues of cooperation is positive as it creates an even greater synergy and interaction between member states and other partners like regions, on an attempt to define precise goals and move ahead with such interactions.

**Mr Anthony Papadimitriou** in reply stressed the importance of interaction and synergy at the sub-region level as certain policies are related with regions more than the governmental level and makes the regional dimension advisable.

**Mr Philippe Cichowlaz**, started by expressing his great pleasure to be back to the BBSRC as he was responsible on behalf of CPMR for several years and sees all these initiatives, common issues, policies and challenges with which member regions of BBSRC are faced with. He then went on explaining the enlargement policy of the E.U in relation to the states of the Balkan and Black Sea and the existing inequalities in the states and regions concerned. He then referred to the need for the development of the EU pre-accession countries which have to be substantial and effective on several policies taking also into account the western Balkan countries which are not at the moment in pre-accession status. The same applies to several Black Sea countries like Ukraine, Moldova, etc. He then went on analysing the challenges of the European Neighbourhood Policy after 2013 taking into consideration the experience on the subject in the Mediterranean and he referred to a report which has been drafted by the CPMR Inter-Mediterranean Commission. The conclusions were extremely positive and interesting giving a more permanent character in this project identifying and defining the role of sub-regions. The report was sent to the Committee of the Regions where discussions are under way and the European Commission. As a result of this report, several proposals have been made which are rather positive. He also referred to the Convergence Policies for the period 2014 - 2020 viewing to closing the gap between regions. He then said that BBSRC and Inter-Mediterranean Commission can work together in the subject and invited the BBSRC President and all its members to participate to its next activities.

**Ms. Lucyna Kaminska** from the European Commission DG Mare/Unit 1 Maritime Policy dealing with the Black Sea, made a complete presentation of the new EU integrated Maritime policy as such and with special emphasis to the Black Sea and the Eastern Dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy. She also stressed at the same time the important role of regions whose commitment, expertise and knowledge is much valuable when looking for suitable ideas and practical solutions for the Black Sea. The entire presentation of Ms. Kaminska is available upon request.

**Mr G. Tsiotras**, Secretary General of the Central Macedonia Region and newly elected BBSRC President, said that it is honour for him to enjoy the confidence of all BBSRC member regions and to have been elected President and he warmly thank all. He then referred to the excellent relation which the Region of Central Macedonia holds with several regions which emerged through co-operation within CPMR or other projects. He once again congratulated the accession of Samsun to CPMR and the BBSRC saying that the BBSRC has now 30 regions from 7 countries with different cultures and history. This diversity can be the point of contact, dialogue and development among member regions of the BBSRC. He then stressed that during the today General Assembly meeting several important issues were discussed which will keep the BBSRC Commission busy until the next G.A in Odessa. He promised that he will work with all his effort and

commitment to continue the work of the BBSRC in the next 2 years so as BBSRC to become a platform for development, dialogue, and cooperation. This need will be realised with all forms of co-operation which exist in the area. Priority will also be given to the establishment of the BBSRC Technical Commission which will coordinate the efforts of eligible member regions to the appropriate application for projects to be financed and hoped that there will be keen interest in order to obtain concrete results. He then went on again thanking all members for their confidence on him and said that he will always be at their disposal for cooperation and thanked S.G Kokkinos for the hospitality he extended to all members of the BBSRC in Rhodes.

**Mr Xavier Gizard** in summing up the G.A meeting said that there is need for obtaining specific results out of the work on the BBSRC in the next year of work chaired by Mr Tsiotras. Following the works of today, BBSRC will deal mainly with 4 subjects of interest: Tourism, Energy, Maritime Policy and Partnerships in the region. In order to reach concrete results there is a need for BBSRC to be implicated to all the financial instruments which are available in the wider Balkan and Black Sea area and to participate to a couple of specific co-operation projects making good use of the BBSRC Technical Commission which must meet as soon as possible. Mr Gizard assured President Tsiotras that CPMR will give all it support in order to assist in the implementation of all decisions taken in the today's General Assembly expressing also the availability of Mr Patrick Anvrouin to this direction.

**Mr Claudio MARTINI**, President of the CPMR thanked BBSRC for the invitation and said that he is very happy to be in Rhodes and for the first time to be present in a BBSRC G.A. H expressed his satisfaction on the program of activities of the BBSRC for the next year and said that CPMR will follow the work closely and assist in all possible ways. He stressed the important role of the BBSRC in improving the presence of CPMR as a whole in the Balkan and Black Sea area and to the formation of the general CPMR policy. He then went on saying that after the accession of Bulgaria and Romania in the E.U both the Balkan and the Black Sea constitute an area of principle involvement for the European Regions and CPMR is not an external actor in the area anymore but part of it. In concluding President Martini made an appeal to use the European Neighbourhood Policy instrument (ENPI) as much as possible in order, among others, to push the European Commission to increase its budget after 2014. The work off all of us is very crucial especially after the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty in Ireland. It is a top priority to move again with a great mobilisation of local and regional authorities in support for the creation of a new European Constitution. (Please refer to the full speech of President Martini as **annex 3**).

**Secretary General Kokkinos** thanked once again all the delegations from the member regions of the BBSRC, and all observers for their presence in Rhodes. He also extended a welcome to the CPMR President Mr Claudio Martini and went on congratulating the new President of the BBSRC Mr G. Tsiotras and the two new Vice-presidents, Mr Dogan and Mr Constantinescu.

**President G.TSIOTRAS** in closing thanked all participants for their presence in Rhodes and hoped that the Rhodes G.A will constitute a new start to the work of the BBSRC. He then thanked once again Secretary General Mr C. Kokkinos for his hospitality and the perfect way the BBSRC G.A was organised.

**At this point the meeting was adjourned**

**ANNEX 1**

CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL  
MARITIME REGIONS OF EUROPE (CPMR)



CRPM CPMR

ΔΙΑΣΚΕΨΗ ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑΚΩΝ &  
ΠΑΡΑΚΤΙΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΕΥΡΩΠΗΣ

CPMR BALKAN & BLACK SEA  
REGIONAL COMMISSION (BBSRC)



CPMR - BALKAN & BLACK SEA  
REGIONAL COMMISSION  
ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ ΒΑΛΚΑΝΙΩΝ &  
ΜΑΥΡΗΣ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΑΣ

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CPMR BALKAN/BLACK SEA REGIONAL COMMISSION

26 JUNE 2008, RHODES (NOTIO AIGAIO, GREECE)

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

#### I - REGIONS

##### CROATIA/HRVATSKA

###### PRIMORSKO-GORANSKA

Mr Zoran SKALA, Senior Consultant for International Development Projects

##### GREECE/ELLAS

###### ANATOLIKI MAKEDONIA THRAKI (Eastern Macedonia and Thrace)

Mr Dimitrios STAMATIS, Secretary General

Mrs Maria VALASAKI, Unit A - Head of European Projects

###### ATTIKI (Attica)

Mr Charalambos MANIATIS, Secretary General

###### KENTRIKI MAKEDONIA (Central Macedonia)

Mr Georgio TSIOTRAS, Secretary General

Mrs Theodora AVGOULIDOU, Expert Adviser to the Secretary General

###### KRITI (Crete)

Mr Serafeim TSOKAS, Secretary General

###### NOTIO AIGAIO (South Aegean)

Mr Charalampos KOKKINOS, Secretary General

Mr Themis BIBAS, Counselor of Secretary General

##### ROMANIA/ROMÂNIA

###### CONSTANTA

Ms Irina CONSTANTINESCU, Head of the Programmes Coordination Office

Ms Gabriela IORGOVAN, Head of the Quality Management Office

## TURKEY/TÜRKIYE

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### CANNAKALE

Mr Resul KARAKURT, Provincial Director of the NGO's CANAKKALE

Mr Ayhan GIDER, Executive Secretary of Provincial Administration

### SAMSUN (Applicant Region)

Mr Hasan Basri GÜZELOGLU, Governor - Governorship of Samsun

Mr Aslan KARANFIL, Secretary General - Samsun province administration

Mr Eyüp ELMAS, Coordinator - Governorship of Samsun

### TEKIRDAG

Mr Aydin Nezh DOGAN, Governor of Tekirdag

Mr Mehmet KARAMAN, Press and Public Relations Manager

## UKRAÏNA/YKPAÏHA

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### ODESSA

Mr MYKOLA KISEOLAR, Deputy Head of Odessa Regional State Administration

Mr Feliks PETROSYAN, Deputy Head of Odessa Regional Council

Mrs Liliya DIMITROVA, Senior Official – General Dpt. of Foreign Economic Activity & European Integration

## II - EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

Mr Andreas FOURAS, Member of the Committee of the Regions - Mayor of Patras

Ms Lucyna KAMINSKA, Policy Officer - European Commission

Mr Dimitris TRIANTAFILOU, Director General – International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)

## III - ORGANISATION/OBSERVERS

Mme Mary ALEXIS, Présidente – Femme et défis du Millénaire (FDM)

Mr Peter BANG, International Officer – Region Midtjylland (DK)

Mr Enda BONNER, Councillor – Donegal County Council (IRL)

Mr Frans COX, Coordinator European Affairs – Noord-Nederland Provincies (NL)

Mr Henning GJELLEROD, Regional Councillor – Region of Midtjylland (DK)

Mrs Amalia GOUDEVENOU, Consultant of the Mayor of Patras for International Affairs

Mrs Christel LILJESTRÖM, President of the Baltic Sea Commission

Mr Kevan LIM, Councillor – East of England Regional Assembly (UK)

Mr Michael NIELSEN, Head of International Unit – Nordjylland Region (DK)

Mr Jorma PITKÄLÄ, Chairman of Päijät-Häme Regional Council (Finland)

Mr Henrik RINGBAEK MADSEN, Regional Councillor - Nordjylland Region (DK)

## V - CPMR

M. Claudio MARTINI, Président de la CRPM

M. Paolo GIANNARELLI, Conseiller du Président de la CRPM

M. Xavier GIZARD, Secrétaire général

Mr Anthony PAPADIMITRIOU, Secrétaire exécutif de la BBSRC

M. Patrick ANVROIN, Directeur à la CRPM

M. Jean-Didier HACHE, Directeur à la CRPM

Mr Enrico MAYRHOFER, Directeur de la Communication

Mme Marie-Agnès CHARON, Directrice du secrétariat de la CRPM

ANNEX 2 (see enclosed)ANNEX 3SPEECH BY CLAUDIO MARTINI

With Bulgaria and Romania joining the European Union last year, we are no longer an “external actor” in the Black Sea area. Now, we are definitely part of this Region; therefore relations with countries such as Armenia, Ukraine or Georgia will grow closer and closer. I do not talk about Turkey because it is a candidate country...

These countries are rich in culture and they offer many opportunities for EU investors. Moreover, I believe that choosing Sochi as a place to host the Winter Olympics in 2014 will contribute to the growth of this whole area and not only Russia.

Last April, **the Commission** presented a Communication on “*The Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2007*”. This document provides an overview of developments in the European Union’s relations with its neighbours. The structure and instruments within the framework of the Neighbourhood Policy are now well developed. Indeed, the relations between the EU and its partners are increasingly intensive, supporting a broad agenda for the adoption and implementation of EU-oriented reforms in many countries and across a wide range of sectors.

Furthermore, in its February 2008 conclusions, **the Council** underlined the central role of the European Neighbourhood Policy objectives. In particular, the Council highlighted that a deeper economic integration must remain an essential building block of our relations with our neighbours. It also underlined the importance of people-to-people contacts and the role of civil society in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy, particularly in the fields of education, science, culture and business, for promoting shared principles, enhancing EU visibility and strengthening local civil society. The Council asks for more flexible use of existing possibilities to simplify visa procedures. Finally, in the area of financial cooperation with European Neighbourhood partners, significant progress has already been achieved. Indeed, the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) has led to an increase in financial assistance to European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) partners.

As President of the **Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions**, I wish to emphasise our recent engagements in external cooperation and the Neighbourhood Policy. Our last position on structural policy, “*A project for post-2013 Europe?*” gives significant value to the Neighbourhood Policy. Indeed, this document proposes a Convergence Policy for the least prosperous EU States, the pre-accession countries, and also the States situated at the external borders of the EU. We estimate that only with such a policy will we be able to stabilise and to develop our neighbouring countries, from Morocco to the Baltic area, passing through the Black Sea.

As President of a Mediterranean Region, the Region of Tuscany in Italy, I also draw your attention to the establishment of a permanent body to foster dialogue, exchange and cooperation, between the EU and Southern and Eastern Mediterranean regional and local authorities. The name of this body is **Regional and Local Euro-Mediterranean Assembly** and it has been promoted by the Committee of the Regions, some European Association, such as the CPMR, and also by the Southern and Eastern-Mediterranean regional and local authorities.

This body consists of a common representative assembly which represents regional and local authorities from the whole Mediterranean area, as the *Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly* represents Members of Parliament from the same area. It will provide an ideal institutional framework for regional and local representatives of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and enable them to establish direct dialogue with the European institutions. The Assembly's first

meetings would be held in Brussels as from 2009, at the Committee of the Regions. This idea to establish a common representative assembly of regional and local authorities, warmly supported by the European Commission, will also be developed in the Black Sea area, in order to promote local democracy and to constitute a platform for concrete cooperation and political dialogue.

Finally, I understand that you discussed **Euro-Regions** this morning. As you may know, a legal instrument currently exists called the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) to establish Euro-Regions between Member States. It enables regional and local authorities from different Member States to set up cooperation groupings, with a legal personality. This instrument organises and manages cross-border, transnational or inter-regional cooperation measures, such as managing a project or programme in the framework of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), or under the Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, with or without a financial contribution from the EU.

I conclude with a request or an appeal. Finally we have an Instrument for the Neighbourhood policy. It is the **European Neighbourhood policy Instrument (ENPI)**. I know, it is not perfect, but I believe that we should use it as much as possible in order to ask the Commission to increase its budget after 2014. CPMR must definitely move in this direction.

Thank you.