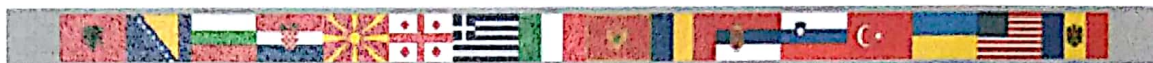




SEDM-CC/PMSC



2017 - 2019  
Athens Chairmanship



JOINT STATEMENT  
SEDM MINISTERS OF DEFENCE MEETING

BELGRADE, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018



We, the Ministers of Defence of the Southeastern Europe Defence Ministerial (SEDM) Process:

Her Excellency, Olta XHAÇKA, represented by Mr. Petro KOÇI,  
Deputy Minister of Defence,

Her Excellency, Marina PENDES, represented by Mr. Sead JUSIC,  
Deputy Minister of Defence,

His Excellency, Krasimir KARAKACHANOV, represented by Mr.  
Atanas ZAPRYANOV, Deputy Minister of Defence,

His Excellency, Damir KRSTICEVIC, represented by h.e. Gordan  
BAKOTA, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in Belgrade

Her Excellency, Radmila SHEKERINSKA JANKOVSKA, represented  
by Mr. Zoran SEKULOVSKI, Head of Department for Policy and  
Planning of Ministry of Defence,

His Excellency, Panos KAMMENOS, represented by Mrs. Maria  
KOLLIA-TSAROUCHA, Deputy Minister of National Defence,

Her Excellency, Elisabetta TRENTA, represented by H.E. Carlo LO  
CASCIO, Ambassador in Belgrade,



His Excellency, Predrag BOSKOVIC, represented by Mr. Ivica IVANOVIC MSc, General Director of Directorate for Defence Policy Ministry for Defence,

His Excellency, Mihai Viorel FIFOR, represented by Mr. Nicolae NASTA, State Secretary of the Ministry of National Defence,

His Excellency, Karl ERJAVEC, represented by Mr. Klemen GROŠELJ PhD, State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence,

His Excellency, Hulusi AKAR, represented by Mr. Alpaslan KAVAKLIOĞLU, Deputy Minister of National Defence,

His Excellency, Stepan POLTORAK, represented by H.E. Oleksandr ALEKSANDROVYCH, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in Belgrade,

His Excellency, Aleksandar VULIN Minister of Defence, represented by Mr. Bojan JOCIĆ, State Secretary of Ministry of Defence,

met in Belgrade on 11th October 2018, strongly determined to promote lasting peace, stability and security in the region of South-Eastern Europe (SEE) through the SEDM Process.

We highly appreciated the inspiring key note speech given by Mr. Bojan JOCIĆ, State Secretary of Ministry of Defence and the opening remarks given by the Chairman of SEDM - CC/PMSC, Ambassador Eleftherios ANGHELOPOULOS.





We welcomed the presence of the representatives from the NATO HQ, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), RACVIAC - Centre for Security Cooperation, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms (SEESAC).

We noted with satisfaction that this year's Ministerial meeting marks the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the signing of the MPFSEE Agreement and we reiterated our commitment to further enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Process through increased cooperation among Member Nations. We welcomed the finalization of the Draft 6th Additional Protocol of the MPFSEE Agreement. We expressed our appreciation for the work of the Experts Working Group (EWG) on the Revision of the MPFSEE Agreement as well as of the Secretariat.

This being the last Ministerial Meeting during the Athens Chairmanship for the period of 2017-2019, we expressed our appreciation to Athens as well as to the Chairman of the SEDM-CC/PMSC and the Secretariat, for their efforts in coordinating many





Fruitful meetings and activities and extended our wishes for success to Tirana as the Chair of the SEDM-CC/PMSC Secretariat during 2019-2021.

We noted with satisfaction the achievements obtained within the process as presented by the Chairman of the SEDM-CC/PMSC in his update on the SEDM projects since the last SEDM Ministerial meeting in Batumi.

We approved the establishment of an Online Medical Archive which is another notable output of the "Interconnection of the Military Hospitals" (IMIHO) project mutually beneficial for our nations and aims at increasing visibility and public awareness of our initiative and fosters cooperation among military hospitals.

We express our appreciation for SEDM Portal developments, which constitute a case in point and a paradigm on how internet based online tools can help us work together effectively, share our views, thoughts and ideas, while raising awareness about our Initiative to the world.





We noted the importance of the 'Building Integrity in Defence' Project, which has been proved a remarkable tool to support countries in the process of reforming defence institutions and developing capabilities at a time of serious financial constraints.

We expressed our appreciation for the progress in SEDM project "Female Leaders in Security and Defence" and we recognized its importance as far as Human resources diversity as well as gender integration bring in a variety of perspectives and experiences to the national and international defence structures and to our national armed forces.

We appreciated the developments on the "SEESIM - 2018" Exercise planning and we encouraged the SEDM nations to support the project which in general promotes the coordinated, rapid, interagency response to real world threats – both natural and man-made – to our individual and collective security.

We, through the presentations of our national views on the way ahead, reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening political and military cooperation in SEE to support and enhance regional security,





stability, good neighborly relations and contribute in preventing deterioration of security and strengthen the defence architecture.

We welcomed the strengthening and enlargement of European and Euro - Atlantic multilateral cooperation focused in enhancing security and stability in South-Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region.

We reiterated our unwavering commitment to the international law, treaties and agreements, the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, including full respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, peaceful settlement of disputes, good neighborly relations and refraining from the threat or use of force.

We expressed our strong belief that we, the Ministers of Defence of South-Eastern Europe, should come together, to further enhance regional dialogue and cooperation and solve, in full respect of international law, any persisting problems, in order for our region to genuinely advance the goals of wider international community in promoting peace, security and stability in our wider neighborhood, as credible and strategic partners.





We noted with serious concern the common challenges that the ongoing migration and refugee flows, pose to our region and we reiterated our commitment to support and complement the efforts of the international community, within the UN legal framework, to cut the lines of smuggling and human trafficking. We reiterated our resolve to maintain and strengthen our own regional coordination and cooperation on this issue.

We reiterated that bringing peace and stability, providing a sustainable economic growth and thus creating conditions for human and social development in the countries of origin will encourage their people to seek their future in their homelands rather than in other countries, as in Europe. We expressed our concern over grave security and human right situation in conflict-affected areas and stress the necessity for peaceful settlement of ongoing and protracted conflicts, and respect of fundamental rights of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and refugees to safe and dignified return to their homes.



We reaffirmed our strongest condemnation of all terrorist attacks in all forms and manifestations in different parts of the world, noting



that terrorism constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. We reiterated our support and commitment to the efforts of the international community to fight terrorism, including through concerted regional cooperation, which is the most effective way of coping with this pressing and demanding issue.

We noted with deep concern the serious risks posed by threats, smuggling of arms, drugs, as well as organized crime, to the security and stability of the region, including through financing terrorism.

We appreciate the efforts of RACVIAC – Center for Security Cooperation as an important international organization in the SEE dealing with security issues, playing a leading role in the areas of confidence and security building measures, security cooperation, Counter Weapons of Mass Destruction (C-WMD), Counter-Terrorism including Foreign Terrorist Fighters and, contributing to the Euro-Atlantic processes. We will further promote and support the activities organized by RACVIAC with the aim to enhance the security dialogue and cooperation in the SEE.







We reaffirmed our dedication to the 'open door policy' for the aspirant states which want to be part of the SEDM initiative and whose participation could help mitigate the SEEBRIG's recognized shortfalls and capability gap.

We, the MPFSEE Ministers of Defence, strongly encouraged Sarajevo to finalize their national procedure for the ratification of MPFSEE Agreement, in order to greet Sarajevo as a new member.

We, the MPFSEE Ministers of Defence, took note of the update regarding the 6<sup>th</sup> Additional Protocol of the MFPSEE Agreement and decided that its signing will take place during the first semester of 2019. This Protocol adapts the needs in the face of newly emerged circumstances and the security environment, while still adhering to the scope of its agreed operational framework. We also emphasized that the principles of promoting regional cooperation and good neighborly relations, through collective efforts, remain at the very heart of MPFSEE's founding agreement.



We, the MPFSEE Ministers of Defence, welcomed the report



presented by COMSEEBRIG on SEEBRIG activities and achievements since the last Ministerial Meeting in Batumi.

We, the MPFSEE Ministers of Defence, approved the HQ SEEBRIG Annual Plan for 2019, SEEBRIG's Budget for the Fiscal Year 2019, and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-2021, as well as COMSEEBRIG's authorization to re-allocate up to 20% among chapters of the approved 2019 Budget, as it was agreed during 40<sup>th</sup> PMSC/MPFSEE Meeting in Athens.

We, the MPFSEE Ministers of Defence, approved HQ SEEBRIG Board of Auditors Rotational Table, HQ SEEBRIG Action Plan REGARDING Auditors Observations and the Amendments on HQ SEEBRIG SOP 103 (Leaves and Holidays), SOP 801 (Financial Admin Procedures for Multinational Financing) and SOP 806 (Procurement and Accounting Financing for Common Funded Supplies).

We, the MPFSEE Ministers of Defence, considering the evolving number in disasters in South Eastern Europe, approved the document of SEEBRIG on "SEEBRIG Disaster Relief Operations (DRO) Capabilities List" and encouraged the nations to consider possible





follow-up of SEEDRO Concept for the benefit of the people of our region. In this context, SEESIM-2018 is an excellent opportunity for SEEBRIG HQ to examine any necessary review of the documents related to DROs, with a view to promote cooperation with civil-emergency organizations, national and regional.

We conveyed our gratitude to Belgrade for the excellent hospitality extended to all delegations during the Ministerial Meeting.

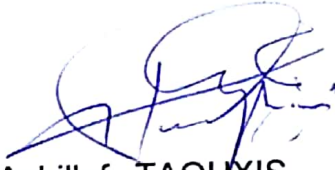
We also expressed our sincere appreciation for Belgrade's commitment to international security and stability, demonstrated through its significant contributions to multinational peacekeeping operations, especially in the medical domain.

We confirmed that the next Ministerial Meeting will be hosted by Bucharest in October 2019, according to the meeting calendar.

We expressed our appreciation to Belgrade and particularly H.E. Aleksandar VULIN and to all officials both from Belgrade and SEDM-CC/PMSC Athens Chairmanship for their tireless efforts in successfully preparing and conducting the annual SEDM Ministerial

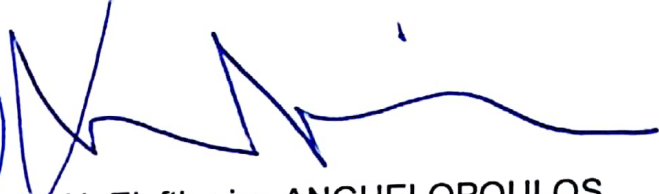


Meeting.



MJGen Achillefs TAOUXIS

Head of SEDM-CC/PMSC Secretariat



H.E. Amb. Ah Eleftherios ANGHELOPOULOS  
SEDM-CC/PMSC Chairman