RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE CPMR BALKAN & BLACK SEA COMMISSION

Adopted unanimously during the BBSC Plenary Meeting – 27 October 2020 – Online meeting
in the framework of the 48th CPMR General Assembly - 29 October 2020 - Online meeting

ARTICLE 1 - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

“The Balkan and Black Sea Commission” (BBSC) is established as an integral body of “The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe” (CPMR), an association under French jurisdiction. It will act as one of its Geographical Commissions without having separate legal personality.

The present rules of procedure fall within the framework of the CPMR Statutes modified and approved by its Extraordinary General Assembly held in Palermo, Sicily (Italy), on 18th October 2019 as well as within the framework of the CPMR Rules of Procedure approved by the Members of the CPMR Political Bureau by written procedure on 26th May 2020 and are approved both by the BBSC and CPMR General Assemblies.

In the event of differences of interpretation, the provisions of the CPMR Statutes shall take precedence over the BBSC provisions and regulations.

The aim of the CPMR Balkan and Black Sea Commission (BBSC) is to act as the political voice of the CPMR Regions situated in the wider Balkan and Black Sea region with the following principal objectives:

1- To organise and develop dialogue, consultation and cooperation between all regional authorities of the Balkan and the wider Black Sea region, while complying with the Constitution, laws, regulations and treaties in force in their respective States;

2- To contribute towards peace and stability in the Balkan and wider Black Sea region and to promote the integration or close cooperation of these regions with the European Union;

3- To promote regionalisation in Europe and encourage the application of the principles of subsidiary and complementarity between the local, regional, national and European Institutional levels;

4- To identify and to promote specific cooperation programmes for the Balkan and wider Black Sea region or to participate in programmes organised by third parties in order to achieve or pursue its objectives;
5- To promote cooperation between structures of public authorities from the Member Regions;
6- To participate via consultations and proposals to inter-state structures specially created in the Balkan and wider Black Sea region.

ARTICLE 2 - MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

1- Following an opinion of its President and by a decision of its General Assembly taken by simple majority of its full Member Regions present, the following may become members of the BBSC:
   a. As full members: regions of the States participating in the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)\(^1\) and the regions of the States participating in the EU Black Sea Synergy initiative\(^2\). All BBSC full members should also enjoy full membership status within the CPMR.
   b. As associated members: territorial entities that are in the process of regionalisation and associations of regional or local authorities which should enjoy a special and lower membership fee.

2- The term "Region" covers mainly the regional authorities immediately below the level of central government. The same territory may be directly represented in the BBSC by only one entity.

ARTICLE 3 - THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1- Each member region appoints its delegates to the General Assembly. The General Assembly can legitimately take decisions if one quarter of its Member Regions are present.

2- Each member has one seat at the General Assembly. Delegates at the General Assembly must be members of a Regional Government or a Regional Assembly, or duly authorised representatives. Each member region has the right to propose any item for discussion on the General Assembly agenda.

3- Each full member of the BBSC, as specified in Article 2.1a of the present rules of procedure, has the right to one vote at the General Assembly provided their membership dues for the past calendar year preceding the General Assembly have been paid in full. Votes shall generally be taken by show of hands, unless the General Assembly decides to proceed with a secret ballot. Associated members do not have the right to vote.

4- The General Assembly is convened by the BBSC President twice a year. Once in May or June in an Ordinary Session and once in a Mini Session in September/October, one day prior to the CPMR General Assembly. On the initiative of the BBSC President or in the event that half of the full members so request, the President of the BBSC is entitled to convene an Extraordinary General Assembly meeting. This planned calendar can be

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1 The countries participating in the EUSAIR are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, North Macedonia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia.
2 The countries covered by the EU's Black Sea Synergy initiative are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Romania, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine.
adjusted according to the needs of the host region, the CPMR calendar or the EU calendar or events.

5- The General Assembly, by a simple majority of its full members present, discharges its responsibility for the accounts of the previous year, establishes the amounts of the current year and approves the draft budget for the following year.

6- The General Assembly may take decisions on its own initiative on any item of the agenda.

7- The General Assembly, by a simple majority of its full Member Regions present, discusses and adopts reports and policy papers from the President or any member region.

8- The General Assembly decides, by simple majority of its full Member Regions present:
   o On the annual reports of activities and work programmes;
   o On the resolutions on the political strategy of the BBSC;
   o On the admission of new members.

9- The General Assembly elects, separately, by simple majority of its full Member Regions present, the BBSC President. S/He may be re-elected for a second mandate.

10- Only members of a regional government or assembly may be elected.

11- The General Assembly initiates studies, organises conferences, adopts recommendations, declarations and decisions and examines projects for interregional cooperation in the fields of work of the CPMR and fields and in any other areas insofar as it deems appropriate and conform to the BBSC Action Plan.

12- The minutes of the General Assembly meetings shall be drawn up by the BBSC Executive Secretary and shall be signed by the President. Following approval by the General Assembly they shall be kept in the archives of the BBSC.

ARTICLE 4 - THE POLITICAL BUREAU

1- The Political Bureau is made up of:
   o The President of the Commission who chairs the Political Bureau and is a full member of it;
   o A full member and a substitute member nominated by the Member Regions of each State within which BBSC has members. The nomination shall be ratified by the General Assembly.

2- The full members of each State, except the new President, will be Vice-Presidents of the BBSC. In order to ensure geographical balance, if the new President comes from a Balkan country, non-bordering the Black Sea, the 1st Vice-President and alternate representative of the BBSC President to the Political Bureau of the CPMR will have to come from a country bordering the Black Sea. In case the new President comes from any country bordering the Black Sea, the 1st Vice-President and alternate representative of the BBSC President to the Political Bureau of the CPMR will have to come from any Balkan country non-bordering the Black Sea. The 1st Vice-President will be appointed by the BBSC President.

3- The Political Bureau shall meet at least twice a year.

4- The Bureau meets at the invitation of the President or at the initiative of a simple majority of its members.
5. Each member of the Political Bureau shall be elected for a period of two years. The members shall be office-holding representatives of regional authorities. If a member loses his/her position within the regional authority, this implies ipso facto withdrawal from the Political Bureau, on which s/he shall be replaced.

6. Given that the Rules of Procedure have provided for the substitution of full members of the Political Bureau by substitute members, instruments of proxy shall only be used in case of absolute necessity, and granted to a member of the same Regional Government or Regional Assembly as the full member concerned. If no political representative is available, and only in such cases, proxy can be given, where appropriate, to a senior civil servant who has responsibility for policies within the administration, or to a civil servant who has been authorised by the full member – or if he or she is unable to do so – the substitute member.

7. The tasks of the Bureau:
   o To propose topics for the Commission to work on;
   o To determine working methods;
   o To monitor the work undertaken by the Commission;
   o To propose Commission meetings;
   o To propose which resolutions to submit to the CPMR General Assembly and to adopt political resolutions between General Assemblies.

**ARTICLE 5 - THE PRESIDENT & VICE–PRESIDENTS**

1. The President is the supreme representative of the BBSC, representing it in all external and internal relations with the CPMR. S/He chairs the meetings of the BBSC bodies and has the power to make all necessary decisions aiming at the implementation of its policies and decisions adopted.

   The President is a full member of the Political Bureau of the CPMR and he is elected by the BBSC General Assembly for a two-year term.

   The call for applications for the position of President of the BBSC will be launched by the Executive Secretary two months prior to the end of the President's term of office.

   All applications must be sent to the Executive Secretary for dissemination to BBSC Member Regions together with a curriculum vitae and a two-page declaration on the BBSC strategy. All these documents must be provided in English.

2. The President in his work is assisted by the Vice-Presidents for a two-year term. The President may delegate certain tasks to each Vice-President corresponding to the priorities of the BBSC. The Vice-Presidents may represent the BBSC at relevant CPMR or other meetings and events, further to agreement with the BBSC President and coordination with the BBSC Executive Secretary. The 1st Vice-President, as appointed by the President, will be the BBSC alternate member of the Political Bureau of the CPMR.

3. The President represents the interests of the BBSC Member Regions. S/he implements the decisions of the General Assembly. The Political Bureau makes the necessary decisions between two General Assemblies and the Political Bureau. S/he is also responsible for proposing the draft agenda of the General Assembly and the preparation of decisions to be submitted to the General Assembly. He also heads and coordinates the work of the General Assembly and the other bodies of the BBSC.
4- Should the President lose his/her regional mandate, the new President will be elected in the next BBSC General Assembly. In the meantime, the 1st Vice-President – or in his/her absence the next Vice-President in line – will act as BBSC Acting President.

5- Former Presidents and Vice-Presidents who have greatly contributed to the work of the BBSRC, may become Honorary Presidents or Vice-Presidents by a decision of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 6 - THE WORKING GROUPS – TECHNICAL COMMISSION

1- By decision of the General Assembly, the BBSC can establish Working Groups and specialised Task Forces for assisting its activities open to all its members.

2- Each Working Group or Task Force established is chaired by one of the BBSC Member Regions. The task of a Working Group is to work on a specific mandate usually for a specific policy in order to carry out the BBSC policies and objectives. The BBSC Working Groups address recommendations for adoption by the General Assembly.

3- The Task Force (TF) is a flexible body in which experts from Member Regions and BBSC observers meet in order to cooperate in the implementation of projects of common interest co-financed by different international organisations and in general initiate ways for cooperation among BBSC Member Regions.

ARTICLE 7 - THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

The President shall designate in his/her Region one or more collaborator(s) responsible for monitoring the activities of the Commission as and if necessary. The Bureau shall designate one Executive Secretary following a recruitment process managed by the Secretary General of the CPMR. A representative of the President of the Commission could be involved in the panel that will handle the process.

The Executive Secretariat is based in Rennes and the Executive Secretary is based in the CPMR premises in Rennes or in Brussels or is hosted by the Region. In this case this Region must bear the operating costs.

S/He reports to the Plenary Assembly and the Bureau. S/He organises the work of the Commission in accordance with its provisions, liaises with the Secretary General of the CPMR and represents the CPMR Secretary General within the BBSC.

The Executive Secretary acts as moderator during working meetings and is responsible for drafting the minutes of each meeting.

Until the decision of the General Assembly and the appointment of an Executive Secretary, the President has the right, for financial/budgetary issues and necessity, to nominate a representative who will carry out all the duties of the Executive Secretary, on an honorary basis (no salary).
ARTICLE 8 – FINANCE

The activities of the Balkan and Black Sea Regional Commission shall be funded through an annual membership fee payable by each Member Region and approved by the General Assembly. This annual fee is levied in December of each year covering the following year. The accounts of the BBSC are kept by the CPMR Secretariat. The financial year of the BBSC corresponds to the calendar year. A forecast statement and a closing balance sheet are drawn up for each financial year.

ARTICLE 9 - AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Amendments to the rules of procedure can only be made pursuant to a decision of the General Assembly taken by a two-thirds majority of its full Member Regions present.

ARTICLE 10 - HEADQUARTERS

The Balkan and Black Sea Commission headquarters are located in Kavala, Greece. They may be transferred elsewhere by the decision of the General Assembly taken by a two-thirds majority of its full Member Regions present.

ARTICLE 11 – COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

By decision of its General Assembly, the Balkan and Black Sea Commission can cooperate with other international, interregional, regional and local organisations or groups of such organisations whenever their objectives are similar to those of the BBSC. Any cooperation agreement should be approved ahead of its signature by the CPMR Political Bureau.

The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) represents more than 150 regional authorities from 24 countries across Europe and beyond. Organised in Geographical Commissions, the CPMR works to ensure that a balanced territorial development is at the heart of the European Union and its policies. One of these Commissions is the Balkan and Black Sea Commission.

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