



CPMR BALKAN & BLACK
SEA COMMISSION

Minutes

Pre-CPMR General Assembly Meeting of the CPMR Balkan & Black Sea Commission

3 November 2016, Ponta Delgada (Azores, Portugal)

Ms Christiana Kalogirou, Governor of North Aegean Region (Greece) and Acting President of the BBSC opened the meeting. She outlined the difficulties that the BBSC is facing at present, and referred to migration, a challenge at European level but with growing importance in the Balkans. She stressed the need for interregional cooperation that can help to strengthen commercial activities and encourage investments in the area, and underlined the importance of further developing tourism in the region.

The minutes of the **General Assembly, held in Istanbul on 30 May 2016** were unanimously adopted by the members.

Mr Lucian Furdui, Tulcea County Councillor, was appointed as the Romanian full member of the BBSC Political Bureau.

Ms Kalogirou reminded participants that the Political Bureau of the BBSC would be **renewed at the 2017 BBSC General Assembly** according to the [BBSC rules of procedure](#).

Mr Stavros Kalognomos, CPMR Policy Officer in charge of the BBSC, presented the financial documents and stressed that from now on the Commission aimed to be involved in various project proposal. This would allow the BBSC to strengthen cooperation with its Members, encourage partnerships between them and different stakeholders, and help increase the Commission's budget.

In the meantime, the Commission was continuing efforts to attract new Members and relies on the involvement of its Members to spread the good word. **Constanta County Council** (Romania) had expressed its interest in participating in this meeting, and the BBSC will work towards the return of its former Member.

Mr Kalognomos explained that, despite the current situation in the area, the Commission was maintaining close contact with Turkish, Moldovan and Ukrainian Regions.

More precisely:

- Turkish membership: Trakya Development Agency (Edirne, Kirklareli, Tekirdag) participated in the 2016 BBSC General Assembly on 30-31 May and presented its interest in becoming a Member. Before then, the three Governorships had participated separately in the CPMR and gradually withdrew membership. The BBSC was remaining in contact with Trakya Development Agency on this issue.
- Moldovan membership: the Union of County Councils of the Republic of Moldova, in a letter sent some days prior to the meeting in the Azores, expressed its regret for not being able to pay 2016 fees due to the critical economic situation their country is facing, with an impact on state and local budgets. The UCRM committed to honouring their membership fees, depending on the situation in the Republic of Moldova.
- Ukrainian membership: due to the crisis in the country, Odesa Regional State Administration was unable to pay its fees¹.

Mr Kalognomos recalled that the BBSC understood the difficulties faced and was keeping in touch with all Members and potential Members. However, he explained that only Members that were consistent with paying their membership fees would be invited to project proposals consortia initiated by the BBSC and receive information about other consortia.

The **draft budget for 2017** was adopted.

Mr Mircea Iordache, Public Officer, Tulcea County Council underlined that the County was trying to attract new members, especially in the Republic of Moldova, and welcomed the membership of Moldovan County Councils.

Mr Nikos Lampropoulos, Adviser to the CPMR Secretary General presented a first [BBSC Business Plan](#) for the next period ([see the PowerPoint presentation](#)) that lays down the mission statement and 5 strategic priorities aiming to upgrade the activities of the BBSC, ensure an increased membership, enhance cooperation among members and strengthen the BBSC Members' participation in core CPMR activities. Among the other objectives, he suggested opening up to cooperation on **agricultural issues** and invited BBSC Members to get back with their comments and proposals until the 2017 BBSC General Assembly.

Ms Kalogirou informed participants about the interest from the **Regional Administration of Varna** (Bulgaria) **to host the 2017 BBSC General Assembly** in May or June. The exact date would be confirmed and announced in due course.

Mr Kalognomos recalled that the following BBSC General Assembly would also elect the new BBSC President for the 2017-2019 term. The call for applications for this position would be sent by the Secretariat in March (according to the [BBSC rules of procedure](#)).

Moreover, one of the objectives of the following BBSC General Assembly will be to identify our Members' maritime priorities to be presented during the 4th Black Sea Stakeholder Conference².

Mr Alexandros Thanos, Deputy Governor of Central Macedonia in charge of Tourism and Culture (Greece), expressed their interest to host an *"International Conference on Fostering Entrepreneurship and Tourism in*

¹ Later in November, the CPMR received a letter from Odesa Regional State Administration explaining the situation in the country and ensuring their membership and willingness to honour future payments.

² Please find further information on the 3rd Black Sea Stakeholder Conference via this link:

http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/content/conference-blue-economy-black-sea-odessa-ukraine_en

the Balkan and Black Sea Region” The conference was to be held in Thessaloniki and the exact dates would be announced at the appropriate time.

Dr Apostolos Papafotiou, Regional Councillor in charge of International Affairs and European Programmes, Peloponnese (Greece) thanked participants for the updates on the Commission’s on-going work and plans. He reminded them of the difficulties that the Commission is increasingly facing due to the current developments in the area. He urged Members to strengthen cooperation linked to tourism and use all initiatives (e.g. the Macro-Regional Strategies: [EUSDR](#) and [EUSAIR](#)) and funding instruments available. He welcomed the first BBSC Business Plan and invited BBSC Members to develop the exchange of good practice between them and the other CPMR Members as well.

Any amendments to the CPMR Final Declaration had been submitted.

Ms Kalogirou thanked the participants for attending and closed the meeting.