



CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME REGIONS  
**BALKAN & BLACK SEA  
REGIONAL COMMISSION**



**MINUTES**  
**2013 GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**26 April 2013, Odessa (Ukraine)**

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*First Session: Chaired by Pavlos Damianidis, BBSRC President*

**Welcome speech by Mr Khlystov on behalf of Mr Eduard Matviychuk, Head of Odessa Regional State Administration ([attached](#))**

Mr Khlystov opened the General Assembly by explaining that Odessa is situated along the important transport routes of the coasts of the Black Sea. He continued by stressing that the Region has the Danube River and therefore has developed a maritime industry and an important transport and logistics centre. Odessa region possesses huge economic and investment potential. For the last year, Odessa has occupied the first place in the number and amount of investments. Odessa Region is an inseparable part of the Black Sea Region and is strategically important for many countries of the world, not only for those that are located in the Black Sea.

From the viewpoint of the interregional perspective the importance of the Black Sea Region can be considered in three ways:

1. The Region is the main political and economic link between Europe and Asia, at the crossroads of international transport connections and communications East-West and North-South, at the border of the Asian Muslim and European Christian civilisations;
2. For many countries the Black Sea Region is an important factor in solving issues connected with energy safety. Together with the Caspian Region, it makes this area the basic centre of the new energy policy and a centre where the interest of the transit countries and exporting countries intertwine. It is considered by a number of regional organisations such as the *Central European Initiative (CEI)* and *Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)* where Ukraine presides, the *Organisation for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM)* and others. At the same time, regional cooperation has still not reached a high level of integration and efficiency. For Ukraine, the Black Sea Region is very important in a geopolitical sense. Firstly, with EU the economic interest. Ukraine has the longest sea coastline among all the Black Sea countries and about half of all the Black Sea ports. In addition, the sustainable operation of the transport complex is certainly one of the priorities of the Black Sea policy of the country. For our country, it is also important to have a large scale communication project, such as the construction of a ring highway around the Black Sea and a system of major pipelines to transport oil and gas from Central Asia, Caucasus and the Middle East to Europe. The Black Sea Policy of Ukraine is fixed in a number of normative documents – in particular in the Sea Doctrine. The three national projects determined by the President of Ukraine that have a direct relation to the Black Sea Region are:
  - (i) the construction of an LNG terminal in Odessa Region,
  - (ii) the Danube Corridor project and
  - (iii) the alternative energy development project. (Only last year, Odessa started to commission a solar power station and this year, will commission two more solar power stations).
3. The powerful transport and distribution potential is represented here with seven sea ports and the developed network of highways and railroads. One of the other tasks in the Black Sea Region is the development of intermodal transportation. The creation of a network of logistics centres should increase the competitiveness of the Black Sea route. Odessa Region with its developed transport and distribution potential could play a very important role in that process.

### **Welcome speech by Mr Goncharenko (Vice-President of Odessa Regional Council)**

Odessa Region is the only Region of Ukraine which is a Member of the CPMR (from 2004) and the Region is ready to work hard with the objective of achieving all the aims that the CPMR and the BBSRC have. Mr Goncharenko expressed his thanks to the President, Mr Damianidis, for his great personal input in the development of connection and cooperation between the countries; and he explained that he was sure that the election of the new President of the BBSRC would help everyone all to develop cooperation. Mr Goncharenko stated that both Odessa Regional Council and himself personally, strongly believe that the work of the conference and of the BBSRC will really help to improve the quality of life in our countries and in our Regions. Very important projects, for example, the ring highway around the Black Sea, which it is hoped will someday be realised in the Region, are really important for everyone.

### **Welcome speech by Mr Kostyantyn Rzhepishevskiy, Representative of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in Odessa**

Mr Kostyantyn Rzhepishevskiy stated that he felt rather nostalgic as ten years ago he was the person who applied for Odessa Region to join the CPMR. Odessa Region has achieved a lot during this time in the CPMR, in the Lower Danube Euroregion and the Assembly of European Regions and it is an example for other Ukrainian Regions in cooperation with European structures. This meeting is very important for Southern Ukraine, for the whole of Ukraine and our Region.

### **Speech by Mr Pavlos Damianidis, President of the BBSRC and Deputy Regional Governor, East Macedonia & Thrace Region (GR) (attached)**

In the last two years, since the Varna General Assembly, when Mr Damianidis was trusted with the chairmanship of the BBSRC, there has been a great effort to reconstitute our "inactive" Commission. The Commission's Bureau in Kavala was reopened, where the BBSRC headquarters are temporarily housed, and to recover the BBSRC's presence in important decision-making centres and recognition of the BBSRC by significant organisations and institutions in the Region.

The BBSRC has been granted Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status in the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the most important international organisation in the region; and cooperation with the BSEC Business Council has to be further examined. The BBSRC should also enhance its presence and participation within the proceedings of the Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP). Furthermore, the BBSRC is expected to collaborate with the Joint Managing Authority (JMA) of the Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme (Black Sea JOP) within the Planning Group for the Programming Period 2014-2020.

Regarding TEN-T, the BBSRC, along with the other CPMR Geographical Commissions, submitted a single proposal to the European Commission's DG Move. This proposal renders the Balkan and Black Sea Region a transit centre and a connection hub of Europe with Southeast Europe and Asia.

The BBSRC continues to work towards the institutionalisation of the Black Sea Strategy in parallel with the EU Strategies for the Danube Region and for the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Region.

The increase in BBSRC members and a more effective structure will allow the Commission to become more active and a major EU partner. To this end, today, the BBSRC's bodies will be restructured and new flexible structures established as agreed during the Political Bureau of Bialystok.

### **Adoption of the Draft Agenda and Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held in Bialystok, on 3 October 2012: Unanimously Adopted**

#### **Election of the President:**

Mr Ayhan Ozkan, Deputy Governor of the Province of Edirne, is the only candidate and was unanimously elected by a show of hands.

Mr Ozkan thanks all participants and expressed his hope to introduce changes in this Geographical Commission, but also hopes to continue the work and prospects opened by Pavlos Damianidis.

Some new projects will be launched. Attention should be paid to policy areas such as transport, research, the environment and the economy.

#### **Composition of the BBSRC Political Bureau**

The full and alternate members nominated for a 2 years mandate by the Member Regions of each State are as follows:

### Full Members

Bulgaria	Burgas – Konstantin Nikolov GREBENAROV, Governor
Croatia	Primorje–Gorski Kotar – Zlatko KOMADINA, President ( <i>information received by letter in September after the meeting</i> )
Greece	South Aegean - Eleftheria FTAKLAKI, Deputy Regional Governor
Romania	Galati - Nicolae DOBROVICI-BACALBASA, President
Turkey	Sinop – Yavuz Selim KÖŞGER, Governor
Ukraine	Odessa - Eduard MATVIYCHUK, Head of Odessa Regional State Administration

### Alternate Members

Bulgaria	Burgas - Sevdalina TURMANOVA, Deputy Regional Governor
Croatia	Istria – Valter FLEGO, President ( <i>information received by letter in September after the meeting</i> )
Greece	Peloponnese - Apostolos PAPAFOIYOU, Deputy Regional Governor
Romania	Tulcea - George SISCU, Vice-President
Turkey	Kırklareli - Ismail GULTEKIN, Deputy Governor
Ukraine	Odessa - Oleksandr MALIN, Deputy Head of Regional State Administration

This composition of the Bureau was unanimously approved.

### Meeting of the Political Bureau

Election of the Vice-Presidents: the Members of the Political Bureau propose that 3 Vice-Presidents of the Commission are elected, when the statutes mention 2 Vice- Presidents. The Political Bureau elected the following people, under the condition that the General Assembly accepts this amendment to the statutes:

- Ismail GULTEKIN, 1st Vice-President of the BBSRC, Deputy Governor, Kırklareli Province
- Eleftheria FTAKLAKI, 2nd Vice-President of the BBSRC, Deputy Regional Governor, South Aegean
- George SISCU, 3rd Vice-President of the BBSRC, Vice President, Tulcea County Council

### *Second Session: Under the Presidency of Mr Ozkan - Priorities of the BBSRC in a changing Balkan and Black Sea area - Balkans, Black Sea, Adriatic and Danube, at the heart of European and pan-European initiatives*

#### Introduction by the President of the BBSRC

Mr Ayhan Özkan expressed his willingness to attract Regions from Russia and Azerbaijan together with other Turkish provinces. He underlined his great interest to cooperate with BSEC and therefore would like to seize the opportunity of the Ukrainian Presidency. He reminded that the BBSRC remains a bridge between the EU and BSEC. The Edirne Province would like to host the next BBSRC General Assembly. The date will be fixed back in Edirne due to a busy schedule. He expressed his delight that a common view was shared and hoped that in the near future, the BBSRC will extend its membership. Our common work will facilitate social life and promote better living standards in the Balkan and Black Sea Region. For 2014-2020 period, the first priority should be to strengthen transnational cooperation and cooperation with other organisations.

#### Amendments to the BBSRC Statutes

The General Assembly unanimously adopted the amendments to the Statutes establishing the position of third Vice-President of the Commission.

#### Priorities of the Ukrainian Presidency in BSEC, statement by Mr Mykola Melenevskiy, Ambassador at Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine ([attached](#))

BSEC is viewed by the international community as an anchor of cooperation in the Black Sea area. Ukraine has assumed the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office from 1 January until 30 June 2013, and has streamlined its efforts at strengthening the organisation. Regarding sectoral cooperation, the Ukrainian Chairmanship concentrates its activities on transport (Black Sea Ring Highway, Motorways of the Sea, multimodal transport), economy (activity towards the creation of regional Free Trade Area), ecology (environmental protection and sustainable development) and humanitarian and cultural cooperation.

#### Adriatic-Ionian Strategy Progress Report, by Mr Patrick Anvroin, Director, CPMR: ([presentation attached](#))

Patrick Anvroin presented the overall EU initiative and process towards the adoption of a “macroregional strategy” and an action plan for this area, and the role Regions are prepared to play in these preparatory steps, with the support of the CPMR.

**The role of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region implementation for Balkan – Black Sea Region, by Mr George Siscu, Vice-President, Tulcea County Council (attached)**

The EU Strategy for the Danube covers a Region that is strongly interlinked, with potential for further integration and growth, despite the different economic strengths of the countries concerned. The added value of the Danube Strategy is the integrated approach, namely the multilevel and transnational governance for an effective coordination of EU, national and regional instruments and financing of flagship projects. The Strategy has considerable potential for development and further integration and the BSEC is the main organisation for cooperation in the Black Sea. The CPMR international seminar in Tulcea, on 24 May 2013, would be a great opportunity to see how to match the Danube Strategy with the Black Sea Synergy.

**Energy Security in the Balkan-Black Sea Region, by Mr Sergey Leivikov, Director, Odessa Energy-saving Company**

The Balkan and Black Sea Region is crucial in addressing the energy supply diversification strategy of the EU, and an increasingly important crossroads in geopolitics. I believe that the key issues of energy security in the Balkan and Black Sea Region are (i) the optimisation of energy infrastructure, (ii) the development of renewable sources of energy and (iii) resolving energy efficiency problems. Besides, the important issue of energy security in the Region is the diversification of supply methods and transportation routes, in order to reduce the dependence on monopolies. The EU Energy Policy is built on a strong and balanced partnership with each of the countries in the area. Mutually beneficial and non-discriminatory international cooperation and open dialogue between all participants in the Region are of great importance.

**The role of Odessa Region in the world maritime manpower supply, by Prof. Dr Mykhaylo Miyusov, Rector, Odessa National Maritime Academy (attached)**

Odessa is the maritime capital of Ukraine. In Odessa Region, which is crossed by 5 international transport corridors, there are more than 200 companies related to the maritime sector. Over the last 15 years there has been a 2.5 increase in the number of Ukrainian seafarers and a further increase of 3.5% and 7% by 2015 and 2020 respectively, is expected. Odessa National Maritime Academy, Member of the International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) and of the Black Sea Association of Maritime Institutions (BSAMI) trains more than 12,000 people and issues about 3,000 specialists per year, accredited by the UK Nautical Institute, with certificates recognised in 53 countries. Furthermore, as Ukraine is among the top 5 countries that provide the world market with seafarers and holds 4.35% of maritime offices (the whole of the Black Sea Region holds about 20%) it means that Odessa Region has good potential for a further increase in supplying the world maritime market with qualified personnel.

**Debate – Adoption of the priorities**

**Mr Ayhan Ozkan, Deputy Governor of the Province of Edirne, President of the BBSRC**

Mr Ozkan explained that it is important for the Commission to show activity not in one but in many spheres. Therefore, we have to develop cooperation in different areas. First of all, he explained that he would like to enlarge the Commission, by increasing the number of participants from Turkey and other countries. Besides this, he would like to see active work from the Commission as during the chairmanship of the previous President. It is very important to be dynamic and ensure further development, with more active and high level cooperation between participants and to ensure publicity of the activities of the Commission, as other programmes and international organisations have to be well-informed about the BBSRC and its work. He continued that it is necessary to work together within the framework of the 2014-2020 CBC Sea Basin Programme in order to overcome the similar problems that are faced. Finally, he encouraged members to work actively and hoped that his Presidency would be productive.

*Third Session: Work Programme for the BBSRC*

**Transnational cooperation context in the Black Sea area and the Black Sea Basin CBC Programme, by Mrs Anastasiia Andronova, Representative of National Info-Point for BSB programme, Deputy Director of Foreign Economic Activity and European Integration Department of Odessa Region State Administration (attached)**

The Black Sea Joint Operational Programme aims at a stronger and more sustainable economic development and social development in the Black Sea Region. The 3 strategic objectives for the new Black Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020 are: (i) promoting economic and social development in the border areas, (ii) addressing common challenges and crime prevention, and (iii) facilitating the mobility of persons, goods and capital. The first meeting of the Joint Programming Committee (JPC), where the 2014-2020 programming exercise was officially launched, was held on 18 April in Bucharest. The second meeting of the JPC is scheduled for June 2013.

**Transnational economic cooperation, by Mr Ralph Goldman, Director, Member of the Board, EU Ukraine Business Council ([attached](#))**

A good knowledge of Ukrainian reality and a careful choice of partners and networks are of great importance in order to succeed in doing business in Ukraine. Apart from the nations, there is an increasing involvement of European and non-European Regions from other countries in development. The geopolitical location of Ukraine is among its strengths, but international media coverage is poor, regarding the progress made. The political world is closely interwoven with business in the country and stakeholder groups are more important in Ukraine than elsewhere. Ukraine still stands poised to sign the Association Agreement with the EU, in November 2013, being also under pressure from Russia to join the Customs Union comprising Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The EU Ukraine Business Council possesses offices in Donetsk, Crimea and Kyiv and is on the point of opening another 11 offices across the country.

**Proposal of the Technical Agenda by Mr Patrick Anvroin, Director, CPMR ([Presentation attached](#))**

Patrick Anvroin presented the ideas of the CPMR Secretariat General, with regard to:

- The possible areas of intervention for the BBSRC and the identification of thematic responsibilities within it;
- An organisational structure and a work schedule for 2 years for the working groups;
- A strengthened participation of BBSRC Regions in CPMR thematic working groups;
- The preparation of a genuine BBSRC medium-term Business Plan;
- And an overall timetable for implementing this new technical organisation.

This proposal needs to be studied by Member Regions, and operational decisions should be taken at the pre-General Assembly BBSRC meeting on 25 September 2013 in Saint-Malo.

### *Closing Session*

Regarding the decision for the meeting venue and the date for the 2014 BBSRC General Assembly, Mr Ozkan proposes to host this meeting in Edirne, at a date to be fixed later. This proposal was unanimously accepted.

Mr Özkan expressed his contentment that a common view was shared and believed that in the near future the BBSRC will extend its membership. He thinks that our work will facilitate social life and promote better living standards in the Balkan and Black Sea Region. In his opinion, the first priority for 2014-2020 should be to strengthen transnational cooperation and cooperation with other organisations. He reiterated his willingness to fulfill all his duties; believing that the BBSRC works together for a common goal. Finally he thanked the Government and the authorities of Odessa for their kind invitation. He thanked all delegates for their successful work, participation and contribution to the work of the current General Assembly.