



## JOINT STATEMENT

### SEDM MINISTERS OF DEFENSE MEETING

Dubrovnik, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015



The Defense Ministers of the Southeastern Europe Defense Ministerial (SEDM) Process:

Her Excellency, Mimi KODHELI

Her Excellency, Marina PENDEŠ

His Excellency, Nikolay NENCHEV, represented by Dimitar Ivanov KYUMYURDZHIEV,  
Deputy Minister of Defense

His Excellency, Ante KOTROMANOVIĆ

Her Excellency, Tinatin KHIDASHELI, represented by Anna DOLIDZE, Deputy Minister of  
Defense

His Excellency, Panos KAMMENOS, represented by Dimitrios VITSAS, Alternate Minister  
of National Defense

Her Excellency, Roberta PINOTTI, represented by Domenico ROSSI, Undersecretary of  
State for Defense

His Excellency, Zoran JOLEVSKI

Her Excellency, Milica PEJANOVIĆ-ĐURIŠIĆ

His Excellency, Mircea DUȘA, represented by Valeriu NICUȚ, State Secretary for Defense  
Policy and Planning

His Excellency, Bratislav GAŠIĆ represented by Zoran ĐORĐEVIĆ, State Secretary of  
Ministry of Defense

Her Excellency, Andreja KATIČ, represented by Primož ŠAVC, Defense Policy Director

His Excellency, Mehmet Vecdi GÖNÜL

His Excellency, Stepan POLTORAK represented by Petro BOBYR, Defense Attaché in  
Zagreb

His Excellency, Ashton CARTER, represented by Evelyn FARKAS, Deputy Assistant  
Secretary of Defense

Together with the Minister of Defense from the SEDM Observer Country

His Excellency, Anatolie ŞALARU

met in Dubrovnik on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015, strongly determined to promote enduring peace, stability and security in the region of Southeastern Europe (SEE) through the SEDM process.

The SEDM Ministers welcomed the presence of the representatives from the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), RACVIAC- Center for Security Cooperation, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) and NATO Communication and Information Agency (NCIA).

The SEDM Ministers expressed particular appreciation to the Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia H.E. Mr. Josip LEKO and the Defense Minister H.E. Ante KOTROMANOVIC for their encouraging opening addresses.

The SEDM Ministers expressed their good wishes to Turkey and the new Chairman of SEDM-CC/PMSC, H.E. Ambassador Hüseyin MÜFTÜOĞLU and the new COMSEEBRIG, Brigadier General Numan YEDİYILDIZ. They also expressed deepest appreciation to Mr. Valeriu NICUŢ, the former Chairman of the SEDM-CC/PMSC and thanked Brigadier General Hakan ESER, former SEEBRIG Commander, for his invaluable contribution.

The SEDM Ministers welcomed Tbilisi for becoming a full member in the SEDM process and encouraged Chisinau to follow suit.

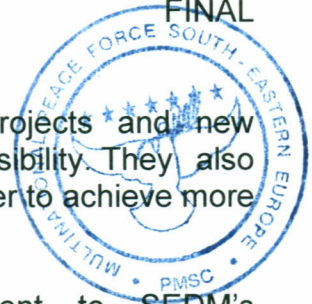
The Ministers expressed full respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and called for a peaceful resolution.

The SEDM Ministers welcomed the Chairman's report by which he provided a summary of the activities of the Chairmanship's accomplishments on priority issues since the last SEDM meeting in 2014.

The Chairman also provided an update on the status of the following SEDM projects:

- Southeastern Europe Simulation Network Exercise (SEESIM -16),
- Interconnection of Military Hospitals (IMIHO),
- Building Integrity (BI) Project,
- Female Leaders in Security and Defense (FLSD) Project

The SEDM Ministers noted with appreciation the progress achieved so far in all current projects. Under the IMIHO project they approved the Standing Operating Procedures (SOP) regarding the Technical Working Group (TWG) Meetings.



The SEDM Ministers encouraged the nations to offer new projects and new proposals in addition to the ongoing ones to improve SEDM's visibility. They also emphasized the importance of reducing unnecessary duplications in order to achieve more efficiency in the SEDM Process.

The SEDM Ministers reaffirmed their countries' commitment to SEDM's fundamental goal to intensify understanding and political-military cooperation in the SEE region, for the purpose of strengthening stability and security in SEE. They emphasized that as the process will mark its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016, this might constitute a good opportunity for the member nations as well as the Secretariat to seek the means and tools to strengthen the effectiveness of the process. In this context, they welcomed the Secretariat's suggestion to revisit the issue of revitalizing the SEDM Strategic Review as well as activating the EWG (Expert Working Group).

The SEDM Ministers noted with interest Skopje's proposal for joint participation of the SEDM nations in United Nations - led peace operations in line with the provisions of the MPFSEE Agreement. They encouraged the SEDM-CC to further explore concrete possibilities for joint participation.

The SEDM Ministers welcomed the efforts and presentation of Athens regarding the Permanent Portal and proudly launched the first ever permanent web-based SEDM portal. The Ministers stressed the importance of the portal and its role in increasing the visibility of the SEDM process in the run-up to its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016.

The SEDM Ministers welcomed the report presented by COMSEEBRIG on SEEBRIG activities and achievements since the last SEDM Meeting.

The "Multinational Peace Force Southeast Europe (MPFSEE) Ministers approved the SEEBRIG HQ Budget for 2016 and Annual Plan for Activities (Coordination, Training and Evaluation) for 2016, as well as COMSEEBRIG's authorization to re-allocate up to 20% among chapters of the approved 2016 Budget, as agreed during 34<sup>th</sup> PMSC Meeting.

The MPFSEE Ministers appreciated the progress achieved at the High Level Expert Meeting (HLEM) in Ankara, which was established in accordance with the proposal of Na-7 to promote the visibility and readiness of SEEBRIG by potentially offering it to NATO within Framework Nations Concept (FNC). They tasked PMSC to continue to work further on this issue.

The MPFSEE Ministers expressed their regret on the denunciation by Na-4 of the MPFSEE Agreement and tasked the PMSC to review all aspects related to the MPFSEE Agreement and its additional protocols with a view to amending the Agreement in the face of newly emerged circumstances and the security environment, while still adhering to the scope of its agreed operational framework. They requested the Chairman to present a report on the revision of the Agreement to the next regular Ministerial Meeting.

The MPFSEE Ministers also took note of Sofia's declaration that it will not be able to host SEEBRIG HQ for the period 2017-2023 and they tasked the PMSC to revise the "HQ SEEBRIG Location and Critical Rotational Slots Table After the Year 2015".

The MPFSEE Ministers welcomed the coming into force of the 5<sup>th</sup> Additional Protocol to the MPFSEE Agreement on 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2015.

The MPFSEE Ministers strongly encouraged Sarajevo to finalize their national procedure for the ratification of MPFSEE Agreement, in order to greet Sarajevo as a new member in 2016.

The SEDM Ministers confirmed their dedication to the 'open door policy' for the aspirant states which want to be part of the SEDM initiative and whose participation could help fulfill the SEEBRIG's recognized shortfalls and capability gap.

The SEDM Ministers thanked Zagreb for organizing and hosting the SEDM reunion and the Comprehensive Regional Ministerial Meeting (CRM) which provided the nations with the opportunity to further the work on rationalizing the regional cooperation.

The next Ministerial Meeting will be hosted by Rome in October 2016, according to the meeting calendar.

The Ministers welcomed the proposal of Tbilisi to host the following Ministerial Meeting in 2017 and tasked the Secretariat to update the chart accordingly.

The SEDM Ministers expressed their appreciation to Zagreb and particularly H.E. Mr. Ante KOTROMANOVIĆ for the warm hospitality and the excellent organization of the meeting. They also expressed gratitude for the efforts of his staff and the SEDM-CC and PMSC Secretariat for the preparations and the efficient conduct of the events within the Ministerial Meeting.

  
Serdar BAYCILI  
Head of SEDM-CC/PMSC Secretariat



  
H.E. Amb. Hüseyin MÜFTÜOĞLU  
SEDM-CC/PMSC Chairman