



SEDM-CC/PMSC

*Wisdom
Cooperation
Strength!*



2021-2023
SOFIA CHAIRMANSHIP

**SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE DEFENCE MINISTERIAL
DEPUTY CHIEFS OF DEFENCE MEETING**



14th June 2022, Ljubljana

JOINT STATEMENT



We, the Deputy Chiefs of Defence/ General Staff from the SEDM member-states:

Deputy Chief of General Staff, Major General Manushaqe SHEHU,

Deputy Chief of Defense for Operations, Major General Ivica JERKIĆ,

Deputy Chief of Defence, Lieutenant General Dimitar ILIEV, represented by
Director for Defence Policy and Planning Directorate, Brigadier General Radostin
ILIEV,

Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Siniša JURKOVIĆ,

Deputy Chief of Defence, Vice Admiral Ioannis DRIMOUSIS,

Deputy Chief of Defence, Lieutenant General Carmine MASIELLO, represented by

Deputy Chief of Military Policy Division , Rear Admiral Alberto SODOMACO,

Deputy Chief of General Staff Colonel Željko RADULOVIĆ, represented by Head

of Section in Operations Department J-3, Lieutenant Colonel Igor KNEZEVIĆ,

Deputy Chief of General Staff , Major General Azim NUREDIN, represented by

Head of Strategic Planning, Equipping and Use of Forces Brigadier General Simeon

TRAJKOVSKI ,

Deputy Chief of Defence for Operations and Training, Lieutenant General

Gheorghişă VLAD,

Deputy Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant General Petar CVETKOVIĆ,

Deputy Chief of General Staff, Major General Roman URBANČ,

Deputy Chief of General Staff, General Selçuk BAYRAKTAROĞLU represented

by Head of Department of Operations Planning, Brigadier General Subutay ADAŞ,

Convened in Ljubljana, on the 14th of June 2022, together with the representatives of international/regional organizations, to foster constructive regional military cooperation in South Eastern Europe (SEE), in order to further enhance cooperation, stability, trust and security in the region.

We highly appreciated the encouraging opening remarks by the SEDM Chairman, Mr. Yordan Bozhilov and Ljubljana's Deputy Chief of General Staff, Major General Roman Urbanč.

This being the first DCHOD Meeting since the assumption of the Chairmanship by Sofia from Tirana in July 2021, we expressed our appreciation to the Chairman of SEDM-CC/PMSC and welcomed the accomplishments in enriching the Process, which Sofia Chairmanship has achieved so far.

We condemned the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, one of our member states, which constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. We demanded an immediate end of hostilities and opening of negotiations for the withdrawal of Russian Federation troops from the territory of independent Ukraine. We expressed our concern about the violations of the rules and laws of war that have been identified, the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Ukraine, the numerous cases of civilian casualties and the destruction of Ukraine's crucial infrastructure. We supported the efforts of the international community and international and regional organizations to stop the war and provide protection for refugees.

We fully supported the SEDM Statement condemning the Russian aggression against Ukraine, proposed by Sofia at the last Coordination Committee meeting in March 2022, and approved by the SEDM Ministers of Defence.

We continue to note with concern the current global COVID-19 pandemic, causing an unprecedented crisis, with massive loss of lives and a severe shock to the economies around the world. In this context, we appreciated the role that our Armed/Defence Forces played in mitigating the impact of the spreading of the pandemic, by providing vital support to relevant civil authorities.

We appreciated the updates on the SEDM-CC/PMSC activities since the last SEDM DCHODs meeting, hosted by Zagreb via video teleconference, on 10th of June 2021, presented by SEDM-CC/ PMSC Chairman and we emphasized the importance of the decisions taken by the SEDM Ministers of Defence during their last SEDM meeting in Skopje, on the 4th of November 2021 and also the importance of keeping a close working relationship with the relevant international organizations.

We welcomed the achievements of the MPFSEE to date and we reiterated our commitment to further enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Process through increased cooperation among Member Nations.

We fully supported the assessment of the Chairman of SEDM-CC/PMSC, emphasizing that the commitment of Member Nations to the fundamental goals of the SEDM Process to further enhance the political-military cooperation in SEE should be continued as a means to strengthen peace, security and stability in our region. We reaffirmed our commitment to continue promoting the relevance of the SEDM Process, which has proved to be a successful security building mechanism in SEE.

As this year marks the 26th Anniversary since the first meeting of the Ministers of Defence of SEE in Tirana, we reaffirmed that the SEDM process, as a regional framework of cooperation among the SEE countries, represents a successful example of multilateral cooperation as well as a relevant contributor to the regional and global peace and security.

We reaffirmed that through the SEDM Process we have made good progress during all these years by working together and by staying united, as our unity is our strength. We underlined that this Initiative has strengthened the relations among our

countries and has contributed to their efforts towards a common Euro and/or Euro-Atlantic future, in accordance with their individual policies and aspirations.

We reaffirmed our dedication to the purposes and principles provided by the United Nations Charter, to the international law and to the treaties and agreements and reconfirmed our commitment to contribute to peace and confidence and to foster good neighborly relations by working closely with all States in SEE.

We underlined our commitment to regional peace and stability and we noted that we should continue on the path of regional cooperation, which is closely tied to international security and stability, focusing on SEEBRIG and developing the regional projects for cooperation and protection of peace and democracy in the region.

We welcomed the new SEEBRIG Commander, Brigadier General Evangelos MITROUTSIKOS and wished him good luck and success in all of his endeavors in this demanding position.

We noted the report of SEEBRIG Commander, Brigadier General Evangelos MITROUTSIKOS concerning the SEEBRIG HQ activities since the last DCHOD's Meeting. We expressed our appreciation to the SEEBRIG Commander for his efforts to enhance the effectiveness of SEEBRIG and to actively seek opportunities to contribute to peace, security, stability and cooperation in SEE.

We expressed our satisfaction with the participation of SEEBRIG in exercises, courses and training in cooperation with NATO Centers of Excellences and Training Centers, which have generated a better understanding of Peace Support Operations (PSO), Disaster Relief Operations (DRO), and Humanitarian Assistance Operations (HAO) among SEEBRIG HQ staff.

We, the MPFSEE DCHODs encouraged the SEEBRIG Commander to analyze Bucharest's offer regarding the use of three national military training facilities by SEEBRIG HQ and affiliated units in order to increase its interoperability.

We noted that the planning process of Seven Stars 2022 exercise, designed to enhance SEEBRIG capabilities and increase its military potential for Peace Support Operations, Disaster Relief Operations and Humanitarian Assistance Operations, has reached its final stage with the Coordination Conference, scheduled for the period 1st to 2nd September 2022.

We reiterated our hope that Sarajevo joins, as early as possible, the MPFSEE Member Nations and stressed that the membership of Sarajevo in the MPFSEE would make an important contribution to SEEBRIG.

We recognized that SEESIM is a valuable tool for promoting cooperation and interoperability among its Members, and we encourage all Member Nations to support this exercise. We appreciated Athens' efforts in hosting the SEESIM 22 exercise.

We noted the continuous improvement of the SEDM Portal and expressed our appreciation to Bucharest and Athens for their efforts to implement new tools which constitute a case in point and a paradigm on how internet based online tools can help us work together effectively.

We expressed our satisfaction with the recent development of the Interconnection of Military Hospitals (IMIHO) Project, and appreciated Athens' contribution as the Lead Nation for this Project, for developing the IMIHO website and for hosting the 34th Tech WG Meeting via VTC on 17 May and the 16th IMIHO Users Meeting via VTC on 18 May.

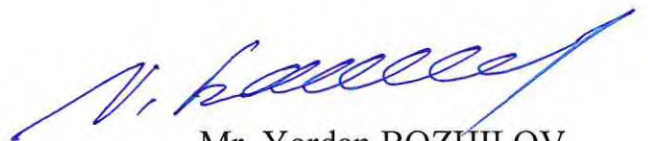
We appreciated Rome's accomplishments as the host of the "Female Leaders in Security and Defence (FLSD) Project" and acknowledged their efforts in conducting a two day Workshop via VTC, on 27 and 28 October 2021. We appreciated Bucharest's commitment to host, in the second semester, the 2022 FLSD Conference.

We appreciated the RACVIAC - Center for Security Cooperation RACVIAC as a unique international organization dealing with the security issues, playing a leading role in the areas of confidence and security building measures - a project owned by the region and working for the region - which has made an outstanding contribution to enhancing permanent and sincere security cooperation among the SEE countries and to reaching long-lasting peace and prosperity.

We conveyed our appreciation and gratitude to all delegations and personnel involved for their efforts in successfully preparing and conducting the annual SEDM DCHOD Meeting.

We expressed our gratitude to Major General Roman Urbanč and Ljubljana staff for hosting this event and for their tireless efforts in successfully preparing and conducting this Meeting.

We confirmed that the next DCHOD's Meeting will be hosted by Rome, in June 2023, according to the meeting calendar.



Mr. Yordan BOZHILOV

SEDM-CC/ PMSC CHAIRMAN

