



SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE DEFENCE MINISTERIAL PROCESS

DEFENCE MINISTERIAL MEETING

- 6th of NOVEMBER, 2024, Tirana -

JOINT STATEMENT

We, the Ministers of Defence of the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial (SEDM) Process:

His Excellency Pirro VENGU,

His Excellency Zukan HELEZ, represented by the Deputy Minister of Defence for Policy and Plans Slaven Galić

His Excellency Atanas ZAPRYANOV, represented by the Deputy Minister of Defence Radostin ILIEV

His Excellency Ivan ANUŠIĆ, represented by Advisor to the Minister of Defence Brigadier General Tomislav Galić,

His Excellency Irakli CHIKOVANI, represented by the Deputy Minister of Defence Pataa PATIASHVILI

His Excellency Nikolaos DENDIAS, represented by General Secretary of the Ministry of National Defence of the Hellenic Republic, Antonios P. OIKONOMOU



His Excellency Guido CROSETTO, represented by Undersecretary of State for Defence Matteo PEREGO di CREMNAGO,

His Excellency Anatolie NOSATÎ,

His Excellency Dragan KRAPOVIĆ, represented by Acting Defence Policy Director Radmila PEROVIĆ

His Excellency Vlado MISAJLOVSKI, represented by the Deputy Minister of Defence Elfet ISMAILI

His Excellency Angel TÎLVĂR,

His Excellency Bratislav GAŠIĆ, represented by Acting Assistant Minister of Defence Predrag BANDIĆ,

His Excellency Borut SAJOVIC,

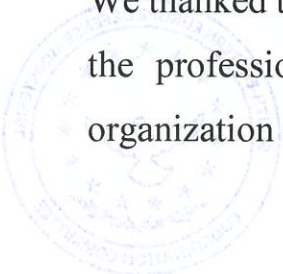
His Excellency Yaşar GÜLER, represented by the General Director Brigadier General Soner ORUÇOĞLU

His Excellency Rustem UMEROV, represented by the Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Albania Volodymyr SHKUROV

His Excellency Lloyd J. AUSTIN III, represented by the Acting Secretary of Defence Representative Europe and Acting Defence Advisor, U.S. Mission to NATO, David F. HELVEY

Gathered in Tirana on November 6, 2024, alongside with representatives of regional organizations, to promote constructive regional military collaboration in South Eastern Europe (SEE), in order to consolidate and enhance cooperation, stability, and security in our region.

We thanked the Republic of Albania for the wonderful hospitality shown to us and the professionalism of the Albanian Ministry of Defence for the excellent organization of the Ministerial meeting.



We appreciated the opening statements made by the Minister of Defence of Republic of Albania, Mr. Pirro Vengu, and by the Minister of National Defence of Romania, Mr. Angel Tîlvăr, as the representative of the SEDM Chair Nation. We expressed our gratitude for the proactivity of Bucharest's Chairmanship since the beginning of their tenure in July 2023. We wished all SEDM Nations great success in continuing to consolidate and enforce the SEDM projects and Process as an important platform of regional cooperation.

We expressed our appreciation to the Republic of North Macedonia for its continued and consistent support to the South-Eastern Europe Brigade/SEEBRIG, and also for its efforts as Host Nation in the successful execution of this year's SEEBRIG 25th Anniversary Ceremony, on the 3rd of September 2024.

We appreciated the updates received on the SEDM developments since the last ministerial meeting, and noted with satisfaction the progress made towards analyzing the status of the current initiatives and results achieved so far, within that timeframe.

We took note of the conclusions of the comprehensive analysis of the status and prospects of the current SEDM Projects, which were agreed during an Expert Working Group (EWG) meeting on the subject. Based on these conclusions, we tasked the SEDM-CC to further explore means for a more efficient implementation of the SEDM projects.

We expressed our appreciation to the Hellenic Republic for its consistent efforts to continue developing the IMIHO project, assigning a new Chairperson, and also to the Republic of Serbia for its commitment to host the next IMIHO Technical Working Group meeting (IMIHO TWG) in November 2024, contributing to identifying and optimizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the military hospitals' interconnection.

We expressed our gratitude to the Hellenic Republic, Romania and the Republic of Bulgaria for their dedicated and excellent cooperation in finding efficient ways for



a smooth and on time transition of hosting the SEDM Information systems and providing uninterrupted online services, thus assuring the functioning of the SEDM portal as a whole.

We stressed the importance of continuing the “Female Leaders in Security and Defence” (FLSD) project, as an important instrument to foster the development of the most proper human capital in its diversity in order to meet appropriately current and future security challenges. We appreciated the efforts of the Republic of Serbia as a lead nation in continuing the development of the FLSD project for the period 2024-2025, as well as for hosting the FLSD Conference in Belgrade, in December 2024. We saluted the Republic of Moldova’s readiness to host the FLSD conference in 2026, and encouraged all SEDM Member States to actively take part in the FLSD project in the coming years.

We approved a new SEDM project, namely *SEDM – Platform for Enhancing Member States’ Resilience* and acknowledged that Nations will participate depending on their assessment, needs, and national availability. We welcomed Romania's commitment on leading the project for the next two years, in cooperation with the Euro-Atlantic Center for Resilience (E-ARC). We encourage Nations to take advantage of the extensive opportunities offered by this new project through direct participation.

We expressed our appreciation to Romania for its consistent efforts to continue planning the SEESIM25 exercise, with its main objectives of implementing the emergency response procedures and improving the interoperability among SEDM Member States’ Emergency Operations Centers. We welcomed the Nations that already expressed their willingness to participate in the SEESIM25 exercise and encouraged all SEDM Member States to actively take part in developing and coordinating civil emergency scenarios and exercises within SEDM.

We took note of the potential cooperation between SEDM and the South-East Europe Military Intelligence Chiefs’ Forum (SEEMIC) and expressed our interest to see the results of such a practical effort.



We reconfirmed our determination to continue encouraging political and military cooperation in the South-Eastern Europe, as a means to achieve regional security through good neighborly relations. We welcomed the cooperation under SEDM format with relevant regional-entities and organizations on defence such as the RACVIAC - Center for Security Cooperation, the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). We expressed our appreciation for the continuous value they bring in enhancing the security dialogue and regional cooperation in South-Eastern Europe.

We noted the report of SEEBRIG's Commander, Brigadier General Bilbil BITRI, on the activities of SEEBRIG HQ since the last Ministerial meeting. We thanked COMSEEBRIG for the achievements and his continuous and persistent efforts to strengthen the capabilities and enhance interoperability of SEEBRIG since taking over command of the Brigade. We also commended the increased interaction and cooperation as evidenced by his working visits to SHAPE, JFC Naples and the UN Headquarters.

We welcomed the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of SEEBRIG's activation. We used this opportunity to highlight the Brigade's importance as a practical expression of our commitment to maintaining peace and stability in the South-Eastern Europe region.

We, the MPFSEE Ministers of Defence, approved the SEEBRIG HQ Annual Plan 2025, the SEEBRIG Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 and the SEEBRIG Medium-Term Financial Plan 2026-2029, as well as the Authority for Reallocation of Funds to COMSEEBRIG and the Financial Accounts Audit for 2025. We support the continuation of the efforts to maintain the readiness and increase the interoperability of SEEBRIG capabilities, through interaction and cooperation with affiliated units and other regional and international entities/organizations, such as UN, OSCE, NATO and EU. We also took note of COMSEEBRIG's concerns.



regarding staffing and execution of the approved activities, and tasked PMSC to follow with them.

We took note that PMSC has endorsed the Concept Paper on strengthening the relevance of SEEBRIG, based on the working progress registered since last SEDM Meeting held in Ankara, on 22nd of November 2023. We approved this endeavor and, therefore, tasked the PMSC and SEEBRIG to conduct further discussions within an Expert Working Group to identify and propose concrete actions in order to implement the political will expressed in the Concept Paper on strengthening the relevance of SEEBRIG.

We, the MPFSEE Ministers of Defence, reiterated our expectation that Bosnia and Herzegovina finalizes its national procedure for the ratification of the MPFSEE Agreement, in order to welcome it as a new Member State.

We, the Ministers of Defense, recognized the importance of the new commitments undertaken by some countries to establish harmonized military mobility corridors to support the rapid and efficient movement of military forces, personnel, and equipment throughout southeast Europe.

We expressed our full commitment to the universal application of principles of international law, the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, to which all SEDM Member States agree on, as well as the relevant Resolutions of the UN Security Council, including full respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, and settling all disputes in a peaceful manner and good neighborly relations.

We reiterated our firm condemnation of the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, one of the SEDM Member States, which has for nearly three years defended itself. We reaffirmed our strong support to the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.



We noted with serious concern the common challenges that the ongoing migration and refugee flows pose to our region, and we reaffirmed our commitment to support the efforts of the international community, within the UN legal framework.

We condemned the continued illegal occupation of Georgia's indivisible regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia by the Russian Federation. We reaffirmed our strong support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and stressed the need for a peaceful resolution of the Russia-Georgia conflict, as well as respecting the fundamental rights of IDPs and refugees to safe and dignified return to their homes.

We expressed our appreciation and gratitude to all delegations and personnel involved in the successful preparation and conduct of the annual SEDM Meeting.

We expressed our gratitude to Minister of Defence, Mr. Pirro Vengu, as well as his staff, for their gracious hosting of this event and their efforts in order to ensure its success.

We confirmed that the next Ministerial Meeting will be hosted by Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2025, in accordance with the agreed calendar.



Ms Simona COJOCARU

SEDM-CC/PMSC CHAIRPERSON

