

JOINT STATEMENT

Adopted at the XII Conference of
Speakers of the Parliaments of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative
UNDER THE ALBANIAN AII CHAIRMANSHIP

Tirana, 28 April 2014

The Speakers of the Parliaments of the Participating Countries to the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (AII),

- **GUIDED** by the principles of the Ancona Declaration of the 20 May 2000, as the founding political act of the AII;
- **CONSIDERING** the commitments made during the last meeting of the AII Parliamentary Dimension in Brdo pri Kranju (*13 May 2013*) and the previous AII Parliamentary gatherings;
- **CONVINCED** that the cultural and historic bonds, together with the common environment, form a solid basis for achieving a sustainable growth through cooperation;
- **AWARE** of the boost and impetus that the parliaments could give to development in the AII Participating States;
- **EMPHASIZING** the role of the Parliaments for the promotion of parliamentary dimension of cooperation in the region, as an added value;
- **WELCOMING** the process for the approval of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Region (EUSAIR) expected to come to an end during the second semester of this year, under the Italian Presidency of the EU Council;
- **CONVINCED** that EUSAIR will boost development through the realization of strategic projects for Blue Growth cooperation, Environment Protection, Transport, Energy and Tourism bringing benefit to the whole Adriatic Ionian area improving its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity;
- **AWARE** that the AII represents the "intergovernmental anchorage " of the EUSAIR - as it has solemnly been reiterated by the Eight Participating Governments on the occasion of the Special AI Council under the Albanian Presidency held in Athens on 6 February 2014 - and that the future AI Macro-region has enjoyed in its preparatory phase and will enjoy in its implementation phase the contribution of civil society;

- **CONVINCED of the enhanced role the AII Parliaments need to play in view of this** new phase of cooperation in the region represented by the EUSAIR

- 1) **WELCOME** the development of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Regional Strategy as a new innovative form of cooperation in line with EUROPE 2020, Europe's growth strategy aimed at generating smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;

- 2) **PRAISE** AII Governments for the results of the Special AI Council held in Athens last 6 February under the Albanian Chairmanship further committing and supporting the establishment and the implementation of the EUSAIR;

- 3) **AFFIRM** the full support to all Stakeholders committed in the establishment of the EUSAIR as a means to achieve growth and sustainable development in the region;

- 4) **EXPRESS** their belief that the particularity of the EUSAIR lies in the fact that it unites EU member states and countries that are – even if at different levels – in the process of accession to the EU, thus contributing to the reinforcement of the integration and cohesion;

- 5) **COMMIT** themselves to follow closely the developments of the EUSAIR both in the final phase of its process of approval and in the implementation phase starting at the beginning of 2015;

- 6) **DECIDE** as representatives of the Institutions closer to the Citizens, to set up ad hoc Parliamentary Representations to follow the work of the AII and the progress of EUSAIR, in close contact with the Permanent Secretariat;

- 7) **CALL** upon the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina to convene a meeting of the ad hoc Parliamentary Representatives to discuss on future concrete steps of the working agenda.