



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic headed the delegation of the Republic of Serbia to the Fourth EUSAR Forum held on 7-8 May in Budva, Montenegro, in the framework of MNE Chairmanship.

In the context of the EUSAIR Forum, FPM/MFA Dacic took part in and addressed the Adriatic and Ionian Council/Ministerial Meeting of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Macro-Region (EUSAIR).

The Republic of Serbia took over at the Budva Forum the yearlong All Presidency and EUSAIR Chairmanship, which will officially begin on 1 June 2019.

"I would like, on behalf of the Republic of Serbia and my own, to thank Montenegro and Minister Darmanovic and his team for, successful Chairmanship of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian macro Region (EUSAIR) and the Presidency of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative.

{youtube}WJZEvpl3vl8{/youtube}

I would particularly like to commend that under your Chairmanship and Presidency special attention was devoted to the promotion of European standards and values as fundamental preconditions for full EU membership of the Western Balkans and to emphasize on this occasion as well that Serbia intends to continue its chairing of EUSAIR and All in the same spirit.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to the All Permanent Secretariat in Ancona. In line with the applicable Rules of Procedure, we will continue such cooperation with both the Secretariat and its "Foundation" in the course of our incoming Chairmanship/Presidency.

From the Annual Report which took stock of the results of All Permanent Secretariat, I learned that the Secretariat's representatives supported and participated in 24 meetings hosted by MNE Chair/Presidency.

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As I have already indicated that Serbia will strive to be a dynamic Chair implying an obligation on our part to organize a larger number of activities, be it ongoing or new ones, the aim is to increase visibility of our joint Strategy. As you know, Serbia is the only participating State so far that is a land-locked country, and now it is joined by North Macedonia and San Marino.

In view of this fact, we have one more obligation to do everything in our power to consolidate all these projects related not only to coastal areas but also to the mainland as far as the countries having no direct access to the sea or land-locked countries.

Considering that we have already held the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office which brings together 57 countries and where decisions are consensus-based, I hope that we will know to manage in this organization too, which is going to have 10 participating countries, to articulate our common interests in the best possible way.

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We consider it important to focus our joint activities on a number of key priorities, such as infrastructure connectivity, promotion of cooperation in the fields of culture, tourism and youth exchange. It will be necessary to include economic and financial components among our Chairmanship/Presidency priorities. In that context, we shall accentuate in particular cooperation on small- and medium-sized businesses including cooperation among chambers of commerce, primarily to establish better economic connections, create more jobs and reduce labour migration.

We will devote special attention to strengthening dialogue with the civil sector and continuing initiated activities in All traditional areas such as environmental protection, cooperation in the fields of science and education and Blue Growth sector.

The Budva Declaration signed today will be a good basis for our future joint activities, and I hope that we will best articulate our common interests and ensure financial support for our projects in the future.

Like in the OSCE there is also a Troika or Trio Presidency as it is called here, composed of the current, former and next Presidencies, meaning that Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia will have an active cooperation over the next one-year period. Our Presidency begins on 1 June.

Let me once again extend our thanks for the successful chairing and generous hospitality and express our satisfaction that we shall be chairing the Strategy and the All Initiative in the next one year", said the Serbian Foreign Minister after the meeting in Budva today.