

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION
on
A COMMON MARITIME AGENDA FOR THE BLACK SEA

Bucharest - 21 May 2019

The Ministers responsible for maritime affairs of the participating countries – Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine – met on 21 May 2019, *in the presence* of H.E. Mr Karmenu Vella, European Commissioner for Environment, Fisheries and Maritime Affairs and H.E. Ambassador Selim Yenel, First Deputy Secretary General, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

1. RECALLING:

- The commitment of the Burgas Ministerial Declaration towards a Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea, of 31 May 2018, including:

- That the respect for the norms and principles of international law is at the core of regional cooperation in the Black Sea.

- That the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea¹ as well as the other relevant international conventions and customary international law related to activities in oceans and seas are fully considered.

- That the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution plays a key role for the environmental welfare of the Black Sea.

- That the International Maritime Organization sets a regulatory framework ensuring a safe, secure, efficient international shipping industry and a green and sustainable maritime transportation system.

2. WELCOMING

- The progress achieved by the participating countries, with the facilitation of the European Commission, in the follow up to the Burgas Ministerial Declaration.

- The Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda for the Black Sea launched on 8 May 2019 in Bucharest, Romania, in support of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea - both annexed to this Declaration.

¹ The Republic of Turkey is not party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

3. UNDERLINING

- The voluntary, bottom-up and sectoral nature of the cooperation under the Common Maritime Agenda, which aims to promote a more sustainable blue economy in the Black Sea.
- That the Agenda is a sea basin initiative owned by the participating countries, to be implemented in synergy with the work of the existing regional cooperation initiatives and without creating new structures.
- That complementarity and mutual reinforcement should be promoted, where appropriate, with the work of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (BSC), the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) and the Joint Operational Programme Black Sea Basin.
- That the participating countries have full autonomy to cooperate with one or more of the countries, while contributing to the implementation of the common priorities and actions set by the countries in the Common Maritime Agenda.

4. AGREE ON:

- The Common Maritime Agenda attached to this Declaration, as well as its goals, priorities and actions and the promotion of enhanced cooperation on maritime affairs among the participating countries.

5. AGREE TO:

- Contribute to the achievement of the goals and the implementation of priorities and actions of the Agenda.
- Continue working on joint sustainable blue economy projects, including bankable investment projects in line with the goals, priorities and actions of the Common Maritime Agenda.

6. ENCOURAGE:

- To use the Common Maritime Agenda as a tool for the participating countries, the European Commission, the international financial institutions and other donors to align available and future funding and for the priority areas identified by the participating countries.
- The sharing of best practices on maritime affairs with similar initiatives around other sea basins.

7. SUPPORT:

- Implementation of the Common Maritime Agenda, through both political and operational coordination.

- Political coordination, which will be provided through *ad hoc* Ministerial meetings convened on the initiative of the coordinator of the Common Maritime Agenda Steering Group (see below).

- Operational coordination, which will be ensured through a Common Maritime Agenda *ad hoc* Steering Group, which will coordinate the implementation of the goals, priorities and actions of the Agenda. To this end, the work of the Steering Group will be coordinated by one of the participating countries on a voluntary rotation basis and on a one-year term.

- Implementation process as outlined in Annex 2 of this Declaration.

The Ministers thank Romania for the excellent organisation and chairing of the ministerial meeting for the endorsement of the Common Maritime Agenda in Bucharest.