



Montenegro Presidency-in-Office
June 2015 – June 2016



MARRI REGIONAL FORUM DECLARATION

We, the Ministers and High representatives responsible for issues of migration, asylum and refugees from Republic of Albania, Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo*¹, in the format of the Regional Initiative for Migration, Asylum and Refugees (MARRI);

Guided by the principles laid down in the founding documents of MARRI, the Declaration of MARRI Regional Forum held in Skopje on June 10, 2015 and by the Priorities of the Presidency of Montenegro;

Having in mind the importance of good neighbourly relations and continuation of common regional cooperation as preconditions for broader integration processes;

Recognizing the significance of strong joint actions in the migration crisis, with a view to maintaining the stability and safety in the Region, security of external EU borders, and to respecting the international human rights protection standards;

Determined to support along those lines the reform of MARRI by raising the degree of responsibility for its efficient and effective operation, and for the sustainability of this Initiative;

Appreciating the efforts and the results of the Presidency-in-Office by Montenegro to that end, and in particular:

- the decision of the European Commission to support capacity building of MARRI through the project "Protection Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey", financed from IPA II funds,
- the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between MARRI Regional Center (MARRI RC) and the Secretariat of the Central European Initiative (CEI),
- strengthening of cooperation and synergetic actions taken with other regional organizations such as DCAF and PCC SEE,

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence



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- the organization of the International conference “Acting Together in Migration management – enhancing coordination among central and local level” in cooperation with CEI, NALAS, GIZ and with financial support provided by CEI and GIZ, and support by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia,
- organization of the MARRI Friends Meeting,
- successful completion of the project BORDAIRPOL I and signing of the Agreement on donation for continuation of the project (BORDAIRPOL II) with the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration for a period of 30 months, and successful commencement of the implementation of the planned project activities in 2016,
- successful finalization of all planned activities under the project “Improvement of the procedures for establishing identity of irregular migrants in the MARRI region” and efforts aimed at finding support for its extension and sustainability, having in mind that it is a project of utmost importance for MARRI Participants,
- raising of standards in regular activities and promotion of institutional memory of MARRI RC, as well as enhanced visibility of the Center.

We have gathered at the regular annual meeting of the Forum and confirmed the following:

- We welcome the next Presidency by the Republic of Serbia,
- We endorse the Decision on annual contribution for 2016,
- We endorse the Annual Report of MARRI June 2015-June 2016 and the Financial Report for 2015,
- We endorse the Annual Programme of Activities 2016 - 2017,
- Aware that a competent and quality work of MARRI depends on the contribution of MARRI Participants, we confirm our readiness for our administrations to participate in the implementation of regular activities of MARRI RC,
- We encourage MARRI RC to prepare, in cooperation with the Presidency-to-be, the amendments to the Guidelines and Rules of Procedures of MARRI, as well as the Statute of MARRI RC, for the purpose of improving the future work of MARRI,



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- We appreciate the efforts of the Presidency of Montenegro in the implementation of the decision on the introduction of a position of MARRI RC Deputy Director and we recommend to MARRI Regional Committee to come up with a sustainable solution.

In line with the foregoing,

We welcome the successful implementation of all commenced and future projects in the areas of common interest, encouraging MARRI RC to continue to invest efforts in securing donor funds and engaging external experts for further reforms;

We would like to thank the State Secretariat for Migration of the Swiss Confederation, British Embassy in Skopje and Central European initiative for the support of project activities of MARRI RC expressed by allocation of funds, as well as the European Commission for the decision to support capacity building MARRI, and we extend our full faith in IOM and EASO regarding the implementation of the planned support;

We would like to thank Montenegro and commend it for the results of its one year Presidency, and express our full support to the Republic of Serbia in its future endeavor during the forthcoming Presidency.

In Podgorica, 21 June 2016