



Republic of Serbia Presidency-in-Office
June 2016 – June 2017



MARRI REGIONAL FORUM DECLARATION

Belgrade, 27 June, 2017

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

Guided by the principles laid down in the founding documents of MARRI, the Declaration of MARRI Regional Forum held in Podgorica on June 21, 2016 and by the Priorities of the Presidency of the Republic of Serbia;

Having regard to the importance of the European perspective of the Western Balkans and the key importance of fostering regional cooperation aimed at furthering the integration process;

With a view to maintaining the stability and safety in the MARRI Region, security of external EU borders, and to respecting the international human rights protection standards;

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

Supporting the efforts and the results of the Presidency by the Republic of Serbia, and in particular:

- Implementation of all planned activities in the framework of the Project ***Support of the sustainable development of cooperation among border police in South-eastern Europe (BORDAIRPOL II)*** by organizing three Regional trainings and one Annual meeting for the border police officers;
- Successful organisation of the Regional Workshop ***Irregular migration and trafficking in human beings – international standards for protection of migrants at risk of trafficking in human beings with particular focus on women and children along the migration route;***
- Successful organisation of the ***Annual Meeting of National Coordinators for Anti-Trafficking;***
- Implementation of the joint activities with IOM within the Project ***Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey funded by IPA II;***

* 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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- Successful implementation of **four technical assistance projects aimed at MARRI reform with support of German International Cooperation (GIZ)**;
- Commencement of the **MARRI Strategy 2017-2020** development with completion of national reports and achievement of IPA funded external expertise for further development of this document;
- Organisation of an exceptionally successful **Friends of MARRI Meeting**;
- Strengthening cooperation with **FRONTEX, EASO and RCC**;
- Advancing the international promotion and visibility of MARRI.

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

- We endorse the Annual Report of MARRI June 2016 - June 2017, and the Financial Report for 2016,
- We unanimously adopt the Priorities and Annual Program of Activities for the period June 2017 - June 2018,
- Aware that internal functionality represents one of the key challenges of MARRI, we confirm our readiness to support timely the implementation of regular activities of MARRI RC,
- We agree that the next Presidency should be held by the Republic of Albania.

In line with the aforestated,

We encourage the MARRI RC to implement the planned activities and continue further reforms and improvement of its work by engaging external experts;

We would like to thank the State Secretariat for Migration of the Swiss Confederation, GIZ and the Catholic Relief Services Office in Skopje for the support of project activities of the MARRI RC;

We would like to thank the Republic of Serbia and commend it for the results of its one year Presidency, and we hereby express our full confidence for a successful Republic of Albania MARRI Presidency for the period June 2017-June 2018.

In Belgrade, 27 June 2017