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PRISHTINA DECLARATION

MARRI Regional Forum – 30 June 2020

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

Guided by the principles laid down in the founding documents of MARRI, the Sarajevo Declaration 2019 and the Priorities of the Kosovo* Presidency-in-Office;

Applying the principle of regional ownership in the Western Balkans;

Highlighting the importance of good-neighbourly relations in the Region;

Asserting that the European Perspective is common goal of all Participants and integration into the European Union remains priority of the Western Balkans;

Having regard to achieve a regional vision on migration aligned to the European perspective;

Stressing the high importance of regular migration for development and prosperity in EU and the Western Balkans;

Committed to support stability and security, with respect to human rights in MARRI Participants;

Determined to encourage a successful MARRI Legal Framework Reform, with the key goal to valorise MARRI's ultimate potentials;

Expressing our satisfaction that Montenegro and Kosovo* have agreed to raise their annual financial contribution to MARRI to the level of all other four Participants;

Recognising the outstanding results achieved during the Kosovo* Presidency-in-Office, in particular through the following activities:

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- Internal managerial and organizational-administrative Reforms of the Director of the Regional Centre;
- Launching of a joint MARRI – GIZ regional project entitled "Prevention and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in the Western Balkans PaCT" intended to strengthen the capacities of key actors in the field of resilience, the identification of (potential) victims of trafficking and the protection of victims, especially in the field of psycho-social counselling and mental health;
- Back-to-back meeting of the Heads of Asylum Departments network and the High Representatives from Border Police, 29-31 October 2019, Ohrid;
- Meeting of the Coordinators for Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings' Network within the PaCT project, 27 November 2019, Podgorica;
- Successful completion of the project "Strengthening regional migration governance" funded by GIZ, with six Workshops in all six Participants and a final Regional Conference in Pristina on 4 and 5 December 2019;
- Strengthening and deepening the collaboration with IOM, FRONTEX, EASO, GIZ, ICMPD and other international and regional organisations, the regional non-governmental sector and the Academia, in the areas of migration;
- Secondment of the Integrated German Expert by the German Government and GIZ, to the Regional Centre for two years;
- Implementing other joint activities with IOM and EASO under the project "Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey" funded by IPA II, in particular:
 - full functioning of the Regional Remote Interpretation Service (MARRI RRIS) since mid-September 2019;
 - technical preparation of the online Regional Migration Data Exchange Platform in the Western Balkans (WB-MIDEX);
 - start of activities of EASO, with MARRI as regional training coordinator for Asylum;
- Fostering the MARRI Legal Framework Reform with two meetings of the Working Group, 11-13 September 2019 in Struga, and 6–8 November 2019 in Gevgelija, and the engagement of a Legal Editor, a third meeting being postponed due to the COVID-19 imposed travel restrictions;
- Selecting and appointing a professional **Finance Officer** at the Regional Centre;

We have gathered at the regular Annual Meeting of the FORUM and confirm the following:

- We endorse the Director's Annual Report June 2019 - June 2020
- We endorse the Director's Financial Report for 2019;



- We unanimously adopt the **Montenegro Priorities** and the Annual Programme of Activities for the period June 2020 - June 2021;
- We confirm our readiness to foster timely the implementation of all regular activities of MARRI, aware that functionality is the key to MARRI's success and sustainability;
- We agree that the next Presidency should be held by **Montenegro**.

In line with the afore-stated

We encourage MARRI RC, as the Secretariat of this Initiative, to implement the planned activities and continue further reforms;

We would like to thank the European Commission, IOM, EASO, the German government and GIZ for their support;

We encourage MARRI Participants' Foreign Ministers to advocate for positioning MARRI as Principal Migration Agency in WB6;

We would like to express our gratitude to the Presidency-in-Office of Kosovo* and all Offices and Officers in charge with realising the past period's Agenda;

We also want to thank the Director for his unequalled efforts to develop the Regional Centre, its functionality, relevance and impact as think tank, pace maker and service provider for all Participants;

We convey our full confidence to the Presidency of Montenegro for successfully implementing MARRI's Agenda for the period June 2020 - June 2021.

30 June 2020

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