



JOINT STATEMENT

SEDM MINISTERS OF DEFENSE MEETING

Sarajevo-Bosnia and Herzegovina, 3rd October 2012

The Defense Ministers of the Southeastern Europe Defense Ministerial (SEDM) Process:

His Excellency, Arben Imami represented by Arian Starova Deputy Minister of Defense

His Excellency, Anu Anguelov represented by Avgustina Tzvetkova Deputy Minister of Defense

His Excellency, Panos Panagiotopoulos represented by Panagiotis Karampelas Deputy Minister of National Defense

His Excellency, Giampaolo Di Paola represented by Gianluigi Magri Deputy Minister of Defense

His Excellency, Fatmir Besimi

His Excellency, Corneliu Dobrițoiu

His Excellency, İsmet Yılmaz

His Excellency, Muhamed Ibrahimović

His Excellency, Ante Kotromanović, represented by Dragan Lozančić Assistant Minister of Defense

Her Excellency, Milica Pejanović Djurišić

His Excellency, Aleksandar Vučić represented by Aleksandar Nikolić

His Excellency, Aleš Hojs

His Excellency, Dmytro Salamatin, represented by Oleksandr Oliynyk First Deputy Minister of Defense

His Excellency, Leon Edward Panetta, represented by Evelyn Farkas Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense

Together with the Minister of Defense from the SEDM Observer Countries:

His Excellency, Dimitri Shashkini, represented by Davit Nardaia Deputy Minister of Defense

His Excellency, Marinuța Vitalie

met in Sarajevo on 3rd October 2012, strongly determined to promote enduring peace, stability and security in the region of Southeastern Europe (SEE) through the SEDM process.

The SEDM Ministers welcomed the presence of the representatives from NATO HQ Brussels, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), RACVIAC Center for Security Cooperation and the NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA).

The Ministers of Defense expressed particular appreciation for the encouraging opening address given by the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The SEDM Ministers of Defense appreciated the report of the Chairperson H.E. Dr. Gianluigi Magri, Undersecretary of State for Defense of the Republic of Italy on the activities of the Chairmanship's accomplishments that followed the last SEDM meeting in 2011. SEDM Ministers appreciated the report on previous activities presented by the Chairman.

SEDM Ministers appreciated the opening presentation of the Minister of Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina suggesting additional actions for the prevention of duplication and further synchronizations of regional efforts that are related to the harmonization of existing initiatives, meetings and activities in the SEE region, including the proposal that each regional initiative is focused on a certain area, and SEEBRIG to extend its possible mission to include CMO's.

The SEDM Ministers took note of the SEDM Group of Experts Report on the "SEDM Strategic Review" of SEDM objectives and its relationship with key International Organizations. SEDM Ministers took note of the conclusions and recommendations of the "SEDM Strategic Review" which makes proposals and puts emphasis on the necessity to increase the usability of SEEBRIG, to improve the decision-making process, to expand the linkages with the

International and Regional Organizations and Initiatives, and to base the evaluation of future SEDM projects on effective criteria.

They asked SEDM-CC to undertake a second phase of the Review focused on creating an actionable roadmap for each of the SEDM reform objectives and appreciated the proposal by the US to circulate a US non-paper outlining these objectives as a starting point for the second phase of the Review. They also accepted the idea to consider the SSR as a living document to be updated and used when necessary as a tool to make proposals and inform Ministers about SEDM projects, activities and way ahead.

The SEDM Ministers declare they will remain deeply committed to promote all initiatives genuinely aimed to improve SEDM efficiency and visibility, reduce unnecessary duplications, ensure maximum coherence, streamline structures and improve working methods in order to achieve more efficiency in the future regional defense cooperation.

Ministers of Defense formally approved the Building Integrity (BI) project and thanked Bulgaria for its efforts.

Ministers recognized the importance of the Female Leaders in Security and Defense (FLSD) project and encouraged Member Nations to continue with its implementation.

The Ministers of Defense tasked SEDM-CC Secretariat to carry out a study to examine the possibility to review content, effectiveness, achieved overall benefits and further purposes of the exercise SEESIM 14, as well as the future financial solutions.

Decision on further conduct of SEESIM exercise will be based on the consultations of interested Member Nations. Pending on the results of the study, the SEDM Ministers may agree on the Croatian proposal to host the Southeastern Europe Simulation (SEESIM) 14 and to organize the exercise by Co-Chairing the effort with Bulgaria.

Ministers of Defense appreciated the report of COMSEEBRIG, Brigadier General Zdravko POPOVSKI, on SEEBRIG activities and achievements following the last SEDM Meeting, they encouraged COMSEEBRIG to seek all available training opportunities as well.

Following this, they approved the HQ SEEBRIG Annual Plan (Main Activities, Training and Travel Plan) for 2013 and SEEBRIG's Budget for the Fiscal Year

2013 recommending keeping the focus on training activities aimed improving the Unit's operational capabilities.

Ministers remain committed to supporting the overarching idea of further efforts needed in order to increase SEEBRIG's operational effectiveness.

Ministers agreed with the result of the COMSEEBRIG-led comparative analysis on the issue of the HQ location to the effect that a Permanent HQ is the most suitable solution. At this stage Bulgaria and Turkey reiterated their proposals to host SEEBRIG HQ on a permanent basis. Other proposals of hosting SEEBRIG HQ are welcomed.

MPFSEE Ministers tasked the PMSC/MPFSEE to establish a High Level Expert Meeting (HLEM) in order to review and amend all aspects related to the Multinational Peace Force Southeast Europe (MPFSEE) Agreement and its additional protocols, effective until 2015, and to develop a set of proposals on SEEBRIG's role, mission and structure based on the conclusions and recommendations of the SEDM Strategic Review. The Chairman will report the outcomes of the HLEM during the next Ministerial Meeting.

SEDM Ministers noted the NCIA' proposals for the cooperation and acquirement of the NCIA services will be examined in the future.

Ministers of Defense confirmed their dedication to the 'open door policy' for the aspirant states that want to be part of the SEDM initiative and whose participation could help to fulfill the SEEBRIG recognized shortfalls and capability gap. In this regard the SEDM Ministers welcomed the intention of the Republic of Serbia to post a liaison officer to SEEBRIG HQ in the course of 2013. It has been also reaffirmed the importance of NATO's and the EU's open door policy and ongoing efforts for peace and stability.

SEDM Ministers took note of the Slovenian non-paper on "Rationalization of Regional Defense Cooperation Endeavors in the South East Europe and Western Balkans". The Minister of Defense of the Republic of Slovenia further elaborated the idea contained in the NON-PAPER to host the Comprehensive Regional Defense Ministerial Meeting in the first week of October 2013. SEDM Ministers in principle support the idea of the NON-PAPER and agreed on further collaboration as required.

SEDM Ministers welcomed the proposal of Slovenia to host the Ministerial Meeting in October 2013. They asked the SEDM-CC Secretariat to update

the meeting calendar in accordance with their decision and approved the joint Statement.

The SEDM Ministers expressed their appreciation to the Minister of Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina, H.E. Muhamed Ibrahimović, for his warm hospitality in hosting this meeting. They also expressed gratitude for the efforts of his staff in preparing and organizing all the details connected with the Ministerial events.