



**SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE DEFENSE MINISTERIAL
COORDINATION COMMITTEE AND
POLITICAL-MILITARY STEERING COMMITTEE
TURKISH CHAIRMANSHIP 2015-2017**

JOINT STATEMENT

**SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE DEFENSE MINISTERIAL (SEDM) DEPUTY CHIEFS
OF DEFENSE (DCHODs) MEETING**

9th June 2016, Sarajevo/BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA

We, the Deputy Chiefs of Defense/General Staff from the SEDM countries:

General Director, Acting Deputy Chief of General Staff, Colonel Ardian BALI

Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina for Operations, Major General Mirko TEPŠIĆ

Deputy Chief of Staff, Major General Plamen ATANASOV

Deputy Chief of Defense, Lieutenant General Drago MATANOVIĆ represented by Director of General Staff CAF Rear Admiral Robert HRANJ

Deputy Chief of Defense, Major General Muhamet RACAJ

1st Deputy Chief of General Staff, Colonel Omar BEGOIDZE

Deputy Chief of the Hellenic National Defense General Staff, Lieutenant General Georgios PARASCHOPOULOS

Deputy Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant General Roberto NORDIO represented by Brigadier General Silvano FRIGERIO

Deputy Chief of General Staff, Colonel Rajko PEŠIĆ,

Deputy Chief of General Staff, Major General Adrian TONEA, represented by Major General Cristinel CERNEA

Deputy Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant General Jovica DRAGANIĆ

Deputy Chief of General Staff, Major General Alan GEDER,

Deputy Chief of General Staff, General Yaşar GÜLER represented by Brigadier General İzzet TEKİN.

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convened in Sarajevo, on the 9th of June 2016, to foster military cooperation in South Eastern Europe in order to further strengthen stability, security and prosperity in the region.

We highly appreciated the encouraging opening remarks by the Deputy Minister of Defense from Sarajevo, H.E. Mr. Sead JUSIĆ and by the Chairman of SEDM-CC/PMSC, H.E. Ambassador Hüseyin MÜFTÜOĞLU.

This being the first DCHODs Meeting since the takeover of the Chairmanship by Ankara from Bucharest in July 2015, we expressed our good wishes to Ankara and the new Chairman of SEDM-CC/PMSC. We also extended our wishes of success to new COMSEEBRIG, Brigadier General Numan YEDİYILDIZ, while expressing our deepest appreciation to the previous Chairman and COMSEEBRIG.

We fully acknowledged the current threats to international peace and security and we condemned all terrorist attacks which recently took place in different parts of the world, voicing our belief that the unbroken chain of terrorist acts gives momentum to the need for an orchestrated and unified move to confront terrorism and extremism.

Also, we noted with great concern the common challenge which many South Eastern European countries face in the form of a humanitarian crisis following the war in Syria and conflicts in Africa. We underlined that the humanitarian crisis is a symptom of this civil strife to which a solution should be found without further delay. We welcomed the united efforts of the countries to alleviate the plight of the refugees, stressing that coordinated efforts and cooperation among the South Eastern Europe countries should be maintained to address the difficulties in face of this humanitarian crisis.

We recognized the achievements and appreciated the work done by the Turkish Chairmanship, presented by the Chairman of SEDM-CC/PMSC in the update on the SEDM projects and way ahead. We noted with appreciation the progress achieved so far in all current projects.

We fully supported the assessment of the Chairman of SEDM-CC/PMSC, indicating that the member nations' commitment to fundamental goal to intensify understanding and political-military cooperation in the South Eastern Europe should be preserved for the purpose of strengthening stability and security in the region and that as the process will mark its 20th Anniversary in 2016, this might constitute a good opportunity for the member nations as well as the Secretariat to seek the means and tools to strengthen the effectiveness of the process. In this respect, efforts made by the PMSC were commended regarding the proposal of offering SEEBRIG to NATO within the Framework Nation Concept in order to promote the visibility and readiness of SEEBRIG.

We welcomed Tbilisi for becoming a full member in the SEDM process and voiced our expectation that Chisinau as well will become full member in the process soon.



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We also welcomed the launching of the permanent SEDM portal which will not only increase the visibility of the process but also constitute a platform where all Nations would share information and documents as quickly and effectively as possible. We expressed our gratitude to Athens and the Secretariat for their joined efforts to make the portal usable in a short period of time.

We appreciated the report of COMSEEBRIG on activities since the last DCHODs meeting, stressing that "SEVEN STARS 2016" exercise will enhance the interoperability with NATO structures and other organizations, and will generate a better understanding of Peace Support Operation, Disaster Relief Operation, and Humanitarian Assistance Operations among SEEBRIG HQ and SEEBRIG affiliated units.

We welcomed the update regarding SEEBRIG participation in "SEESIM-16" exercise and acknowledged COMSEEBRIG's call to the member nations to consider offering the Battalion-size module and host the exercise in 2017, as important tool through which SEEBRIG tests and validates its concepts and procedures and assesses its capabilities and readiness in all aspects.

We appreciated the very good results of all the SEEBRIG Evaluation Visits conducted so far and expressed gratitude to the nations involved for their great hospitality and support.

It was emphasized that SEEBRIG has proven itself as a valuable asset and an efficient platform for collaboration among the participating nations, and became a role model for other countries during all these years. In this regard, we expressed our support for the cooperation between SEEBRIG, LITPOLUKR Brigade and other regional organizations.

We recognized the importance of the efforts to enhance SEEBRIG effectiveness as a mechanism to actively contribute to security, cooperation and stability within the SEDM Process in general, and particularly related to seeking the most appropriate ways for engagement of SEEBRIG in various activities, including training and operations. The consolidation and optimization of SEEBRIG relationship with international organizations, especially with NATO were underlined.

Through the presentations of the national views on the way ahead, we reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening military cooperation in South Eastern Europe.

We acknowledged the importance of peace and security in the wider South East Europe region and emphasized the need for respect of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all SEDM member countries.

We reiterated our expectation that Sarajevo joins, as early as possible, the other PMSC nations and stressed that inclusion of Sarajevo in PMSC will make an important contribution to SEEBRIG capabilities.



We followed with great interest the update given by Bucharest on the status of "SEESIM-16" exercise, appreciating Bucharest's efforts in hosting the exercise, and encouraged all SEDM nations to actively take part in the future SEESIM exercises, which remains to be the only exercise under SEDM process.

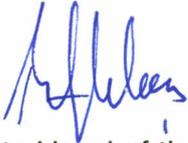
With regard to the location of the SEEBRIG HQ, we thanked Skopje and Athens for their proposals to host the SEEBRIG HQ, stressing that it is necessary to determine host nations after 2017 as soon as possible based on the criteria regulated in MPFSEE Agreement. We expressed our respect to the right for all PMSC nations to host the HQ SEEBRIG. We noted the Secretariat's efforts aimed at finding a solution acceptable to all parties.

We welcomed the coming into force of the 5th Additional Protocol to the MPFSEE Agreement on 15th of September 2015 and expressed our support for the efforts of the Secretariat on revising the MPFSEE Agreement, especially to accelerate the decision making process and to simplify the general procedures related to the conduct of SEEBRIG activities.

We recognized the newly approved DCHODs Meeting Plan until 2030 and we expressed our gratitude to Podgorica for offering to host the 2017 DCHODs Meeting, the exact date of which will be communicated in due time.

We expressed our appreciation for the presence of the representatives of Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) and for the contribution of the representative of RACVIAC- Center for Security Cooperation. We appreciate the activities of these regional organizations with the aim to enhance the security cooperation in the SEE region.

We expressed our gratitude to the Ministry of Defense from Sarajevo for the warm hospitality and to all officials for their tireless efforts in preparing the annual SEDM Deputy Chiefs of Defense Meeting.



Deputy Head of the Secretariat
MAJ Barış AKBAŞ



Chairman of SEDM-CC/PMSC
Amb. Hüseyin MÜFTÜOĞLU

