

JOINT STATEMENT
BY THE MINISTERS OF DEFENCE OF:
THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA,
THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA,
THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC,
THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC,
MONTENEGRO,
THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

CONCERNING

THE ADRIATIC IONIAN INITIATIVE (ADRION)

We, the Ministers of Defence of the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Croatia, the Hellenic Republic, the Italian Republic, Montenegro and the Republic of Slovenia, met in Venice, on the 07th of October 2024.

Aware of the long-standing collaboration among the Member States of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, based on mutual respect and in accordance with international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Aware of the positive results achieved by ADRION, we emphasize its twentieth anniversary, celebrating two decades of efforts and commitments to improve maritime safety and increase situational awareness and deep understanding in the Adriatic-Ionian basin.

ADRION – conscious that also through its operative component, the ‘On Call Maritime Force’ (OCMF) – has proven to be a credible tool in:

- promoting training, integration, capability development, mutual knowledge and expertise exchange, and trust building;
- providing a credible naval presence in the Adriatic-Ionian region, when activated;
- attaining Maritime Security and expertise over the regional maritime environment.

Approved during the ADRION Ministerial meeting in Venice on the 7th of October 2024.

Considering the effectiveness of ADRION, which in the last twenty years has successfully contributed to the integration and interoperability of the Navies in the Adriatic-Ionian area, we are confident that the Initiative can further evolve to achieve tangible objectives, consistent with the geostrategic situation, and from this evolution extend to other domains and dimensions.

Led by our determination to further strengthen our cooperation, we ask the ADRION Chiefs of Navies to develop any possible initiative aimed to improve ADRION effectiveness and visibility through:

- implementing cooperative training to achieve high common standards, with particular emphasis on Maritime Security and the protection of Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC);
- enhancing the concept of the On-Call Maritime Force (OCMF) with a potential orientation for employment and offering it to major International Organizations (IOs), especially NATO and EU, thereby promoting Maritime Security in the Adriatic-Ionian region through scheduled OCMF activations;
- deepening the dialogue on the underwater dimension with a focus on the Adriatic-Ionian region, in light of common interests in safeguarding critical underwater infrastructure;
- seeking common capability solutions to address renewed geostrategic needs;
- examining the possibility of synergies with other fora that support security issues in the Adriatic-Ionian area and the Western Balkans region, while also endorsing the importance of freedom of navigation in the Mediterranean for the sake of the Region's prosperity;
- fostering the sharing of capabilities, laying the groundwork for enabling higher-level cooperation in closely related areas to identify and develop common requirements and reduce overall costs;
- enhancing, through a wide-step approach, common Maritime Situational Awareness, utilizing to the fullest extent existing tools, such as the Virtual-Regional Maritime Traffic Centre;

- exploring any additional field of activity, of common interest, which may benefit from being dealt within ADRION (inter alia, counter pollution).

Reckoning the importance of holding regular meetings to exchange different views and perspectives, we have decided to meet up at least biannually, preferably during the Trans-Regional Seapower Symposium in Venice. Additionally, aware of the importance of monitoring the timeline of our commitments, the Chiefs of Navy Staff and/or the Directors for Defense Policies will conduct intermediate meetings, preferably during the annual ADRION Exercises, hosted by the annually rotating Presidency.