

**DECLARATION  
OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF WATER MANAGEMENT  
OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO  
THE DANUBE RIVER PROTECTION CONVENTION  
AND  
THE CONVENTION FOR PROTECTION OF THE BLACK SEA AGAINST POLLUTION  
ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF COOPERATION  
(Bucharest, 23 February 2007)**

The Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, the Environmental and Water Management of Austria, Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina,, Minister of Environment and Water of Bulgaria, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Croatia, Deputy Minister of Environment of the Czech Republic, Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany, Minister of Environment and Water of Hungary, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Moldova, Ministry of Environment and Water Management of Romania, Minister Coordinator of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Serbia, Minister of Environment of Slovak Republic, Minister of Environmental Protection of Ukraine, Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning of Slovenia, Minister of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia, Minister of Natural Resources of Russian Federation, Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Turkey and the European Commission

*We the Ministers, High Officials and the Member of the European Commission being responsible for the implementation of the Danube River Protection Convention and the Black Sea Protection Convention are committed to strengthen the water and aquatic environment protection activities undertaken in the Danube region and to increase the cooperation and efforts for protection of the marine waters and marine environment of the Black Sea,*

*Valuing* the social and economic benefits of the goods and services that Danube River and its tributaries and the Black Sea waters and coasts provide;

*Acknowledging* the vulnerability and historical damage of related ecosystems by pollution and other consequences of human activities;

*Recognizing* the recent signs of environmental recovery in the Danube and Black Sea ecosystems that have come about through both reduced economic activity and active policies and actions;

*Expressing* desire to continue these trends of reduced pollution for nutrients and hazardous substances at the same time as achieving economic growth;

*Taking note* of the existing cooperation between ICPDR (full wording) and ICPBS (full wording) in the frame of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2001 and expressing the intention to strengthen and build upon this cooperation;

*Acknowledging* the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU on 1 January 2007 and to the fact that the EU now directly borders the Black Sea;

*Emphasizing* that strengthening relations of Black Sea countries with the European Commission in the environmental field, would create an additional impetus for the Black Sea protection and increased cooperation with other regional organizations;

*Reconfirming* the commitment of Danube countries to implement the Water Framework Directive and to develop a Danube River Basin Management Plan by 2009;

*Fully aware* of the fact that, the coastal area of the Black Sea, will be a sensitive area due to eutrophication, the entire Danube Basin will be required to apply more stringent measures regarding nutrient pollution

*Equally aware* of the importance Danube and the Black Sea have in the field of transportation and other branches of the economies of the Danube and Black Sea countries;

*Realising* that the future challenges for water management will become even more difficult to resolve when faced with the consequences of human-induced changes of the global and regional climate. These consequences will also be severe in the Danube and Black Sea region.

*Expressing* support for other solutions for reducing nutrient pollution such as measures for the introduction of phosphate-free detergents;

*Acknowledge* that apart from the Danube River, there are other tributaries to the Black Sea which are inputting nutrients and hazardous substances; and encourage their basin states to join common efforts to reduce pollution loads to the Black Sea;

*Recognizing* the important contribution to building regional cooperation and improving pollution control that the UNDP GEF Danube Regional Project and Black Sea Ecosystem Recovery Project have provided;

*Being aware* of the huge financial resources necessary for achieving the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive and implementation of measures under the Danube River Basin Management Plan;

Acknowledging in this respect the work undertaken by the DABLAS Task Force to improve financing of priority projects in the region.

*Fully recognising* the importance of financing implementation of EC water quality legislation in the EU Member States through the use of EC structural and cohesion funds

*Considering* that a continued coordination of the activities undertaken by all Danube countries is needed to have the maximum water environment improvements with the lowest costs;

Express appreciation of the valued support from international financial institutions, international and regional organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, other stakeholders and major groups for assisting in achieving this goal;

Welcome the initiative of the Council of Europe to create a Black Sea Euroregion in order to further stimulate the democratic process in the area, promote good governance and strengthen security and stability, as well as to promote sustainable development.

Being aware of risks stemming from floods and accidental pollution leading often to massive damages and losses often with transboundary effect.

Confirm a strong commitment to the implementation of the ICPDR Action Programme for sustainable flood prevention in the Danube River Basin and willingness to use all efforts to draft the action plans for sub-basins identifying key flood protection problems and programs of measures by 2009

*Highlighting* that, despite commitments of all countries towards mitigation of climate change through reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, countries must start preparing adaptation strategies to address the climate-induced changes which will not be mitigated. The international commissions in the Danube and the Black Sea should take a leading role in assessing the impacts of climate change in the region and coordinating adaptation measures related to impacts on the freshwater and marine environment.

Emphasize the necessity of a close cooperation in prevention and mitigation of pollution accidents including timely distribution of warning information via the Danube Accident Emergency Warning System;

*Confirm* their strong commitment to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the protection of the environment in the Danube and Black Sea Region by:

- promoting new activities for the sustainable development in the context of both Danube and Black Sea Conventions and WFD implementation, starting with the development of the Programme of measures in 2007;
- disseminating the results of the UNDP/GEF project concerning i.a. the reduction of nutrients pollution within the Danube River Basin;

- agreeing on the necessity to intensify the efforts of cooperation in the Danube River Basin to maintain the important progress that has been made and to continue to serve as a model for other regions of the world now when the UNDP/GEF project is finished;
- promoting the integration of regional priorities into national programmes and facilitating the co-ordinated and efficient use of funding instruments at national, EU and international level in particular by providing a comprehensive and integrated vision of the priorities for environmental investments directed towards protection of the aquatic environment;

*Undertake to further* enhance the co-operation between the Danube and Black Sea countries, the International commissions for the protection of the Danube and the Black Sea, the Danube Cooperation Process, as well as the other regional initiatives in the field of Danube and Black Sea protection and sustainable development, ICPDR and the Black Sea Commission, as well as other regional initiatives aimed at enforcing solidarity in the field of Danube River and Black Sea protection and reconfirm the long-term and intermediate goal of the Danube Black Sea Memorandum of Understanding;

Agree to utilize to the maximum extent possible the new European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) as tool for addressing Black Sea problems as well as to utilize the new IPA instrument to address water related issues in the candidate and potential candidate countries

Agree to continue to cooperate under the DABLAS Task Force to ensure that priority projects obtain financing

*Underline* the importance of an enhanced co-operation on joint scientific-technical researches and programs, elaboration and execution of co-operation projects, exchange of scientific and technical information, exchange of officials, experts, researchers and representatives of non-governmental organizations, organizing training programs, meetings, conferences and symposia;

Welcome organization of the second Joint Danube Survey in 2007 as an excellent example of a basin-wide cooperation towards a good status of the Danube water;

*Express* their gratitude to the Government and the people of Romania for the warm hospitality extended to them during the Meeting.