

**EIGHT MEETING OF THE PARTIES
TO THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT
ON THE SAVA RIVER BASIN
Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina), October 24, 2019**

DRAFT DECLARATION

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DECLARATION

WE, THE PARTIES TO THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON THE SAVA RIVER BASIN, gathered in Sarajevo on October 24, 2019, for our Eighth Meeting, *recall* the vital importance of regional cooperation and coordination of the Parties,

Conscious of the great importance of the Sava River Basin, its environment and natural resources for the economic and social prosperity, as well as the crucial importance of regional cooperation and coordination in line with the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (hereinafter: FASRB), aiming at sustainable development of the Sava River Basin,

Recognizing the benefits that the Parties can gain from, and harms that can be avoided or mitigated as a result of the cooperation of the Parties through and within the International Sava River Basin Commission (hereinafter: Sava Commission),

Reaffirming our political commitment to cooperate on the basis of, and in accordance with, the EU legislation in the field of water and inland waterway transport relevant for achieving the objectives of the FASRB and its protocols,

Bearing in mind the commitment of the Parties expressed in the “Declaration from the Seventh Meeting of the Parties”, held in Bled (Slovenia) on June 7, 2018, declare the following:

Considering the cooperation in the Sava River Basin, We

- *Appreciate* the efforts of the Parties, the Sava Commission and its Secretariat and expert bodies in the implementation of the FASRB and *acknowledge* the significant overall progress towards the achievement of the jointly agreed objectives set by the FASRB and its protocols that has been made in the reporting period,
- *Having considered* the Seventh Country Reports on implementation of the FASRB and work of the Sava Commission, *accept* the “Report on implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin for the period from April 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019”,

Considering the significant progress made in integrated water management, We

- *Approve* the “Flood Risk Management Plan in the Sava River Basin” (Sava FRM Plan) enclosed in Annex 1 of this “Declaration”, as a milestone in the cooperation of the Parties leading towards fulfilment of one of the main objectives of the FASRB – *to prevent or limit hazards and reduce and eliminate adverse consequences from floods*,
- *Acknowledging* active participation and contribution to its development, *welcome* approval of the Sava FRM Plan by Montenegro,
- *Commit ourselves* to making our best efforts to implement the Summary of Measures that is an integral part of the Sava FRM Plan, in order to contribute to meeting the common objectives – avoidance of new flood risks, reduction of existing flood risks during and after the floods, strengthening resilience, raising awareness about flood risks and implementing

solidarity principle, while being aware of the existing differences between the Parties – EU member states and non-EU member states,

- Although the measures are the responsibility of the Parties, we *request* the Sava Commission to provide all necessary assistance to the Parties in communication with relevant international institutions, in order to find out more opportunities and mechanisms for funding implementation of the measures on the basin-wide level,
- *Having in mind* data gaps and uncertainties in the Sava FRM Plan, we *commit ourselves* to making additional efforts to ensure adequate resources for continuation of the activities coordinated by the Sava Commission in the next cycle of the flood risk management planning, starting with the update of the joint Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment in the Sava River Basin,
- *Encourage* the Sava Commission to continue and further enhance the dialogue with relevant stakeholders from the emergency management sector established within the development of the Sava FRM Plan,
- *Welcome* the establishment of the “Flood Forecasting and Warning System in the Sava River Basin” (Sava FFWS) as a mature and reliable platform for operational hydrological forecasting at both national and international level in the Sava River Basin and *acknowledge* a great work of the Sava Commission and all institutions and individuals who took part in the process of its establishment,
- *Welcome* signing of the “Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation on regular functioning and maintenance of the Sava Flood Forecasting and Warning System” as a basis for sustainable functioning of the Sava FFWS, and *support* efforts of the Parties and the Sava Commission to ensure adequate human and financial resources for further developments of the Sava FFWS,
- *Recognizing* significant progress made towards the preparation of the 2nd Sava River Basin Management Plan, *reconfirm* our strong commitment to ensure adequate human and financial resources for the further development of the Plan and *request* the Sava Commission to continue related fund-raising efforts,
- *Emphasizing* the importance of sustainable development in the basin, *encourage* the Sava Commission to continue already established dialogue with relevant stakeholders from the navigation, hydropower, agriculture, nature conservation and other relevant sectors, for further integration of the economic, social and environmental aspects into the river basin management planning,
- *Reconfirm our commitment* to undertake *final harmonization* of the Protocol on Emergency Situations to the FASRB, taking into account its significance for the implementation of the FASRB.

Considering rehabilitation and development of navigation, We

- *Reconfirm* our commitment to rehabilitate and develop navigation on the Sava River and its navigable tributaries being aware of its importance for further economic and social development of the region while *respecting* applicable environmental legislation as well as the Joint Statement on Guiding Principles for the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin (Joint Statement),

- *Underline* the need for an urgent complete demining of the Sava River banks, with special emphasis on the planned worksites for the waterway rehabilitation and maintenance, bearing in mind that demining of those locations is a prerequisite for carrying out the necessary examinations for the preparation of the project documentation and that possible delays in demining activities can have a very negative impact on already started activities on the waterway rehabilitation,
- *Welcome* the progress in the fairway rehabilitation on critical sectors in Republic of Serbia including the preparatory activities for the rehabilitation of the sector Drina Confluence,
- *Welcome* the beginning of the development of necessary documentation for the rehabilitation of the fairway sector Novi Grad, and accordingly *express satisfaction* with the establishment of the Stakeholders Forum in the framework of this activity as the significant step forward in the implementation of the Joint Statement,
- Although the planned measures on the rehabilitation and development of navigation on the Sava River are the responsibility of the Parties, *request* the Sava Commission to continue providing assistance to the Parties in communication with relevant international institutions, in order to find out more opportunities and mechanisms for supporting and funding of activities related to the rehabilitation and development of navigation on the Sava River and in monitoring and coordination of their implementation,
- *Support* the use of harmonized border control forms for the vessels in the Sava River basin, which is aimed at simplification, harmonisation and digitalisation of administrative processes in Sava navigation through the application of harmonised arrival and departure reports, crew lists as well as passenger lists,

Being aware of importance of the cross-cutting issues in the Sava River Basin, We

- *Encourage* the Sava Commission and the Parties to undertake further activities related to the climate change adaptation in the basin, recognizing the likely consequences of climate change on the water regime in the Sava River Basin and the need for effective adaptation measures,
- *Welcome* development and delivery to the Parties of the hydrologic model for the Sava River basin and the hydraulic model for the Sava River, and *commit ourselves* to take necessary activities for further enhancement of the models to increase their utility for the various purposes of the joint activities,
- *Express satisfaction* with the extraordinary progress made in regard to data and information exchange in the basin, *commit ourselves* to undertake all activities necessary to secure the proper functioning and maintenance of the Sava GIS and Sava HIS and *strongly support* their further upgrades, including the integration of the navigation-related applications,
- *Acknowledge* the work of the Sava Commission undertaken following the adoption of “Joint Plan of Actions for the Sava River Basin” as a coordinated program of multipurpose and integrated interventions to strengthen overall river basin management planning, improve navigability, enhance flood risk management, develop sustainable tourism, protect the environment and adapt to climate change, and support further activities to this regard,
- *Welcome* efforts of the Sava Commission in development of sustainable tourism in the Sava River Basin as a significant tool in the promotion of economic benefits, and strongly support further activities to this regard,

- *Welcome* messages from the 8th Youth Parliament of the Sava River Basin delivered at this Meeting. In this regard, we *express* satisfaction with further involvement of young generation through the partnership with schools on the national and transboundary level as proposed by the International conference of teachers “Living with water”, held back to back to the 8th Youth Parliament,

In closing remarks, We

- *Express* appreciation to donors, relevant partner organizations and all other contributors for supporting the work of the Sava Commission and *hope* for their support and cooperation in the future activities of the Sava Commission,
- *Express* gratitude to stakeholders for their participation in the activities on the basin wide level and *welcome* their further involvement in the future relevant processes,
- *Express* gratitude to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina for having hosted the Eight Meeting of the Parties and *announce* the next meeting of the Parties to be held in Croatia in 2021.