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**CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON THE
PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE CARPATHIANS**

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SECOND MEETING
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Item 10 of the provisional annotated agenda

**ELEMENTS FOR THE MINISTERIAL
DECLARATION**

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Second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

We, the Ministers and High Representatives of the seven Parties to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (hereafter Carpathian Convention), the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine, held our Second Meeting in Bucharest, Romania on 19 June 2008;

Recalling Resolution 62/196 of the General Assembly of the United Nations of 30 November 2007, which “notes with appreciation the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, adopted and signed by the seven countries of the region to provide a framework for cooperation and multisectoral policy coordination, a platform for joint strategies for sustainable development and a forum for dialogue between all involved stakeholders,”

Reaffirming the commitment to implement the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals as contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration as the overall policy frameworks for sustainable development;

Recalling also the Ministerial Declaration of the Belgrade Conference, which welcomed “the mountain partnerships within and between the Alps, the Carpathians, the South-Eastern European mountain region, the Caucasus and the mountain regions of Central Asia”, recognized “the benefits from the existing legally binding instruments for the protection and sustainable development of the mountain regions like the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention”, welcomed “the initiative of South-Eastern European and Caucasian countries to develop such instruments”, and encouraged the Mountain Partnership “to promote and foster exchanges of experience and expertise with other mountain regions in the world”;

Reaffirming the commitments made in the Carpathian Declaration on the occasion of the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties of 13 December 2006, in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Have expressed the following:

We express our satisfaction with the ratification by all seven Carpathian countries of the Carpathian Convention;

We take note of the Progress Report by the Secretariat, and the Report of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee on the results and progress achieved in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, and the reports and outcomes of the six Working Groups which had been established under the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee;

We highly welcome the adoption and signature of the Protocol on Biological and Landscape Diversity, the permanent arrangement of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas and the

progress achieved by the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI), contributing to the implementation of the Protocol;

We welcome the Vision and Strategies for the Carpathian Area as a strategic basis for the future sustainable development of the Carpathian region, in particular the contribution spatial planning makes to integrate European Spatial Development policies with the management of the Carpathians' fragile ecosystems;

We appreciate the progress made in the integration of water resources and land use planning made in cooperation with the ICPDR and the Ramsar Convention, and welcome the successful work of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative as a partnership established in the framework of the Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions resulting in concrete action on the ground;

We note with appreciation the establishment of a regional platform for sustainable agriculture and rural development in the Carpathian region in the framework of the SARD-M Project and the Adelboden Group, including further promotion of innovative approaches for the payment of environmental services, resulting of the fruitful cooperation with the FAO;

We welcome the recommendation for the development of a Protocol on Sustainable Forestry under the Carpathian Convention, aiming at enhancing and facilitating the cooperation of the Parties for the protection and sustainable management of Carpathian forests, in cooperation with the FAO, the MCPFE, the Padua University and the European Network of Mountain Forests;

We welcome the recommendation for the development of a Protocol on Sustainable Transport undertaken with the support of the European Academy (EURAC) and the Central European Initiative (CEI), aiming at assuring the functionality of transport networks, improved accessibility and safety while limiting environmental impact and promoting management systems for sustainable transport;

We appreciate the preparatory work for the development of a Protocol on Sustainable Tourism undertaken with the support of CEEWEB;

We welcome the Carpathian renewable energy partnership and programme for a regional competence network established in cooperation with UNIDO and the FAO, which should promote sustainable use and production of renewable energy while ensuring environmental sustainability, limiting environmental impact and improving energy efficiency of local consumption;

We support the development of an Inventory of Carpathian Heritage as well as a programme of practical activities in support of Carpathian heritage, serving for maintaining Carpathian Unity and Identity;

We recognize the important support provided by the EU INTERREG III B CADSES "Carpathian Project" for the achievement of this progress in the implementation of the convention's goals, and we call upon the relevant European Union programmes, including those of the European Regional Development Fund, to support the recommendations of the Carpathian Project and the follow-up projects prioritized in the framework of the Carpathian Convention;

We appreciate the activities of the interim Secretariat provided by UNEP in Vienna in servicing the Carpathian Convention and leading the Carpathian Project, and we call upon the interim Secretariat to further support the Convention's implementation by coordinating follow-up activities and projects;

We take note of the important role of the Carpathian Convention as a platform for transnational cooperation for the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians for the participating countries of Central and Eastern Europe, providing the single framework for the implementation of Pan-Carpathian activities in the Carpathian region, linking the different programmes of structural funds and regional development of the European Territorial Cooperation;

We underline the importance of continuing the structural support for the Carpathian region, and re-iterate our call for the creation of a stand-alone “Carpathian Space” Programme of the European Regional Development Funds, following the successful example of the Alpine Space programme, supporting the general objectives of the Carpathian Convention, and mandate the interim Secretariat to undertake all necessary steps to ensure the development of the “Carpathian Space” programme ;

We underline the importance of participation of the regional and local authorities as well as stakeholders in the Carpathian Convention, in order to ensure that the local people of the Carpathians benefit from its implementation, and call upon the interim Secretariat to continue its cooperation with the Aarhus Convention Secretariat in the implementation of the Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums;

We note that accelerated investment and enhanced business activities will be required that have a net positive environmental and social impact for the environment to ensure the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, welcome Carpathian Opportunity initiative of the WWF, and call upon the private sector, business and local entrepreneurs to seize this unique opportunity to promote and support development, generating new job opportunities coupled with social opportunities and environmental promotion;

We express our gratitude to the Government of Austria for its support to the Carpathian Convention, notably by continuing to host and co-finance the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention on an interim basis;

We appreciate the continued support of the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, and the efficient cooperation and partnership with UNEP, the European Academy EURAC in Bolzano, Italy, and the Regional Environmental Centre (REC);

We express our gratitude to Switzerland for supporting the Carpathian Convention implementation through its contribution for EU enlargement;

We re-iterate our invitation to the European Community to accede to the Carpathian Convention;

We appreciate the signature of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions and the Convention on Biological Diversity, using the Carpathian Convention as a regional framework to support the implementation of the CBD in the Carpathian region;

We take note with concern of the outcomes of the Padua Conference on mountains as early indicators of climate change, and emphasize the need of a coordinated approach for coping with this global challenge within the Carpathian region;

We express our satisfaction with the Carpathian Convention joining the Mountain Partnership, and emphasize our readiness to experience-sharing with other mountains regions of the world such as in the Balkans, in the Andes, the Hindu-Kush-Karakorum-Himalaya Region and the Atlas mountains;

We reaffirm our commitment to faithfully implement the Carpathian Convention;

We welcome the offer of the Government of to host the 3rd Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention in

We express our gratitude to the Government of Romania for having hosted the 2nd Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention, and we wish to thank it and the Romanian people for the warm hospitality that we have received.

Done in Bucharest, Romania, 19 June 2008