

Statement for the Ministerial meeting, Bucharest, Romania, 23 February 2007

Dear Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Honorable Guests,

I would like to express a great gratitude to Romanian hosts for organizing of this wonderful event.

As a Danubian country Moldova is especially interested in continuation of regional initiatives as an integrated part of common efforts to protect our common river. For years all Danube countries worked hard on further development of a constructive cooperation within the basin. It demonstrated that we need to cooperate in order to find the best solutions for improvement of the state of water ecosystems, cooperate in case of emergencies and that the ICPDR is really a good platform for negotiations, collaboration, development, planning of different activities and thus contributes to the further progress in the region.

The implementation of the Water Framework Directive was and remains a key activity in the Republic of Moldova. Development of the provisions of this document was and is an actual issue for the ICPDR and all contracting parties. In spite of Moldova is not an EU country we assume responsibilities for the development of the Integrated River Basin management plan for our part of the Danube basin as a part of the provisions presumed in the EU-Moldova Action Plan. Certainly we face with a lot of problems on this way, but in cooperation with EU, ICPDR, member states we shall continue our efforts in this domain. We do believe that the ICPDR will strongly contribute to further development of the Prut initiative, especially in the non-EU countries, which recently became good neighbors of the EU trough the Prut river.

Another important element in cooperation in the Danube basin is involvement of the NGO and business community in the development of the river management plans. In this context I would like to mention an NGO & business Forum held in Chisinau last year, a number of conferences organized in Moldova on involvement of public institutions and NGOs in WFD implementation process. These events, lead toward building a new dialogue between the governmental, non-governmental and private sector that play an important role in the implementation of the WFD as well as the Danube Convention provisions in Moldova.

During the Presidency of the Republic of Moldova in the ICPDR in 2006 a significant efforts were made in the field of sub-basin cooperation through development of the Prut initiative and Danube Delta with involvement of Romania, Moldova, Ukraine and different International Institutions. These initiatives aim at strengthening the cooperation between Lower Danubian countries in order to facilitate and harmonize the better implementation of WFD provisions in the

region especially the elaboration and implementation of the Integrated Management Plan for the entire Danube river basin.

Celebration of the Danube Day is an important element for rising of public awareness on environmental issues. The Danube Day in Moldova in the year of 2006 was celebrated in the transboundary context. In Moldova it turned from a Danube Day into the Danube Week involving thousands of people from both sides of the Prut river. This was a wonderful possibility to gather people from different fields of activities, ages, visions and to rise their awareness on the Danube, its problems and plans for the future development making them feeling united by our common River – blue Danube.

Dear colleges.

I would also like to mention an essential role of the UNDP\GEF Danube Regional Project that continued during the last 5 years and that now is coming to the end. We want to bring our appreciation and thanks to UNDP/GEF and Project team for their useful and fruitful work for the Danube and its people. This support was essential for the ICPDR and contracting parties activities. We do hope that on the base of the outcomes of the project we shall be able to develop a lot of new useful activities for our river in future.

We totally support presented Declaration and do believe that it could become a good starting point for further activities in the Danube basin and lead to further improvement of basin cooperation in different domains.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to address to Romania, country which overtook the Presidency in the ICPDR in 2007, together with the beginning of its membership in European Union. We would like to congratulate our Romanian and Bulgarian colleges with this event and to wish them a further success in their efforts in continuation of activities started with the Presidency of other countries in the ICPDR. We all are sure in further development and enriching of good traditions in the Danube basin and wish to our Romanian colleges great success in implementation of all planned activities in the year of 2007.

Thank you for attention

Constantin Mihailescu,
Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Moldova,
ICPDR President in 2006