

**JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ**  
**Meeting of the Partnership Commission of the U.S.-Adriatic Charter**  
**Zagreb, 15-16 December 2016**

1. We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and the Representative of the United States of America, have convened in Zagreb, on 15-16 December 2016, under the chairmanship of the Republic of Croatia, at the meeting of the U.S.–Adriatic Charter Partnership Commission.
  
2. We also warmly welcome the participation of Kosovo\*<sup>i</sup>, the Republic of Serbia and Republic of Slovenia, as the observers at our meeting. We welcome the observers in the spirit of openness and inclusiveness of our Charter, while expressing our willingness to explore new ways of cooperation within the Charter. In this context, Kosovo\*’s official request to join the Charter remains a pending issue. We look forward that this issue will be resolved and we will be able to provide an answer during the next 12 months. In addition, we welcome the recent agreement on NATO’s enhanced interaction with Kosovo\*. We reaffirm that the door of the U.S.-Adriatic Charter remains open and will seek to fully include all observers to the extent possible in Adriatic Charter events.
  
3. We have discussed and assessed the current political situation in the South East Europe as well as the security challenges, with the special outlook on the Euro-Atlantic integration process in South East Europe. Furthermore, we shared our views on the current and future prospect of cooperation and enlargement of the Charter. It is our strong belief that the doors of the full membership of the Charter should remain open for all those from the

South East Europe that can contribute to the stability and security of this region.

4. We welcome the participation of all countries from the region in the Global anti-ISIL Coalition and believe that the serious security challenges linked with the fight against Islamic terrorism and the returning of foreign fighters, should be an important point of emphasis in shaping the Charter's agenda and program of activities.
5. We stay committed to peaceful, stable and prosperous South East Europe. Dedication to democratic values, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation is of vital importance for the stability and security of this part of the continent, and plays a central role in the Euro-Atlantic integration process.
6. The prospect of NATO and EU membership has helped spread stability and prosperity in the South East Europe. Therefore, we welcome the commitment made by NATO Member States at the Warsaw Summit to pursue the prospect of integration of those countries from South East Europe which aspire to join the Alliance, based on their individual merits.
7. We wholeheartedly welcome and strongly support the outstanding progress Montenegro has made towards full NATO membership. Following the signing of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the Accession of Montenegro in May 2016, we urge all Allies to expeditiously conclude the internal ratification process of the Protocol. We expect that we will be able to welcome Montenegro as a fully-fledged NATO Member in the early 2017, and we are looking forward to it.

8. We strongly support the Republic of Macedonia's aspirations in becoming an Ally and in attaining full membership as soon as possible. Macedonia's membership in NATO is well-founded. We emphasized that integration of the Republic of Macedonia is of crucial importance for the security and stability of the entire South East Europe. We commended the role of the Macedonia in managing the migrant crisis.
9. We welcomed the progress Bosnia and Herzegovina has made in the process of registration of the immovable defence property to the state, at the same time encouraging Bosnia and Herzegovina to accelerate efforts towards meeting the Tallin condition; so that Bosnia and Herzegovina's Membership Action Plan can be activated as soon as possible. We also commended the adoption of the Defence Review by the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
10. We reaffirmed our commitment to international peace and security; and, in particular, the NATO-led mission Resolute Support in Afghanistan, where we are currently working and contributing together. We firmly believe that contributions to international missions and operations help aspirant and partner countries in achieving NATO standards.
11. The transatlantic bond is of an enduring value. With this notion in mind, we reaffirmed the role of the United States of America in supporting the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of the Charter countries, as well as the right of other countries of the South East Europe to chart their own sovereign choice for the future, as indispensable.

12. Albania and Croatia, soon to be joined by Montenegro, along with the United States, stay strongly committed as NATO Members in providing their continuous political support and practical assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia on their Euro-Atlantic path. We also stand ready to support the Euro-Atlantic and European integration efforts of Kosovo\* and Serbia.

13. We extended our gratitude to Croatia for its successful chairmanship of the Charter during 2016. Passing the torch, we expressed our best wishes for success to Macedonia who will take the chairmanship of the U.S.-Adriatic Charter during 2017.

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\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244(1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.