

SAR Round Table in Bulgaria

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The international round table on “Balance of responsibilities of the national and local authorities in solving the problems of search and rescue (SAR) in the SAR responsible area of the Republic of Bulgaria”

The participants of the round table note with respect and gratitude the support of the Regional Administration in Varna, Community of Varna, Bulgarian Port Infrastructure Company, Executive Agency Maritime Administration, Industrial Group Mc Murdo – SAR equipment manufacturer and the hospitality of the Naval Academy “N. Y. Vaptzarov” and consider their invaluable contribution the round table to take place as well as BULSAR involvement to attract the interest of the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) granting information and guidelines in SAR thanks to the Chairman of IMRF captain Michael Vlasto and the Executive Director of IMRF captain Bruce Reid representing best practices in SAR worldwide.

The participants note the following:

Reconfirm the importance of the Memorandum of the round table dated 22/23rd March 2012 “Best Practices for Maritime Search and Rescue” and “Doc. GA41/EC40/REC131/13; RECOMMENDATION-131/2013” of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation where there is a statement noting “The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) recognizes that the need to improve the response time and coordination capabilities for search and rescue (SAR) operations within the Black Sea region not only derives from national and international requirements, but also from the increasing volume of shipping activity in the region. Statistical projections indicate that any potential increase in the number of maritime emergencies and the number of people at risk, and correspondingly in the number of SAR operations, will require preventive management strategies by the Black Sea SAR Authorities.” Based on the above, the participants of the Round Table urge governmental, local authorities and other institutions in the Republic of Bulgaria responsible for the maritime search and rescue, to speed up the application of the outcome of the 2012 Memorandum and PABSEC guidelines;

Urge the Prime Minister as the person responsible as per article 62 (1) and (2) of the Law on the Accident Protection, to order the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technologies, Ministry of Internal Affairs (General Directorate Fire Fighting and Average Protection, Border Police and others in the Ministry of Internal Affairs), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Jurisdiction, Ministry of Defence, specialized maritime non-governmental organizations and maritime trade unions and other administrations concerned with the transport, social and other safety issues in any degree and in particular with the safety of life at sea, protection of the marine environment and critical maritime and coastal infrastructure bearing direct responsibilities to the maritime search and rescue, to undertake quick and adequate measures for prompt application of the practices and outlines of the above quoted 2012 Memorandum;

Actions in that direction should ensure, in short time, effective implementation of the international responsibilities of the Republic of Bulgaria in maritime search and rescue

and harmonization of the national legislation with the International Convention of the United Nations on the Law of Sea 1982, International Convention on the High Seas 1958, IMO Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR-79), ICAO convention on commercial aviation and its annex 12, as well as International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR) of IMO and ICAO;

In order for better coordination between different authorities and administrations to be achieved and in favour of an amendment of the “Universal Emergency Assistance System” of Bulgaria with the maritime section, including Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR), protection of marine environment, critical infrastructure, rendering assistance at sea and salvage of ships in distress recommend parties in the Parliament and Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information technology of the Republic of Bulgaria as authority personally engaged with operational organization and actions in search and rescue at sea, to initiate amendments to the national maritime legislation to be harmonized with the international obligations of the Republic of Bulgaria and follow up of the international maritime and aeronautical search and rescue instruments in which Bulgaria is a party to as stated in the Law of the International Agreements of the Republic of Bulgaria (art. 26) – “The obligations which come from an international agreement in which Bulgaria is a party to should be implemented conscientiously without prejudice to which national competent authority has signed the agreement”

Confirm the readiness of the non-governmental sector (Bulgarian Chamber of Shipping, Bulgarian Shipmasters’ Association, BULSAR, Seafarers’ Trade Union, Ecology Organization and Naval Academy “N. Y. Vapzarov” to participate in the settling down of the above mentioned problems and together with the Community of Varna and Executive Agency Maritime Administration to prepare a feasibility study for accumulation of resources for the recovery of the required means and structure as per the Law on the Maritime Spaces and Inland Waterways and Ports of the Republic of Bulgaria, art. 65 (1) and the Law on the Emergency Protection (art. 2 in the Appendix and § 1. (7) - "Special forces and resources") and especially the search and rescue forces in the Bulgarian search and rescue responsible area including putting back into operation of the salvage ship “Perun” and fire fighting ship “Mizar” as well as training, coordination between different participants in the process and other essential functional obligations and responsibilities.

The participants consider:

Executive Agency Maritime Administration of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology to update the existing “National Search and Rescue Plan 04” and coordinating different authorities and organizations to propose Ordinance of the Council of Ministers for its implementation in the National Emergency Plan

Propose on the grounds of art. 24 of the Act of Establishment of the Council of Ministers and its Administration, implemented with the Ordinance 229 of the Council of Ministers in 2009, representatives of the non-governmental sector such as Bulgarian Shipmasters’ Association, BULSAR and Seafarers’ Trade Union to be included in the Order CM № P-142 / July, 08th 2014 in the interdepartmental group for harmonization of the national legislation concerning a universal emergency system of the Republic of Bulgaria.