

Honourable Ministers, distinguished members of the Delegations, dear colleagues!

Thank you for inviting the ICPDR to the 6th Meeting of the Parties to the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin and thank you for the opportunity to address you on behalf of our Commission.

Let me start with congratulating you for the progress you made over past decade towards sound management of the Sava Basin water resources, combining water management, environmental and economic objectives of the region. I may in particular emphasise the development of a number of protocols to the Framework Agreement, such as the protocol on sediments transport, or on pollution from navigation. Most importantly, however, I may highlight my appreciation for the entering into force of the Protocol on floods protection, the need for which has been underscored by the devastating floods in 2014.

Progress was made towards the update of the first Sava RBM Plan and towards the development of the first Flood Risk Management Plan. This progress is strongly underpinned by your the achievements in developing the Sava GIS and Sava Hydrological Information System. We were proud that the ICPDR – with a small token - also contributed to the development of these tools.

I would also like to emphasise the unique mandate the Framework Agreement gave to your Commission, the ISRBC, in terms of coordination of water management, navigation and sustainable development in the Sava Basin. Balancing the competing requirements of various sectors in water use is not an easy task, but you are doing it very well.

The ICPDR highly appreciates the cooperation with the Sava Commission on the implementation of the Joint Statement on Guiding Principles for Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin; and the significant progress made in dialogue on many projects in the Danube Basin.

The Ministerial Declaration you will adopt today not only acknowledges the progress that the Contracting Parties and the Commission made over past ten years, but primarily provides an excellent framework for of the continued cooperation amongst Sava countries on key challenges in the basin. These challenges include the adaptation to climate change, the improvement of navigation conditions, the expansion of tourism, and others.

Last but not least, let me also praise the Commission and all its partners for the establishment of the Sava Water Council, an important step in lifting up the level of dialogue with Sava Basin Stakeholders towards active public participation in the Sava Commission's activities, plans and policies.

In conclusion, let me express our appreciation for the cooperation between the two Commissions - the Sava Commission and the ICPDR -, which proved to be efficient and mutually enriching, serving all Sava and Danube countries in their efforts to manage the shared rivers and water resources in in a sound and sustainable way.

Hvala na pažnji.