

# Joint Declaration

We, the Ministers of Interior, Chiefs of Police and Chiefs of Customs from the Member States of Southeast European Law Enforcement Center (Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Bulgaria, Hellenic Republic, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Republic of Serbia, and Republic of Turkey), convened in Bucharest, on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SELEC at the high-level Conference on “Strengthening Cooperation in the Fight Against Trans-Border Serious and Organized Crime in Southeast Europe”, to proclaim our shared engagement to strengthen the cooperation in the fight against trans-border serious and organized crime in Southeast Europe

with the joint support of the operational partners of Southeast European Law Enforcement Center (SELEC), namely Interpol, Italian Republic and United States of America

*Knowing* that the trans-border organized crime is an increasing threat to the security and stability of the region

*Stressing* that nowadays challenges of countering crime cannot be addressed by each country individually, but through a synergy of actions from all the actors involved

*Understanding* that the key approach against trans-border organized crime is continuous cooperation in joint investigations, regional operations, and information exchange, and in order to protect our achievements, it is necessary to regularly review, evaluate and coordinate our activities

*Mindful* that the organized criminal groups threaten the socio-economic development, security and political stability of the Southeast European region and the international community

*Recalling our goal* to effectively address trans-border organized crime in full compliance with the mission, objectives and principles of the Convention on the Southeast European Law Enforcement Center (SELEC Convention)

*Affirming* our strong commitment to sustain the capacity of SELEC and its Member States through active contribution to the operational activities

*Taking into consideration* that the role of SELEC must be enhanced in order to strengthen its strategic position as a prominent international partner in the region

*Acknowledging* the necessity to further develop and improve the cooperation in the fight against cross-border organized crime in South Eastern Europe

DECLARE:

*We welcome* the wide-range and results-oriented achievements reached by SELEC in its 20 years, as a key player in the fight against serious and organized crime in the region

*We reconfirm* our commitment to support SELEC in achieving its mission to continue to serve as an efficient platform of cooperation aiming at countering the crime, and we express our readiness to strengthen multilateral cooperation and to take further actions to ensure sustainability and effectiveness of law enforcement actions in the region.

Adopted in Bucharest, on 31<sup>st</sup> of October, 2019