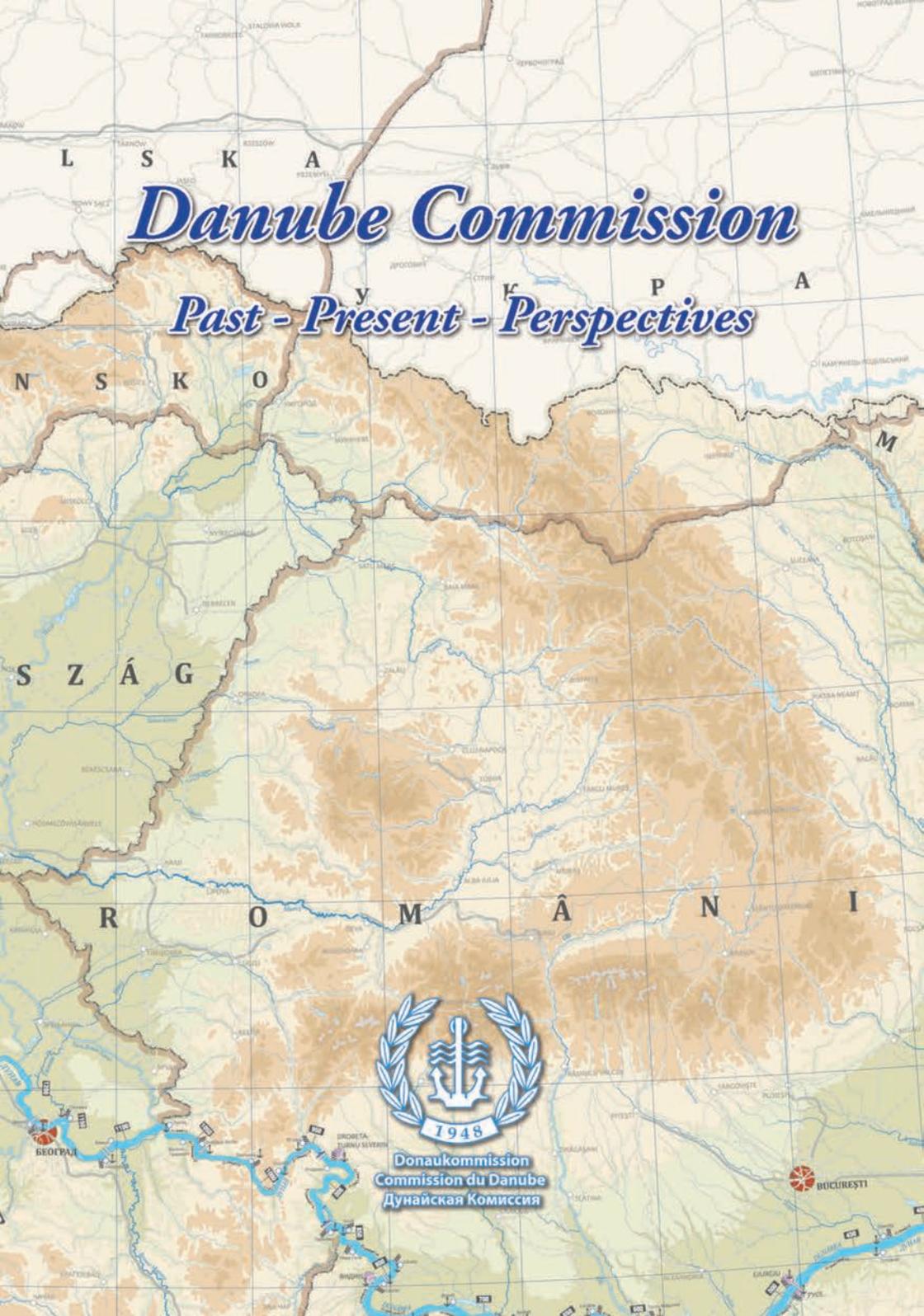


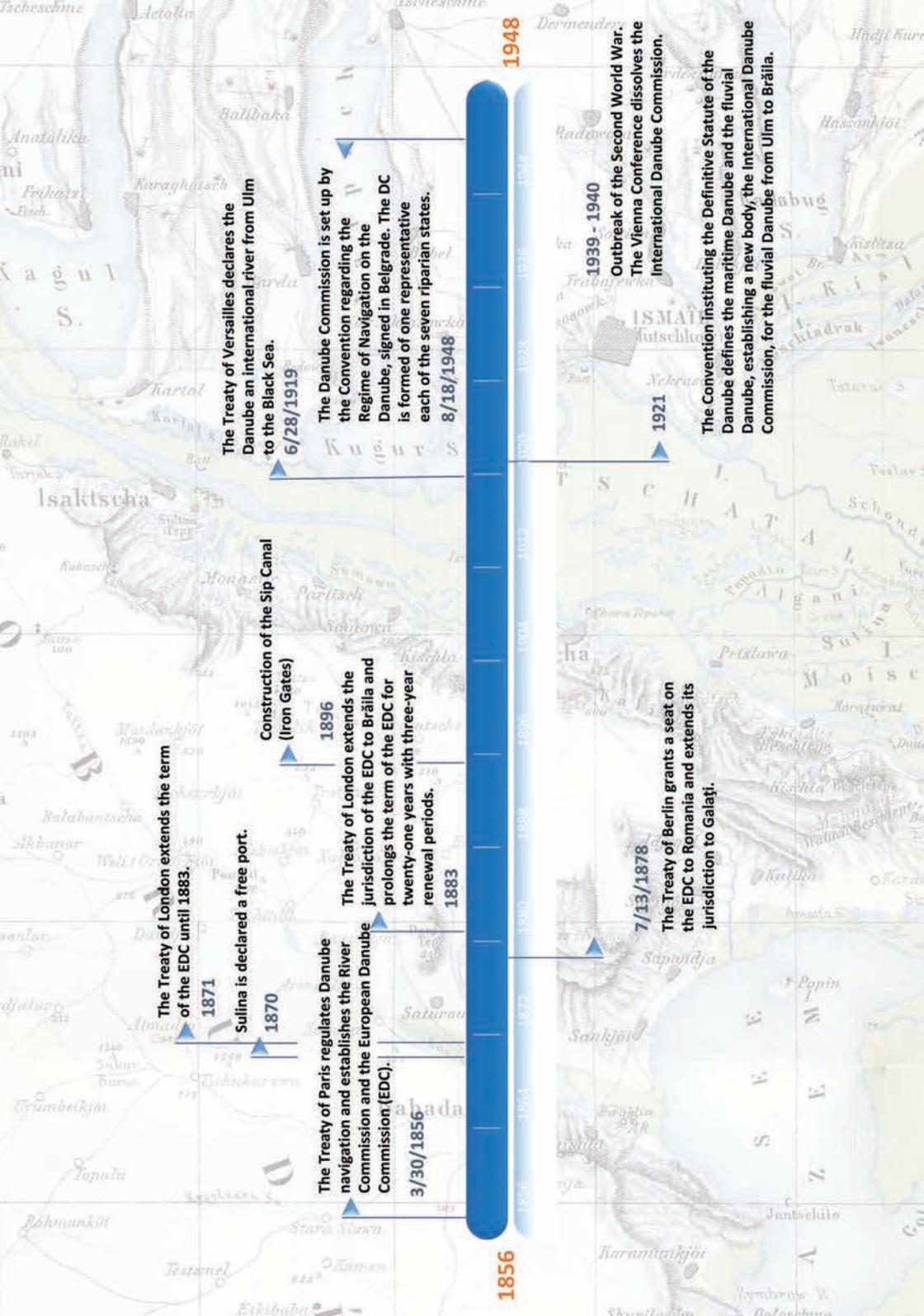
Danube Commission

Past - Present - Perspectives



Donaukommission
Commission du Danube
Дунайская Комиссия





The Treaty of London extends the term of the EDC until 1883.

1871

Sulina is declared a free port.

1870

Construction of the Sip Canal (Iron Gates)

The Treaty of Paris regulates Danube navigation and establishes the River Commission and the European Danube Commission (EDC).

3/30/1856

The Treaty of London extends the jurisdiction of the EDC to Braila and prolongs the term of the EDC for twenty-one years with three-year renewal periods.

1883

The Danube Commission is set up by the Convention regarding the Regime of Navigation on the Danube, signed in Belgrade. The DC is formed of one representative each of the seven riparian states.

8/18/1948

The Treaty of Versailles declares the Danube an international river from Ulm to the Black Sea.

6/28/1919

1856

1948

7/13/1878

The Treaty of Berlin grants a seat on the EDC to Romania and extends its jurisdiction to Galati.

1939 - 1940

Outbreak of the Second World War. The Vienna Conference dissolves the International Danube Commission.

1921

The Convention instituting the Definitive Statute of the Danube defines the maritime Danube and the fluvial Danube, establishing a new body, the International Danube Commission, for the fluvial Danube from Ulm to Braila.

The Danube Commission

Historical background

Taking into consideration its historical predecessors, the European Danube Commission and the International Danube Commission, the current Danube Commission (DC) counts among the oldest international organizations in Europe. On 18th March 1856, seven countries (Russia, Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, Sardinia and Turkey) signed the Treaty of Paris, regulating the principles of navigation on the Danube and its estuaries.

The Treaty of Paris served as the legal basis for the creation of two Commissions: the European Danube Commission (EDC) and the River Commission, set up as a permanent commission to assume responsibilities related to navigation on the fluvial Danube.

From the second half of the 19th century to the beginning of World War I, shipping on the Danube expanded considerably. In 1921, the Paris Conference, through the Convention instituting the Definitive Status of the Danube signed on 23rd July 1921, re-established navigation on the Danube as unrestricted and open to all flags on a footing of complete equality over the whole navigable course of the river. In 1940, the Vienna Conference, with the participation of representatives from Germany, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Italy, decided to revoke the Paris Convention of 1921.

World War II had a devastating effect on Danube navigation. By 1946, navigation had been partially restored and its volume had increased. In this situation, it was imperative to regulate navigation on the Danube and to create the necessary structures.

An international diplomatic conference to develop a new treaty on Danube navigation was convened. After extensive discussions and negotiations, the representatives of the USSR, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia signed the Convention regarding the Regime of Navigation on the Danube (Belgrade Convention) on 18th August 1948 in Belgrade. The Convention came into force on 11th May 1949.

Tasks and activities

The Danube Commission is an international, intergovernmental organization, established by the Convention regarding the Regime of Navigation on the Danube, signed in Belgrade on 18th August 1948.

The Belgrade Convention is a framework which, in Article 8, defines the tasks to be accomplished by the Danube Commission:

- to prepare a general plan of principal works on the basis of proposals presented by the Danubian States;
- to unify the regulations governing river inspection on the Danube;
- to coordinate the hydrometeorological services on the Danube;
- to harmonize inland navigation rules on the Danube;
- to establish a uniform system of standards on the whole navigable portion of the Danube (signals and pilot services);
- to collect statistical data on Danube navigation;
- to compile and publish reference works;
- to draw up and approve the Commission's budget, and to set and levy charges for special maintenance and improvement works.

In line with these tasks, the Danube Commission pursues efforts related to the harmonization of technical requirements and standards in the different fields of the DC's expertise. At the same time, the Danube Commission seeks to address infrastructure needs and ensure due maintenance.

In order to fulfil these tasks, the Danube Commission works according to its adopted work plan, which includes the concrete activities of the organization as well as cooperation with partner organizations and the participation of representatives of the DC in various forums.

In accordance with the work plan, the focus of the Danube Commission's activities is put on the following aspects:

- nautical issues;
- technical issues;
- maintenance of the navigable waterway;
- operational and environmental issues;
- economic and statistical analysis;
- safety and security of navigation;
- international cooperation.



Member States and meetings

Today, the Danube Commission has 11 Member States: the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Austria, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Croatia, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Serbia, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine.

In addition, the following countries are observer states at the Danube Commission: the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Kingdom of Belgium, the French Republic, the Czech Republic, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Turkey, the Republic of Cyprus and Georgia.

The Danube Commission holds its ordinary sessions twice a year and may hold extraordinary sessions if necessary. The Commission also regularly convenes meetings of its expert groups on hydrotechnical issues, ship waste management, professional qualifications etc., as well as its working groups on technical issues and on legal and financial issues in order to accomplish its work plan and to address issues as they appear.

In 1954, the seat of the Danube Commission was moved from Galați, Romania, to Budapest, Hungary.

The main role of the Danube Commission is to provide for, promote and ensure freedom of navigation on the Danube in accordance with the Belgrade Convention, as well as to maintain and improve navigation conditions on the river. The Danube Commission is also an important instrument for fostering good economic and cultural relations among its Member States and with other countries.

The flags of the Member States of the Danube Commission



Presidency and Secretariat

The Presidency of the Danube Commission consists of the President, the Vice-President and the Secretary, who are elected for a period of three years on a rotating basis.

At the executive level, the Secretariat of the Danube Commission is a permanent, administrative body that executes the tasks it is assigned, and is composed of eleven officers (counsellors) nominated by the Member States. The Secretariat of the Danube Commission is headed by the Director-General, who is supported by two Deputies and the Chief Engineer. The Secretariat serves as a central point of contact for the Member States (experts and delegates). The preparation work for the meetings, the translation of all documents into the official languages (German, French, Russian), and maintaining contacts with the Member States are key elements of its activity. The work of the Secretariat is essential in order to ensure a professional response to issues of navigation on the Danube.



The headquarters of the Danube Commission in Budapest

The Danube - a major waterway in Europe

Geographical aspects

The Danube is the largest river in Central and Southeast Europe and plays an important role in the development of external trade relations. Geographically, the river flows from Germany to the Black Sea. Based on geological and geographical characteristics, the Danube is divided into three parts - the Upper Danube, the Middle Danube and the Lower Danube, including the Danube Delta. The hydrographic network of the Danube river basin is formed by around 120 tributaries. The largest ones (more than 500 km long) are the rivers Inn, Drava, Tisza, Sava, Great Morava, Olt, Siret and Prut.

The Danube river is the Pan-European Transport Corridor VII and one of the continent's most important transport routes.

The overall length of the Danube is 2850 km. From Kelheim in Germany to Sulina in the river's Romanian delta, the navigable length of the Danube is 2411.5 km, and it serves more than 45 ports of international importance.

Together with the Rhine, the Danube links the North Sea with the Black Sea over a length of 3,500 km via the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal, connecting the Black Sea with the industrial centres of Western Europe and with the port of Rotterdam.



Hydrotechnical and hydrometeorological issues

Good maintenance of the navigable waterway is crucial. In hydrotechnical and hydrometeorological matters, the main tasks of the Danube Commission are:

- compiling the Plan of Major Works to achieve the recommended parameters of the fairway, hydrotechnical and other facilities on the Danube;
- defining minimum requirements for standard fairway parameters, hydrotechnical facilities and other structures on the Danube;
- calculating low navigable water level and highest navigable water level for the main hydrometric stations on the Danube;
- compiling and publishing the Annual Report on the Danube Waterway, the Hydrological Reference Book of the Danube, the Longitudinal Profile of the Danube and the Album of Bridges on the Danube.

Statistical and economic analysis

The Danube Commission carries out the following work in the field of statistics: It collects and processes economic and statistical data of the Member States for further publication, creates analyses and comparisons with other basins' indicators, prepares the Commission's documents on matters related to the navigation sector, inland waterway transport statistics and economic conditions in inland navigation, and prepares statistical yearbooks and reference books for publication.

The economic area of the Danube river basin is an important factor in developing the Danube as a waterway of European importance. In 2012, the Danube Commission launched the new project "Market Observation for Danube Navigation" in cooperation with the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine. The system established permits monthly analysis of the structure of the cargo base for Danube shipping, the relationship between supply and demand, transport geography and factors shaping transport development, as well as developments in passenger transport.

Transport demand in the Danube river basin is shaped primarily by the following factors:

- Passenger transport on cruise ships and excursion ships: A cluster system provides passenger services at the traditional centres of Danube tourism.
- Cargo transport: The five major metallurgical enterprises established in the Danube river basin have a combined potential iron and steel output of approx. 10.5 million tonnes per year. In addition, there is a well-developed agricultural sector in the Danube countries.

In addition to real-time analysis of market conditions, the Danube Commission seeks to produce forecasts on the relationship between demand, i.e. the current

cargo base, and supply, i.e. fleet availability and port capacity. Considerable attention is also paid to determining factors such as the economic situation and the development of gross domestic product (GDP) in the countries of the Danube basin, as well as to navigation and fairway conditions. Systematic efforts to improve infrastructure (especially fairway maintenance) in order to reduce sensitivity to meteorological conditions are of particular importance for the Danube navigation market.

Ports

A port's importance in Danube navigation results from a country's national interest in the economic activity carried out in the port, which depends primarily on cargo handling (goods dispatched and received by ship), on the types of goods handled (loaded and unloaded), and on logistical factors.

Under the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN), the List of inland navigation ports of international importance (E ports) contains 46 Danube ports, including those on the Chilia branch and the Danube-Black Sea Canal. Each of these ports should have the capacity to handle a total cargo volume of at least 0.5 million tonnes per year.

All in all, some 70 ports are in operation on the Danube, including ports that handle significant cargo volumes (more than 1 million tonnes) and port complexes consisting of a base port and several private terminals (for grain or oil tankers), established due to demand for them on the Danube from late 1990 onwards.

The largest share in cargo handling in ports is held by ports that serve the metallurgical industry: Linz (4.25 million tonnes in cargo handled), Bratislava (approx. 2 million tonnes), Smederevo (3.16 million tonnes), Galați (4.33 million tonnes) and Ismail (more than 5.1 million tonnes). In order to fulfil the provisions of the Belgrade Convention and “strengthen the economic [...] relations of the Danubian states among themselves and with other nations”, the Danube Commission is responsible for preparing and publishing an Album of Ports.



Challenges

The current situation in Danube navigation includes some key problems that have not yet been solved. Thus, the Danube navigation sector continues to be affected by the critical sections that exist almost along the entire length of the Danube.

Efficient and well-equipped ports are a key factor for multimodal transport, and are also a major driver for regional economic development and cross-border activities. The port infrastructure and the hinterland connections of many Danube ports need to be improved in order to enable efficient transshipment operations, and to enhance traffic volume and traffic density on the Danube. National port development programmes also need to be coordinated and harmonized between countries sharing a common Danube border.

Fundamentally, inland navigation is an environment-friendly mode of transport which causes the least external costs of all inland transport modes. Some existing conditions of navigation on the Danube impede the introduction of new, progressive transport technologies. Nevertheless, the environmental conditions of Danube navigation can be further improved by means of fleet modernization measures and optimized waste management. To this end, the Danube countries need to pursue a sustainable, environmentally sound and transnationally coordinated approach.

The vessels in operation on the Danube also represent an important challenge. The safety and efficiency of Danube navigation depends to a large extent on the availability of qualified personnel. Danube navigation is currently experiencing a staffing shortage, which is also caused by a shortage of dedicated training and education opportunities in the Danube countries. Additionally, the existing education institutions partly apply different education curricula. In order to facilitate labour availability and mobility at the European level, harmonization of education and training profiles should be pursued.

Climate change and natural disasters (floods, ice events, high and low water periods) could have a significant impact on the future water flow regime of the Danube. Climate change could affect the use and functions of the Danube in many ways, and will require adaptation strategies (e.g. flexible waterway management tools, adaptation measures related to the maintenance of the fairway and to vessel types) of the Danube region countries.

The role of the Danube Commission is to serve as a coordinator among its Member States, based on its experience, common documents and experts engaged in

different fields of Danube navigation, and to advocate for closer cooperation with the aim of solving problems arising on the Danube.

International cooperation of the Danube Commission

International cooperation and establishing a constructive dialogue with the most important stakeholders from different organizations and countries is part of the daily work of the Danube Commission. Considering the stakeholders concerned, the DC is involved in cooperation in different fields and at various levels.

Cooperation with economic organizations: Cooperation between the Danube Commission and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation is based on a Memorandum of Understanding on sectoral dialogue and partnership between the DC and the BSEC, concluded on 8th June 2010. The Memorandum establishes transport, trade and the environment as the fields of cooperation and defines, as priorities for cooperation, motorways of the sea and short sea shipping for transport from the Black Sea basin to the Danube ports.

Cooperation with river commissions involves the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), the International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC), the Moselle Commission and others. Cooperation with these commissions is comprehensive, focusing on the exchange of good practices, experience and information, but also including common activities and initiatives on specific aspects of navigation. In this context, the Danube Commission seeks to expand its cooperation with other markets of the river basins, for instance by drafting common standards and compiling European market observation reports together with the CCNR, both efforts carried out under the aegis of the European Union.

Cooperation at EU and UN level: Cooperation with the European Commission to support and develop Danube navigation is based on the Administrative Arrangement Concerning a Framework for Cooperation between the Danube Commission and the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport of the European Commission. In particular, both sides endeavour to strengthen their cooperation in order to increase synergies and make their actions more complementary and mutually reinforcing. The United Nations Economic

Commission for Europe has been an important partner for the Danube Commission from the beginning, reflected by the fact that it was the first organization to receive observer status at the DC. The Danube Commission also participates in the work of the UNECE's Working Party on Inland Water Transport (Geneva).

Projects and initiatives

In accordance with the "Conclusions on effective waterway infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance on the Danube and its navigable tributaries", the Master Plan and the National Roadmaps are important documents for the work of the Danube Commission.

Developing the waterway infrastructure is one of the most important objectives of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). The existence of bottlenecks, which cause periodic interruptions and reduced safety of navigation, is one of the main obstacles to the proper maintenance of the Danube waterway. The Danube Commission has provided the European Commission with a list of national infrastructure projects and initiatives (projects of the DC Member States), accompanied by the Plan of Major Works to achieve the recommended parameters of the fairway, hydrotechnical and other facilities on the Danube.

The Administrative Arrangement Concerning a Framework for Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Danube Commission and the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport of the European Commission, concluded in July 2015, comprises 4 pillars:

Pillar 1 - Follow-up to the actions for the implementation of a Fairway Rehabilitation and Maintenance Master Plan for the Danube river

Pillar 2 - Contribution to the elaboration of technical standards for inland waterway transport vessels

Pillar 3 - Elaboration of technical standards for navigation, in particular for infrastructure maintenance

Pillar 4 - Market observation as regards the Danube basin

Based on these pillars and on the provisions of the Grant Agreement concluded with DG MOVE, the Danube Commission is actively involved in the infrastructure development projects FAIRway, Good Navigation Status and GRENDDEL, which are projects of the Danube Transnational Programme (DTP). DANTE, another DTP project, is aimed at improving administrative procedures

and processes for Danube inland waterway transport. The Danube Commission plays a coordinating role in the maintenance of the Danube fairway and the elimination of bureaucratic barriers in order to improve navigation conditions on the Danube.

Since 2014, the Danube Commission has been involved in the process of establishing the Rhine-Danube transport corridor, and since 2015, the Danube Commission has participated in the CESNI Committee's working groups on technical requirements for inland waterway vessels, competencies standards and professional qualifications in inland navigation.

The Administrative Arrangement has enabled the Danube Commission to acquire additional expertise and to achieve a pioneering position as regards infrastructure maintenance, security and market observation for Danube navigation. When working on international projects and elaborating standards, the Danube Commission always strives to express the common position of the DC Member States.

Key challenges of inland navigation are the need for its effective integration into multimodal transport corridors and for financial and economic support measures, as well as the feasibility of reducing the impact of administrative barriers, the harmonization of technical standards and requirements for ensuring the safety and security of navigation, as well as resilience to climate change.

The Danube Commission's goals for the future require a complex approach and must be considered through a strategic dialogue of the DC Member States, and an exchange of technologies, opinions and best practices. Achieving these goals is well within the reach of the Danube Commission.

Message of the President of the Danube Commission, Ambassador Gordan Grlić RADMAN

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great privilege and pleasure to celebrate with you the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Convention regarding the Regime of Navigation on the Danube. As we all know, the Convention was signed in Belgrade in 1948 and established the Danube Commission, an international, intergovernmental organization currently consisting of 11 Member States, with its headquarters in Budapest. The aim of our Commission is to ensure that



navigation on the Danube is free and open to the nationals, commercial vessels and goods of all states on a footing of equality.

As the President of the Danube Commission, I would like to highlight the increased activity of our organization in resolving the most pressing issues of Danube navigation. It has focused on the new version of the Basic Rules of Navigation on the Danube, as well as on addressing challenges related to developing Danube navigation infrastructure and achieving recommended fairway parameters. The Commission also continues to prioritize radiocommunications, the transport of dangerous goods and environmental aspects of navigation.

An important aspect of the Commission's activities is our direct involvement in international projects for inland waterways of European importance, and the introduction of innovative project ideas into the practice of Danube navigation. These projects cover almost all the main areas of navigation, primarily infrastructure development. To name but a few: *DANTE*, *FAIRway*, *Good Navigation Status*, *GRENDDEL*, the *METEET* pilot project, as well as projects in other areas - *Danube Skills*, *Green Danube*, etc.

The Danube Commission actively interacts with other European river commissions such as the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, the Sava Commission and the Moselle Commission. We expect positive results for Danube navigation from our cooperation with the European Commission, based on the Administrative Arrangement Concerning a Framework for Cooperation between the Secretariat of the Danube Commission and the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport of the European Commission. The goals of Priority Area 1 a) of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region and activities within the Rhine-Danube Corridor Forum continue to be a benchmark for us.

The year 2018 marks 70 years of the Convention regarding the Regime of Navigation on the Danube and 70 years of our organization. We are proud of its history, and we face the future with confidence, reaffirming the importance of the Danube river as a transport corridor and of the Danube Commission as the "most international" river commission. For this reason, I welcome the commitment of our organization to active cooperation with other international organizations, which will enable the Danube Commission to develop Danube navigation more vigorously and successfully.

Thank you for your attention!



Participants of the Congress of Paris (1856)



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