



PRESS RELEASE

THE SIGNING CEREMONY OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
OF MARRI REGIONAL FORUM
TIRANA, JULY 02ND, 2004

On July 2nd, 2004 five Western Balkan Countries – Albania – Bosnia Herzegovina – Croatia – Macedonia – Serbia and Montenegro – gathered in Tirana for signing the Memorandum of Understanding of MARRI Regional Forum, as the first step to institutionalise the Regional Centre of MARRI in Skopje.

The MARRI Forum is established in accordance with the decision taken by the first ministerial Regional Forum on Asylum, Migrations and Sustainable Return, held under the auspices of the Chairmanship-in-Office (CiO) of the South East European Cooperation Process - SEECP and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Montenegro on 05 April 2004 in Herceg Novi.

The decision taken to transfer the Forum to regional ownership is in full compliance with the Thessaloniki agenda for the Western Balkans as well as the SEECP objectives and concept of becoming the voice of the region.

The MARRI Regional Forum shall work within the framework of SEECP, but with separate meetings (Regional Forum) of the five Western Balkans countries and with its own presidency based on rotation among countries (Albania is holding the presidency from April 2004 to June 2005).

Seeing MARRI Forum as an integral part of the SEECP, the Albanian Presidency is working closely with the Romanian CiO of the Process in order to endorse the MARRI activities in the framework of the Chairmanship cooperation agenda of the SEECP for the year 2004-2005.

In this regard, a high level delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania led by State Secretary Bogdan Aurescu will be present at the signing ceremony of MoU of MARRI.