



Press release of the Danube Commission: Meeting of the Working Group on legal and financial issues of the Danube Commission

The Meeting of the Working Group on legal and financial issues (WG JUR-FIN) of the Danube Commission (DC) was held under the Chairmanship of the Representative of Romania, Ms Doina Doroftei, on 12-14 November 2024 in a hybrid format.

The delegations of all Danube States of the Danube Commission (the Republic of Austria, Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Croatia, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, Slovak Republic and Ukraine) participated in the Meeting.

The delegation of Ukraine informed that the Russian Federation deliberately intensifies attacks on the port infrastructure on the Danube and in the south of Ukraine, trade vessels and grain storage facilities, in order to reduce Ukraine's export potential and deliberately provoke a food crisis in those parts of the world that are directly dependent on Ukrainian grain supplies.

The Chair and the Director-General expressed solidarity with Ukraine, who continues to face the brutal military aggression from the Russian Federation, which also violates the very core of the fundamental principle of the Belgrade Convention regarding the regime of navigation on the Danube (1948).¹

The Danube Commission has started the process of modernization, which shall identify new common areas of interest and tasks for the Organization and, in particular, its Secretariat. In this regard, WG JUR-FIN also discussed and approved the updated draft of the strategic document for the next 5 years – Gender Equality Plan 2025-2029 in line with European standards and approaches concerning personnel policy. The document will be proposed for approval by the DC Session in December 2024.

WG JUR-FIN traditionally discussed important legal and financial topics concerning basic principles of the Belgrade Convention i) port access practice of the Danube states; ii) drafting of the new Regulation on the activity of conciliation commissions; iii) validity of the vessel's certificates issued by the Danube states which are not members of the European; iv) modification of Rules of Procedure ; v) draft annual budget 2025 and other issues.

The delegations analyzed the progress of cooperation of the Danube Commission with international stakeholders in the context of the discussed modernization process of the DC. The WG JUR-FIN also approved a draft of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Danube Commission and the World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure (PIANC), which shall set the framework for launching official cooperation between both organizations.

¹ Danube states adopted the decision at its 100th Session on 14 December 2023 (DC/SES 100/11) urging the Russian Federation to draw the consequences of its attacks by withdrawing from the Belgrade Convention until 29 February 2024, or, failing that, as of 1 March 2024, the Danube States will no longer consider themselves bound by the obligations under the Belgrade Convention vis-à-vis the Russian Federation. This decision came into force on the 1st March 2024.



The next WG JUR-FIN meeting is planned to take place in April 2025.

