**Debate „ The common priorities of Bulgaria and Romania 2014-2020 – new possibilities and horizons “**

**19 November 2013, Silistra**

Short draft concept

***Introduction:***

Taking into account the :

* New programming period 2014-2020 in completion the targets set into the Strategy Europe 2020 for concentration of the investments into areas where more growth and jobs will be created;
* Preparation of the Partnership agreements 2014-2020 of Bulgaria and Romania, their approval till the end of 2013 and the simultaneous preparation of the operational programs for 2014-2020;
* The European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) is the macro-regional strategy "par excellence" and a tool to promote in particular territorial cohesion and the 2020 Strategy; it offers the framework and is an opportunity for a real regional cooperation between the countries in the Danube region. It enables optimum utilization of the Danube region potential and plays an important role in promoting regional integration.
* Bulgaria and Romania are EU member-states which have a common border – Danube river, which should be considered as a common project for economic and social cohesion of the region, increasing of the competitiveness and setting up of growth and jobs;
* Memorandum of understanding between the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania was signed on 11 October 2012. It foresees the setting up of an inter-ministerial Committee for sustainable development of inland waterway transport in the common Bulgarian-Romanian section of the river and improving the connectivity of the region. The committee has adopted an Action Plan and set up 4 expert groups. (This will help one of the main targets of the strategy to be reached: to increase cargo transport on the river by 20% by 2020 compared with 2010. Currently only 10% has been used)
* For the timely planning and programming of the next programming period is necessary the common priorities of the two countries to be identified and be reflected in the programming documents of both.(partnership agreement, operational programs, programs for regional, transnational and cross-border cooperation). The common planning is of a paramount importance as regard the timely preparation and implementation of the common projects and a positive support from the European Union side.
* North-west and Central north regions in Bulgaria are among the poorest ( together with the Romanian one’s along Danube) in the European union’s territory and of a significant importance for their further development is a possibility for common projects and initiatives with the Romanian cities and regions to be set up and a special focus;
* One of the major projects that is included in the Action plan of the Danube strategy and the Action plan of the Inter-ministerial Committee between Bulgaria and Romania is the preparation and construction of a third bridge over Danube Silistra –Kalarash

**Debate „ The common priorities of Bulgaria and Romania 2014-2020 – new possibilities and horizons “**

**19 November 2013, Silistra**

***With the participation of the President of Republic of Bulgaria – Mr. Rosen Plevneliev***

**Organizer:** Presidency of Republic of Bulgaria within the umbrella of the Council for regional development and national infrastructure to the President

**Host:** Silistra and Kalarash municipalities

**Place:** Silistra, hotel “Drustur”, hall “Drustur”

**Time:** 1 day event

**Participants:** Representatives of the Governments and members of the Parliament of the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania, of the regional and local authorities, European Commission and European Parliament, diplomatic corpus; the business and the NGOs

**Topics for discussion:**

* **Development of the connectivity of the region: transport and environment – common projects, initiatives and possibilities**
* **Possibilities for investments in the Danube regions: setting up of growth and jobs ( short presentation from the mayors of 3 BG and RO cities)**