



CHAIR'S CONCLUSIONS

International Conference on Corridor VIII

Sofia, 8 October 2026

1. On 8 October 2026 the International Conference on Corridor VIII took place in Sofia. Held at the invitation of Minister Velislava Petrova, the event brought together Ministers, EU Commissioner, Ambassadors and other high-ranking officials from the Republic of Albania, the Republic of North Macedonia, the Italian Republic, the Republic of Kosovo, Montenegro, Romania, Ukraine, the UK, the USA, NATO and the EEAS.
2. The discussions focused on the Corridor's growing multidimensional importance and pathways for its accelerated development.
3. In Session 1 "Geopolitical Context of Corridor VIII", participants underlined how the changing European and regional security environment reinforces the strategic relevance of Corridor VIII. It was agreed that its timely completion can contribute to European cohesion, the integration of the Western Balkans, stronger links between the Adriatic, Western Balkans and Black Sea regions, and greater resilience against disruptions and hybrid threats. Participants reaffirmed the importance of close regional cooperation and good-neighbourly relations as well as of sustained political attention to the Corridor in line with the relevant EU policies and initiatives such as the EU Connectivity Agenda. Additional emphasis was put on Corridor VIII in bolstering the EU's endeavors to diversify its supply chains and reinforce its strategic autonomy by providing additional impetus for the realization of major intra-regional initiatives connecting Europe with Asia such as the Middle corridor.
4. In Session 2 "Transport, Energy and Economic Connectivity", participants underlined the imperative of translating the political commitment into accelerated delivery of concrete projects, including the removal of remaining infrastructure and cross-border bottlenecks. They highlighted the importance of interoperable, multimodal and resilient transport infrastructure, stronger logistics and supply-chain connections, and enhanced energy connectivity. Participants encouraged the mobilization and effective use of EU instruments, international financial institutions and private investment, while strengthening cooperation between governments, business, financial institutions and other stakeholders.
5. In Session 3 "Military Mobility, Security, Hybrid Threats, Innovation and New Technologies", participants reaffirmed Corridor VIII's importance for military mobility and dual-use infrastructure in the EU-NATO context. They stressed the need for protection of critical infrastructure and enhanced preparedness against cyber, hybrid and other disruptive threats. Participants also underlined the potential of innovation, digitalization, emerging technologies and public-private cooperation to improve the efficiency, security and resilience of the Corridor.



6. Across all three sessions, a common understanding emerged that the different dimensions of Corridor VIII are closely interconnected. Connectivity, economic development and security should therefore be approached as mutually reinforcing elements of one strategic endeavour.

7. Looking ahead, participants agreed that Corridor VIII should remain high on national, European and Euro-Atlantic agendas. They supported continued political and technical consultations, closer coordination of infrastructure priorities and standards, and regular monitoring of progress, with a view to identifying concrete deliverables and addressing outstanding bottlenecks. They further encouraged continued cooperation with the EU, NATO, international financial institutions, business and civil society.

8. Participants reaffirmed their shared commitment to transforming Corridor VIII into a fully operational, resilient and integrated axis of European connectivity, economic opportunity and security, delivering tangible benefits not only for the countries and citizens along its route but also for the wider region and beyond.

9. Building on the momentum created by previous meetings and discussions, recalling the Chair's Conclusions of Brindisi of 27 July 2023 and the Tirana Joint Declaration of 18 February 2026, the participants welcomed the continued strengthening of the political format and the significant added value of broadening the participation with partners committed to the Corridor's development.