



PRIORITIES OF THE ALBANIAN CEI PRESIDENCY 2024

Albania remains a committed member and a strong supporter of CEI, which is playing an utmost role as a facilitator of the political dialogue and as an accelerator of the EU integration process.

The priorities of the Albanian CEI presidency include: European integration, cultural and tourism cooperation, Policy Dialogue on health challenges, as well as strengthening parliamentary cooperation and introducing the role of CEI Parliamentary Convention process.

During this tenure, Albania will foster the cooperation to facilitate people-to-people contacts, support co-operation among local governments, academic, professional, cultural and non-governmental organizations and educational institutions, promote tourism and expand parliamentary cooperation.

Albania has endorsed all initiatives of CEI members in assisting the Ukrainian people to cope with consequences of the Russian war. In this view, we will continue to support further proposals on upcoming contributions of the CEI Cooperation Fund addressed to Ukraine.

The Presidency will continue to develop the political dialogue on the current challenges in the framework of the well-established platforms (MFA Meetings, Parliamentary Committee, CNC Meetings, side-events).

Albanian Presidency will focus on the following priorities:

- **European Integration:** By supporting regional cooperation, our aim is to promote WB countries in their path toward EU integration, maintaining new momentum to EU expansion. Keeping in mind that in the last enlargement report setting out the state of play of prospective EU members, the European Commission backed the start of accession talks with Ukraine and Moldova and granted candidate status to Georgia, EU should maintain its geostrategic focus on the Western Balkans as well.
- **Tourism and Culture:** The Albanian CEI Presidency will deepen the efforts made so far to promote the cultural-tourist attractions of the CEI region and convert this region to a major touristic destination. We aim to develop a comprehensive package of tourism

that goes beyond the classic tourism of visiting sea and mountain areas or archeological sites, adding the gastronomic and medical tourism. Promoting tourism diversification in the CEI region is our main target.

- **Health:** Health is a right and not a privilege for some. This is the core of our philosophy for building the Albanian 2021-2030 Health Strategy, which is based on the basic principles of solidarity, universality and reducing inequalities. The Albanian CEI Presidency will focus in assessing health challenges as part of cross-sectional policies in the CEI region. Strengthening Regional Cooperation on Public Health through harmonization with European Health Union Regulations/Strategies, and Programs, the CEI members will be encouraged to share the best practices and exploration of improved synergies and regional cooperation on health.
- **Strengthening parliamentary cooperation:** Establishing and deepening partnership structures based on the principles of parliamentary democracy and the respect for human rights is our main goal during the mandate of the Albanian CEI presidency. Parliaments play an essential role to democracy; they serve as a check on the executive and they provide an effective representation of diverse society stakeholders. The impact of the regional parliamentary cooperation relates directly to the EU integration process of the Western Balkans, hence upgrading the role of the Parliamentary cooperation as well as introducing the role of the Parliamentary Convention process, is an indicator of inclusive cooperation within the CEI platform.