



## PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 6 March 2024

### Working visit of ICBSS Director General, Mr. Georgios Mitrakos, to Rome, Italy

On 4-5 March 2024, the ICBSS Director General, Mr. Georgios Mitrakos, had a working visit to Rome, Italy, upon invitation of Dr. Marco Ricceri, Secretary General of EURISPES and Member of the ICBSS Board of Directors and Dr. Enrico Molinaro, Secretary General of the Italian Network for the Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue (RIDE) and Head of the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) in Italy.

Mr. Mitrakos was invited as speaker at the International Conference *"The EU and Italy for Sustainability in Africa and in the Broader Mediterranean Region"*, organised by the **Italian Network for the Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue (RIDE)**, at the European Parliament and Commission Offices in Rome, on Monday 4 March 2024. During his speech, Mr. Mitrakos presented the Black Sea region and stressed the common challenges of the Black Sea – Mediterranean wider regions. The ICBSS Director General emphasised the significance of a continuous cooperation among research institutions in building trust and supporting dialogue in unstable environments.

Prior to the Conference, Mr. Mitrakos had a meeting with Ms. Laurence Martin, Secretary General of the **Federazione del Mare**, Ms. Lidia Rossi, Managing Director of **ForMare-National Shipping Hub**, and Ms. Esther Marchetti, Transport Policy Department of **Confitarma**, the Italian Confederation of Shipowners. Discussions focused on the role of blue economy in the economic development of the countries of both sea-basins and what cooperation perspectives emerge in the said economic sectors.

On 5 March 2024, Mr. Mitrakos was hosted by Ambassador Riccardo Sessa, President of the **Italian Society for International Organization (SIOI)**, the oldest Italian institution dealing with diplomatic courses and research activities in international relations. The ICBSS Director General accepted the honourable invitation to have an open discussion with the students of SIOI on "The Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean".

The working visit was part of the ICBSS' goals to foster dialogue, share knowledge and build partnerships with regional and international stakeholders across regions towards supporting sustainability and development.

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**About the ICBS:** The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), and its think-tank. Thus, the ICBS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim of fostering multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.