



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
Permanent International Secretariat

BS/FM/R(2018)2

**REPORT OF THE
THIRTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

Baku, 14 December 2018

1. The 39th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States was held in Baku, the Republic of Azerbaijan, on 14 December 2018. It was preceded by the Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials on 12-13 December 2018.

2. The following BSEC Member States attended the Meeting:

Republic of Albania
Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine

3. The following BSEC Related Bodies participated in the Meeting:

Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC (PABSEC)
Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB)
International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)

4. The following BSEC Observers attended the Meeting:

Arab Republic of Egypt
Hungary
Republic of Italy
European Commission

Darüşşafaka Caddesi, Seba Center İş Merkezi, No: 45, Kat 3, İstinye, Sarıyer – İstanbul, Turkey

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5. The following BSEC Sectoral Dialogue Partners attended the Meeting:

Republic of Korea
Union of Road Transport Associations in the BSEC Region (BSEC-URTA)
6. The following Guest attended the Meeting:

Azerbaijan International Road Carriers Association (ABADA)
Permanent Secretariat Intergovernmental Commission TRACECA
7. The list of participants of the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.
8. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The agenda, as adopted by the Ministers, is attached as **Annex II**.
9. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Elmar MAMMADYAROV, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The opening statement of the Chairperson is attached as **Annex III**.
10. H.E. Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of BSEC delivered a statement, the text of which is attached as **Annex IV**.
11. The texts of the general statements of the Heads of Delegations are attached as **Annex V**.

RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

12. The Council took note of the Reports of the Meetings of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials (BSEC Headquarters, 31 October-1 November 2018; Baku, 12-13 December 2018), which are attached as **Annexes VI and VII**.
13. Taking into consideration the developments in BSEC since the 38th Meeting of the Council, the Ministers discussed the draft Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations, which were submitted to them by the Committee of Senior Officials.
14. The draft document containing the Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations was adopted. The respective list of Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations is attached as **Annex VIII**.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

15. The next regular Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs will be hosted by the Republic of Bulgaria. The date and venue of the Meeting will be announced in due course.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

16. The Ministers expressed their sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for its contribution to the further promotion of the BSEC goals.

17. The Ministers wished success to the Republic of Bulgaria for its incoming Chairmanship-in-Office.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

18. This Report was adopted by the 39th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States.

**THIRTY-NINTH MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

Baku, 14 December 2018

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

| <u>CHAIRPERSON</u> | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|--|
| H.E. Mr. Elmar MAMMADYAROV | : | Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| <u>MEMBER STATES</u> | | |
| REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA | | |
| H.E. Mr. Genti GAZHELI | : | Ambassador of the Republic of Albania to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| H.E. Mrs. Antonela DHIMOLEA | : | Head of Regional Initiative Unit, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs |
| REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA | | |
| Mr. Ashot KOCHARIAN | : | Director, Multilateral and Bilateral Economic Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Arsen AVAGYAN | : | Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the Organization of BSEC |
| REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN | | |
| H.E. Mr. Mahmud MAMMAD-GULIYEV | : | Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Mr. Anar HUSEYNOV | : | Director, Department of Economic Cooperation and Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Vasif ALIYEV | : | First Secretary, Department of Economic Cooperation Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |

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| Mr. Farid DAMIRLI | : | First Secretary, Department of Economic Cooperation Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Ramiz HAJIZADA | : | Third Secretary, Consulate General of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Istanbul |
| REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA | | |
| H.E. Mrs. Emilia KRALEVA | : | Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria |
| Ms. Julia TZEROVA | : | Head, Regional Cooperation Department, Southeastern Europe Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria |
| Mrs. Tonka KOSTADINOVA | : | Third Secretary, Regional Cooperation Department, Southeastern Europe Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| GEORGIA | | |
| H.E. Mr. Alexander KHVTISIASHVILI | : | Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia |
| Mr. Teimuraz JANJALIA | : | Director, Department for International Economic Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Noshrevan LOMTATIDZE | : | Deputy Director, Department for International Economic Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| HELLENIC REPUBLIC | | |
| H.E. Mr. Markos BOLARIS | : | Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic |
| Mr. Panagiotis PARTSOS | : | Ambassador, Director of the Deputy Minister's Diplomatic Office |
| H.E. Mr. Nikolaos D. KANELLOS | : | Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Ms. Foteini KARAKATSANI | : | Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Hellenic Republic to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA | | |

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| H.E. Mr. Tudor ULIANOVSKI | : | Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova |
| Mr. Eugeniu VIZIR | : | Head, Regional Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| ROMANIA | | |
| H.E. Mr. Dan NECULAESCU | : | Secretary of State for Regional Affairs and Multilateral Global Affairs of Romania |
| H.E. Mr. Dan IANCU | : | Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Romania to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Ms. Antoaneta BARTA | : | Director General, Department for Bilateral Relations, Regional Cooperation and European Enlargement, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Alexandru ENE | : | Director, Western Balkans and Regional Cooperation Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Ms. Andreea GAGEA | : | Expert for BSEC, Western Balkans and Regional Cooperation Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Ciprian-Ionuț MIRICA | : | Counsellor, Embassy of Romania to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| RUSSIAN FEDERATION | | |
| H.E. Mr. Sergei LAVROV | : | Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation |
| H.E. Mr. Mikhail BOCHARNIKOV | : | Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Ms. Ekaterina IZOTOVA | : | Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Marat V. BERDYEV | : | Deputy Director, Department of Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation |
| Mr. Nikolai IVANOV | : | Deputy Director, Fourth CIS Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |

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| Mr. Oleg MURASHEV | : | Minister-Counsellor, Embassy of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Mr. Andrey PODELYSHEV | : | Consul General of the Russian Federation in Istanbul |
| Mr. Sergei GORLOV | : | Head of Division, Department of Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Andrei YAKUSHEV | : | Senior Counsellor, General Secretariat (Department), Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Ms. Tamara PIPIA | : | Counsellor, General Secretariat (Department), Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Nikolay NEFEDOV | : | Counsellor, General Secretariat (Department), Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Rafael USUBOV | : | First Secretary, Department of Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Ms. Yana RAGOZINA | : | Second Secretary, Embassy of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Mr. Aleksei CHEKMAREV | : | Third Secretary, Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Istanbul |
| Mr. Denis APASHKIN | : | Attaché, Embassy of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Ms. Viktoriya KUPRIYANOVA | : | Expert, Department of Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| REPUBLIC OF SERBIA | | |
| Mr. Aleksandar TASIC | : | Head, Department for Economic Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Danica VEINOVIC | : | Charge d'Affairs, Embassy of the Republic of Serbia to the Republic of Azerbaijan |

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| REPUBLIC OF TURKEY | | |
| H.E. Mr. Mevlüt ÇAVUŞOĞLU | : | Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey |
| H.E. Mr. İzzet Selim YENEL | : | Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| H.E. Mr. Erkan ÖZORAL | : | Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Mr. Refik Ali ONANER | : | Minister Plenipotentiary, Special Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey |
| Mr. Mustafa Osman TURAN | : | Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Director General for Multilateral Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Ms. Banu TERZİOĞLU | : | Head of Department, Office of the Chief of Cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey |
| Mr. Soner KÖK | : | Press Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey |
| Mr. Naci Aydan KARAMANOĞLU | : | Head of Department, Deputy Directorate General for Communications and Relations with Civil Society |
| Mrs. Meltem GÜNEY TÖRE | : | Head of Department, Deputy Directorate General for Multilateral Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Mr. Volkan ÖSKİPER | : | Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Mrs. Melike YILMAZ ÖSKİPER | : | Counsellor, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Mr. Derviş Fikret ÜNAL | : | First Secretary, Office of the Chief of Cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey |

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| Mr. Ekrem ŞENTÜRK | : | Attaché, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| UKRAINE | | |
| H.E. Mr. Vasil BODNAR | : | Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine |
| H.E. Mr. Olexandr MISCHENKO | : | Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Mr. Sergii KRAVCHENKO | : | Consul, Consulate General of Ukraine in Istanbul |
| Mr. Oleksandr SENCHENKO | : | Counsellor, Embassy of Ukraine to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| <u>RELATED BODIES</u> | | |
| PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION (PABSEC) | | |
| H.E. Mr. Petar KANEV | : | Head of the PABSEC Delegation, Vice President of the PABSEC |
| H.E. Mr. Asaf HAJIYEV | : | Secretary General |
| BLACK SEA TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BANK (BSTDB) | | |
| H.E. Mr. Dmitry PANKIN | : | President |
| Mr. Valery AKSENOV | : | Director, External Relations and Communications |
| INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR BLACK SEA STUDIES (ICBSS) | | |
| H.E. Mr. Georgios MITRAKOS | : | Director General |
| <u>OBSERVERS</u> | | |
| ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT | | |
| H.E. Mr. Adel IBRAHIM | : | Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Republic of Azerbaijan |

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| Mr. Hossam BASHARY | : | Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| HUNGARY | | |
| Mr. Peter SZTARAY | : | State Secretary for Security Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary |
| H.E. Mr. Viktor SZEDERKENYI | : | Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Hungary to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Mr. Ivan GYURCSIK | : | Ambassador and Permanent Representative for Danube Commission, National Coordinator for Cooperation with BSEC |
| Dr. Laszlo MAKK | : | Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Hungary to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| ITALIAN REPUBLIC | | |
| H.E. Mr. Augusto MASSARY | : | Ambassador of the Italian Republic to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| EUROPEAN COMMISSION | | |
| H.E. Mr. Kestutis JANKAUSKAS | : | Ambassador, Head of the EU Delegation to Azerbaijan |
| Ms. Diana TASE | : | Policy Officer, Black Sea and Eastern Partnership, European External Action Service |
| <u>SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNERS</u> | | |
| <u>REPUBLIC OF KOREA</u> | | |
| Mr. Jeanhyuk YIM | : | Counsellor, Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of Azerbaijan |
| Ms. Jung INHEE | : | Second Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea |
| Mr. Emin MAMMADOV | : | Energy Advisor, Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of Azerbaijan |

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| UNION OF ROAD TRANSPORT ASSOCIATIONS IN THE BSEC REGION (BSEC-URTA) | | |
| H.E. Mr. Adrian Iosif ALBU | : | BSEC-URTA Secretary General, IRU General Delegate |
| <u>GUESTS</u> | | |
| PERMANENT SECRETARIAT INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION TRACECA | | |
| H.E. Mr. Mircea CIOPRAGA | : | Secretary General |
| Ms. Samira RAFIZADE | : | Public Relations Expert |
| AZERBAIJAN INTERNATIONAL ROAD CARRIERS ASSOCIATION (ABADA) | | |
| Mr. Ali ISKANDAROV | : | Deputy Secretary General |
| <u>BSEC PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT</u> | | |
| H.E. Mr. Michael B. CHRISTIDES | : | Ambassador, Secretary General |
| Mr. Teimuraz ANTELAVA | : | Legal Advisor |
| Mr. Kanan MURTUZOV | : | Executive Manager |
| Mrs. Rositsa STOEVA | : | Executive Manager |
| Mr. Alexei NISTREAN | : | Executive Manager |
| Mr. Ioannis PAPPAS | : | Seconded Executive Manager |
| Mrs. Ümit YILMAZ | : | Accountant |
| Ms. Ebru ATEŞ | : | Secretary |
| Ms. Natalia LAVROVA | : | Secretary |

**THIRTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

Baku, 14 December 2018

AGENDA

I. RESOLUTIONS

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM 2: FINANCIAL ISSUES

- 2.1. Consideration of the Mid-year report on the implementation of the 2018 BSEC Budget**
- 2.2. State of affairs with regard to Mandatory Annual Contributions to the 2018 BSEC Budget**
- 2.3. Consideration of the draft 2019 BSEC Budget**
- 2.4. Exchange of views on the possible financial implications for the amendments to the Regulation for the Staff of BSEC PERMIS**

AGENDA ITEM 3: STATE OF AFFAIRS CONCERNING THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BSEC PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF)

- 3.1. The issue of the replenishment of PDF**

AGENDA ITEM 4: INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE WORKING GROUPS

AGENDA ITEM 5: RENEWAL OF THE OBSERVER STATUS

- 5.1. France**
- 5.2. Republic of Poland**

AGENDA ITEM 6: RENEWAL OF THE SDP STATUS

- 6.1. Montenegro**
- 6.2. Republic of Korea**
- 6.3. Black Sea Region Association of Shipbuilders and Shiprepairers (BRASS)**

AGENDA ITEM 7: CONSIDERATION OF THE AMENDMENT PROPOSALS TO THE PABSEC HOST COUNTRY AGREEMENT

AGENDA ITEM 8: BSEC-EU INTERACTION

II. DECISIONS

AGENDA ITEM 9: ACTIVITIES OF THE BSEC PERMIS

9.1. Report of the Secretary General

AGENDA ITEM 10: REVIEW OF THE STATE OF COOPERATION AMONG THE MEMBER STATES

10.1. Trade and Economic Development

10.1.1. BSEC-FAO Workshop on Promotion of Agri-food Trade in the BSEC Region (BSEC HQ, 10-11 July 2018)

10.1.2. Meeting of the Working Group on Banking and Finance (BSEC HQ, 14 November 2018)

10.1.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Customs Matters (BSEC HQ, 6 December 2018)

10.1.4. Joint Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development and the Working Group on Customs Matters (BSEC HQ, 6 December 2018)

10.1.5. Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development (BSEC HQ, 7 December 2018)

10.2. Sectoral Cooperation in Economic Areas

10.2.1. Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry (BSEC HQ, 23 October 2018)

10.2.2. Meeting of the Working Group on Transport (Baku, 24 October 2018)

10.2.3. Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Transport (Baku, 25 October 2018)

10.2.4. Meeting of the Working Group on Energy (BSEC HQ, 4 December 2018)

10.2.5. Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region (Samsun, 27 November 2018)

10.2.6. Meeting on the Implementation of the Project “BSEC PERMIT System” (BSEC HQ, 27 November 2018)

10.2.7. Meeting of the Working Group on ICT (Baku, 3 December 2018)

10.2.8. Meeting of the Ministers in charge of ICT (Baku, 4 December 2018)

10.3. Science, Education, Tourism and Culture

10.3.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology (BSEC HQ, 19 October 2018)

10.3.2. Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States (Istanbul, 22-25 October 2018)

10.3.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (BSEC HQ, 2 November 2018)

10.3.4. BSEC Workshop on Developing an Information Network on Recognition to Maintain Quality in Higher Education (BSEC HQ, 12 November 2018)

10.3.5. Meeting of the Working Group on Education (BSEC HQ, 13 November 2018)

10.3.6. Meeting of the Working Group on Culture (Belgrade, 22 November 2018)

10.3.7. Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Culture (Belgrade, 23 November 2018)

10.4. Cooperation in Social Challenges and other relevant fields

10.4.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Protection (BSEC HQ, 28 September 2018)

10.4.2. Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Massive Forest Fires (BSEC HQ, 25 October 2018)

10.4.3. Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Floods and Torrents (BSEC HQ, 26 October 2018)

10.4.4. Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Liaison Officers of the BSEC Network on Emergency Assistance (BSEC HQ, 7 November 2018)

10.4.5. Meeting of the Working Group on Combating Crime (BSEC HQ, 9 November 2018)

10.4.6. Meeting of the Working Group on Health Care and Pharmaceuticals (BSEC HQ, 23 November 2018)

10.5. Intra-Organizational Matters

10.5.1. Meeting of the BSEC TROIKA, BSEC Related Bodies and BSEC PERMIS (BSEC HQ, 12 July 2018)

10.5.2. Coordination Meeting of the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, BSEC Related Bodies and BSEC PERMIS (BSEC HQ, 12 July 2018)

10.5.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Organizational Matters (BSEC HQ, 25-26 September 2018)

10.5.4. Meeting of the Working Group on Budgetary and Financial Issues (BSEC HQ, 27 September 2018)

10.5.5. Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction (BSEC HQ, 30 October 2018)

AGENDA ITEM 11: APPOINTMENTS OF THE COUNTRY-COORDINATORS

11.1. Working Group on Culture

11.2. Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts in Seismic Risk

AGENDA ITEM 12: APPOINTMENTS IN THE BSEC PERMIS

12.1. First Deputy Secretary General, post vacant from 1 July 2021

- 12.2. Deputy Secretary General, post vacant from 1 July 2019
- 12.3. Legal Advisor, post vacant from 1 July 2019
- 12.4. Project Coordinator, post vacant from 1 January 2019
- 12.5. Executive Manager, post vacant from 1 July 2019

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

AGENDA ITEM 13: INTERACTION BETWEEN BSEC AND THE RELATED BODIES

- 13.1. Interaction between BSEC and PABSEC
- 13.2. Interaction between BSEC and BSEC Business Council
- 13.3. Interaction between BSEC and BSTDB
- 13.4. Interaction between BSEC and ICBSS

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AGENDA ITEM 14: DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 15: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM 16: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

STATEMENT
BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MICHAEL B. CHRISTIDES, SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE *PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT* (PERMIS)
OF THE *BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION* (BSEC)
AT THE 39th MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

(Baku, 14 December 2018)

Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all to welcome, also on my behalf, all high Participants to this important Meeting of the BSEC CMFA and, at the same time, to express my gratitude to You and all Colleagues in the Azerbaijani Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the excellent organization and, mainly, for the extraordinary hospitality with which you honored us all.

We are approaching the end of another year in the life of our Organization – it will soon enter its 27th year of existence – and it is a good opportunity to review what happened in these 12 months: I firmly believe it was **a good year; although** the few, well-known problems persisted, the BSEC Organization has gained in stature and effectiveness, today it is being acknowledged by many as a trustworthy and credible partner and interlocutor, as a promoter of concrete projects and as a platform for genuine dialogue, understanding and networking.

Dear Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen, I will attempt to briefly paint the real picture of the Organization, starting from the “**less good**” and ending with the “**good news**” of the year; **actually**, the "less good" news, is perhaps “**no news**” **at all**, since we all know about these issues for a long time:

No.1.Problem: The depletion of the *Project Development Fund* (PDF). Dear Ministers, **you always** express the desire to render the BSEC Organization more “**project oriented**”. Yet, for **projects** we need **funds**! From 2003 to 2011 **Member** States contributed, **voluntarily**, approx. 450.000 USD, **yet**, for the **last 7 years** no contribution was made to the Fund, which has today 4.550 Euros.

In the folder before you, kindly find a CD that we prepared with a comprehensive presentation of the 25 projects that were implemented in the past with the above funds. **Disbursing these PDF resources** constituted an **important act of BSEC unity** and helped BSEC Member States to focus on **concrete project ideas** of mutual interest and benefit.

The issue is currently discussed during the CSO meetings and I hope that with your support, dear Ministers, we will find ways to revive the PDF!

No.2.Problem: The “**quality**” of the Meetings of the various BSEC Working Groups, an issue **closely connected** also to their “**quantity**”.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as things stand today, PERMIS is asked to prepare, follow and implement the results of 80-90 meetings per year! This means **one meeting every 4 days**, weekends and holidays **included!** The results of this enormous burden are obvious:

No concrete **deliverables**, lack of **interest** and shrinking **participation** of Member States; many of the latter face the **lack** of the necessary **personnel** and **funds** for participating in so many BSEC meetings, especially given the disappointing outcome of many of them.

Two facts are sure: **(a)** the issue is a **longstanding one** (already in 2013 my predecessor informed the CMFA about the problem); **(b)** If things continue as they are, we **risk** the erosion of the **credibility** of our Organization.

Among other, the Secretariat has proposed a possible **solution** for breaking the above vicious circle, by **extending the duration** of the Chairmanship from 6 months to 1 year; it presented the many **advantages envisaged** and a sizable **majority** of the BSEC MS has expressed a positive view; it lies upon the shoulders of the MS to take the necessary decisions.

No.3.Problem: We have to find a solution to the issue of the **Social Security payments** of the staff in the Secretariat, an issue that has not only a **material**, but also a **social, humanitarian and legal aspect** to it. Yesterday the CSO made a significant step forward in starting the necessary procedure for solving this problem and I wish to express again our gratitude to the Azerbaijan Chairmanship for handling the issue with extreme sensitivity and sense of responsibility.

So much about problems! Now the "**good news**", which are indeed very encouraging and certainly **reflect** the progress achieved:

- As I already mentioned, BSEC is today acknowledged as a trusted partner from many other international organizations and agencies of the UN system. They entrust PERMIS with the **joint** formulation and implementation of concrete projects and events, placing at our disposal sizable funds and other concrete support.
- The "**Black Sea Project Promotion Facility**" continues its activity at "full steam"; 3 projects have already been endorsed and are implemented, while many more are in the pipeline. Allow me to underline one project of particular **symbolic importance**: the Facility is financing the first phase of a project for establishing the "**Black Sea Cuisine**" **brand**, in order to promote it **world-wide** as the **culinary heritage** of our wider region.
- BSEC upgraded its interaction with the EU to a project-oriented level of mutual benefit: PERMIS **participates** in project proposals, **reacts** to calls for proposals on EU projects and **was invited, for the first time**, to actively participate in the Steering Committee of the newly established "**Facility for Blue Economy in the Black Sea**". The EU is today funding in the wider Black Sea area projects of **regional ownership**, it implements **bottom-up policies** with the **active involvement** of BSEC MS.
- BSEC PERMIS co-organized recently important international conferences and seminars with third parties on issues of particular importance for the Black Sea region.

- BSEC PERMIS promoted the formulation of concrete projects by its institutional partners, **especially** in the energy sector. Through the **participation** of our “*BSEC Green Energy Network*” in third-party projects, **worth thousands** of Euros, important energy efficiency policies and practices were placed at the disposal of MS.
- For the first time BSEC PERMIS was present with its own stand at the 2018 ITF of Leipzig – the biggest and most significant annual transport event. We were, thus, able to inform the wider public on all achievements in the sector of Transports and trade-facilitation.
- PERMIS brought to its final phase the **implementation** of a FAO project promoting the exports of agricultural products in BSEC countries. The value of the project was 100.000 USD, which were entrusted to PERMIS by FAO.
- The first ever Workshop for Young Diplomats from BSEC Member States took place last October with the financial and organizational support of the KAS Foundation.
- We also took **active** measures to increase the visibility of our Organization: **apart** from our participation in **selected** international events, *the BSEC PERMIS website* has been **radically upgraded** and the newly introduced BSEC CORE system will decisively improve our external and internal correspondence and communications.
- The electronic *BSEC-PERMIS “Newsletter”* is send every second month to 1500 recipients, **having concluded** its first year of circulation. In the folder before you is the **anniversary collection** of all its 6 editions, where you will find most of the activities the Secretariat engaged in.

Excellencies, there are also **many projects and events** which are **currently prepared** for next year: the “**International Conference on Cruise Tourism** in the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean”, co-organized by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the UNWTO and BSEC, a BSEC **presentation event** in Brussels co-organized with the DG NEAR of the EU, the Romanian Presidency of the EU Council and the Bulgarian BSEC Chairmanship, a Workshop on how to attract more Chinese and Indian tourists for the benefit of our MS, co-organized by the UNWTO and BSEC, **and many more**.

Kindly forgive me if I tired you, but, I felt the obligation and responsibility to inform you appropriately on the Secretariat’s continuous efforts to render our Organization more efficient and productive.

In conclusion I wish to sincerely **thank You again** Mr. Chairman for a very successful BSEC Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan and wish to You, **Madame Minister** of the Republic of Bulgaria, all the best during your tenure as the new Chairmanship; I want to assure You that the Secretariat will offer its unwavering support to you!

Thank you for your kind attention!



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
Permanent International Secretariat

Annex VI to BS/FM/R(2018)2

BS/SOM/R(2018)3

REPORT
OF THE MEETING OF THE BSEC COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS
FOR RELATED BODIES, OBSERVERS, AND SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNERS

BSEC Headquarters, 31 October - 1 November 2018

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 31 October - 1 November 2018.
2. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Anar HUSEYNOV, Director of the Department for Economic Cooperation and Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:
 - Republic of Albania
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Azerbaijan
 - Republic of Bulgaria
 - Georgia
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Republic of Moldova
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Serbia
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
4. The following BSEC Related Bodies participated in the Meeting:
 - Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC)
 - Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB)
 - International Centre for the Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)
5. The following BSEC Observers attended the Meeting:
 - Arab Republic of Egypt

Hungary
Republic of Poland
European Commission

6. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.
7. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed, amended and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex II**.

I. RESOLUTIONS

AGENDA ITEM 2: FINANCIAL ISSUES

8. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 3: STATE OF AFFAIRS CONCERNING THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BSEC PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF)

9. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 4: RENEWAL OF THE OBSERVER STATUS

4.1. Poland

10. The Committee submitted the following draft Resolution to the Council:

“The Council, considering the application of the Republic of Poland, agreed to renew the Observer status to the Applicant State for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.”

AGENDA ITEM 5: RENEWAL OF THE SDP STATUS

5.1. Montenegro

11. The Committee submitted the following draft Resolution to the Council:

“The Council, considering the request of Montenegro, agreed to renew the Sectoral Dialogue Partnership Status of the requesting State for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.”

5.2. Black Sea Region Association of Shipbuilders and Shiprepairers (BRASS)

12. The Committee submitted the following draft Resolution to the Council:

“The Council, considering the request of the Black Sea Region Association of Shipbuilders and Shiprepairers (BRASS), agreed to renew the Sectoral Dialogue Partnership Status of the requesting Organization for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.”

AGENDA ITEM 6: CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT REGIONAL TRADE FACILITATION STRATEGY FOR THE BSEC REGION

13. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 7: CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT FRAMEWORK FOR BSEC SINGLE WINDOW COOPERATION

14. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 8: CONSIDERATION OF THE AMENDMENT PROPOSALS TO THE PABSEC HOST COUNTRY AGREEMENT

15. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 9: BSEC-EU INTERACTION

16. The Committee took note of the recent developments in the BSEC-EU interaction and exchanged views on further promoting balanced cooperation in a flexible, mutually beneficial and project-oriented way.

II. DECISIONS

AGENDA ITEM 10: REVIEW OF THE STATE OF COOPERATION AMONG THE MEMBER STATES

10.1. Sectoral Cooperation in Economic Areas

10.1.1. Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry (BSEC HQ, 23 October 2018)

17. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry (BSEC HQ, 23 October 2018) and in particular of the initiative by the Republic of Turkey to establish the BSEC Regional Cooperation Centre for Sustainable Food Systems.”

18. The Member States, which have not presented their positions on the initiative, were requested to do so in order to consider it at the next CSO Meeting in Baku, on 12-13 December 2018. The Summary of the project proposal for the BSEC Regional Cooperation Centre for Sustainable Food Systems is attached as **Annex VII**.

10.2. Science, Education, Tourism and Culture

10.2.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology (BSEC HQ, 19 October 2018)

19. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology held at the BSEC Headquarters on 19 October 2018 and instructed it to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the newly adopted Plan of Action.”

10.3. Cooperation in Social Challenges and other relevant fields

10.3.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Protection (BSEC HQ, 28 September 2018)

20. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Protection held at the BSEC Headquarters on 28 September 2018 and invited the Member States to implement the provisions in the Action Plan for 2018-2019.”

10.3.2. Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Massive Forest Fires (BSEC HQ, 25 October 2018)

21. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Massive Forest Fires held at the BSEC Headquarters on 25 October 2018.”

10.3.3. Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Floods and Torrents (BSEC HQ, 26 October 2018)

22. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Floods and Torrents held at the BSEC Headquarters on 26 October 2018.”

10.4. Intra-Organizational Matters

10.4.1. Meeting of the BSEC TROIKA, BSEC Related Bodies and BSEC PERMIS (BSEC HQ, 12 July 2018)

23. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the outcomes of the Meeting of the BSEC Troika, BSEC Related Bodies, and BSEC PERMIS held at the BSEC Headquarters on 12 July 2018.”

10.4.2. Coordination Meeting of the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, BSEC Related Bodies and BSEC PERMIS (BSEC HQ, 12 July 2018)

24. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the outcomes of the Meeting of the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, BSEC Related Bodies, and BSEC PERMIS held at the BSEC Headquarters on 12 July 2018.”

10.4.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Budgetary and Financial Issues (BSEC HQ, 27 September 2018)

25. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Budgetary and Financial Issues held at the BSEC Headquarters on 27 September 2018.”

AGENDA ITEM 11: APPOINTMENTS OF THE COUNTRY-COORDINATORS

26. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 12: APPOINTMENTS IN THE BSEC PERMIS

27. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

AGENDA ITEM 13: INTERACTION BETWEEN BSEC AND THE RELATED BODIES

13.1. Interaction between BSEC and PABSEC

28. The representative of PABSEC provided the information on its current and forthcoming activities.

13.2. Interaction between BSEC and BSEC Business Council

29. In the absence of the BSEC Business Council representative, the Committee did not consider this sub-item.

13.3. Interaction between BSEC and BSTDB

30. The representative of BSTDB provided the information on its current and forthcoming activities.

13.4. Interaction between BSEC and ICBSS

31. The representative of ICBSS provided the information on its current and forthcoming activities.

* * *

AGENDA ITEM 14: DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

32. In accordance with the BSEC Calendar of Events under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the next meeting of the Committee will take place on 12-13 December 2018 in Baku.

AGENDA ITEM 15: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

33. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 16: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

34. The Report was adopted by the Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials and will be submitted to the 39th Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Baku, 14 December 2018).



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
Permanent International Secretariat

Annex VII to BS/FM/R(2018)2

BS/SOM/R(2018)4

REPORT
OF THE MEETING OF THE BSEC
COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS

FOR RELATED BODIES, OBSERVERS, AND SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNERS

Baku, 12-13 December 2018

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials was held in Baku on 12-13 December 2018.
2. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Anar HUSEYNOV, Director of the Department for Economic Cooperation and Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:
 - Republic of Albania
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Azerbaijan
 - Republic of Bulgaria
 - Georgia
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Republic of Moldova
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Serbia
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
4. The following BSEC Related Body participated in the Meeting:
 - International Centre for the Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)
5. The following BSEC Observers attended the Meeting:
 - Arab Republic of Egypt
 - Hungary
 - Republic of Italy

European Commission

6. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.
7. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed, amended and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex II**.

I. RESOLUTIONS

AGENDA ITEM 2: FINANCIAL ISSUES

8. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 3: INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE WORKING GROUPS

9. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 4: RENEWAL OF THE OBSERVER STATUS

4.1. France

10. The Committee submitted the following draft Resolution to the Council:

“The Council, considering the application of France, agreed to renew the Observer status to the Applicant State for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.”

AGENDA ITEM 5: RENEWAL OF THE SDP STATUS

5.1. Republic of Korea

11. The Committee submitted the following draft Resolution to the Council:

“The Council, considering the request of the Republic of Korea, agreed to renew the Sectoral Dialogue Partnership Status of the requesting State for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.”

AGENDA ITEM 6: REGIONAL TRADE PROMOTION THROUGH TRADE FACILITATION AND SINGLE WINDOW MECHANISM

12. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 7: BSEC-EU INTERACTION

13. The Committee submitted the following draft Resolution to the Council:

“The Council took note of recent developments in BSEC-EU interaction and reiterated its support for developing a flexible, project-oriented and mutually beneficial cooperation.

In this framework, the Council instructed the BSEC PERMIS to continue informing the BSEC Member States on all EU activities and initiatives of potential benefit to the BSEC Member States.”

II. DECISIONS

AGENDA ITEM 8: ACTIVITIES OF THE BSEC PERMIS

8.1. Report of the Secretary General

14. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Progress Report of the Secretary General on the activities of BSEC PERMIS for the first semester of 2018 (Attachment – to Annex – to BS/FM/R(2018)1) and expressed its appreciation for the work done by the Secretary General and the PERMIS Staff to promote BSEC activities.”

AGENDA ITEM 9: REVIEW OF THE STATE OF COOPERATION AMONG THE MEMBER STATES

9.1. Trade and Economic Development

9.1.1. BSEC-FAO Workshop on Promotion of Agri-food Trade in the BSEC Region (BSEC HQ, 10-11 July 2018)

15. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Summary Proceedings of the BSEC-FAO Workshop on “Promotion of Agro-Food Trade in the BSEC Region”, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 10-11 July 2018 and advised the Member States to take into consideration the Recommendations of the Workshop.”

9.1.2. Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Banking and Finance (BSEC HQ, 14 November 2018)

16. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Banking and Finance, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 14 November 2018.”

9.1.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Customs Matters (BSEC HQ, 6 December 2018)

17. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Customs Matters, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 6 December 2018.”

9.1.4. Joint Meeting of the Working Groups on Trade and Economic Development and on Customs Matters (BSEC HQ, 6 December 2018)

18. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Working Groups on Trade and Economic Development and on Customs Matters, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 6 December 2018.”

9.1.5. Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development (BSEC HQ, 7 December 2018)

19. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 7 December 2018, and instructed the Working Group to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the newly adopted Plan of Action.”

9.2. Sectoral Cooperation in Economic Areas

9.2.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Transport (Baku, 24 October 2018)

20. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Working Group on Transport, held in Baku on 24 October 2018, and invited the Member States to take proper actions for the implementation of its decisions.

The Council reiterated its call to the Parties to the Memorandum of Understanding for the Coordinated Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway (BSRH), the Memorandum of Understanding on Development of the Motorways of the Sea (MoS) in the BSEC Region and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region to enhance and step up practical cooperation under the above-mentioned MoUs.

Furthermore, the Council invited the Country-Coordinator of the BSEC Working Group on Transport, presidencies in the BSRH Steering Committee and the MoS Ad Hoc Working Group, the BSEC PERMIS, the BSRH Joint Permanent Technical Secretariat and the MoS Joint Technical Secretariat to present coordinated proposals to the incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office in order to streamline their activities on transport cooperation.

The Council instructed the Working Group to take further decisive actions required to achieve goals set up in the Declaration of the 25th Anniversary Summit of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (Istanbul, 22 May 2017), the BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership (Goal 3) and the BSEC Public Communication Strategy.

The Council encouraged the BSEC PERMIS to continue the practice of the BSEC participation in the ITF Annual Summit and Exhibition in Leipzig in order to increase the BSEC visibility and to present the important role of BSEC in developing transport in the region.”

9.2.2. Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Transport (Baku, 25 October 2018)

21. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Transport of the BSEC Member States, held in Baku on 25 October 2018, and expressed its appreciation to the Chairmanship-in-Office for organizing this event.”

9.2.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Energy (BSEC HQ, 4 December 2018)

22. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Energy, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 4 December 2018, and instructed it to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the adopted Plan of Action.”

9.2.4. Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region (Samsun, 27 November 2018)

23. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 27 November 2018, and invited the Steering Committee to take further steps necessary for the proper implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region.

Furthermore, the Council encouraged the Member States to take appropriate measures in the BSEC subsidiary organs on trade and transport facilitation in order to remove barriers to fair, secure and efficient international road transport, in particular, through introduction of new technologies on transport and at the border crossing points.”

9.2.5. Meeting on the Implementation of the Project “BSEC PERMIT System” (BSEC HQ, 27 November 2018)

24. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of information about the Meeting of the BSEC Member States participating in the Project “BSEC PERMIT System”, which took place at the BSEC Headquarters on 27 November 2018.”

9.2.6. Meeting of the Working Group on ICT (Baku, 3 December 2018)

25. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on ICT, held in Baku on 3 December 2018, and instructed it to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the adopted Plan of Action.”

9.2.7. Meeting of the Ministers in charge of ICT (Baku, 4 December 2018)

26. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council welcomed the “Baku Joint Declaration on Cooperation in the field of Information-Communication Technologies in the BSEC Region”, adopted at the Meeting of the Ministers in charge of ICT of the BSEC Member States, held in

Baku on 4 December 2018, and instructed the BSEC Working Group on ICT to implement its provisions.”

9.3. Science, Education, Tourism and Culture

9.3.1. Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States (Istanbul, 22-25 October 2018)

27. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council instructed the CSO to discuss at its next meeting the results of the joint BSEC-KAS 1st Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States on “Regional Policies in the wider Black Sea area”, held on 22-24 October 2018 in Istanbul, in order to improve the way in which future events are organized.”

9.3.2. Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (BSEC HQ, 2 November 2018)

28. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 2 November 2018, and instructed it to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the newly adopted Plan of Action.”

9.3.3. BSEC Workshop on Developing an Information Network on Recognition to Maintain Quality in Higher Education (BSEC HQ, 12 November 2018)

29. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Summary and Conclusions of the BSEC Workshop on Developing an Information Network on Recognition to Maintain Quality in Higher Education, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 12 November 2018, and expressed its appreciation to the Council of Higher Education of the Republic of Turkey for organizing the event.”

9.3.4. Meeting of the Working Group on Education (BSEC HQ, 13 November 2018)

30. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Education, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 13 November 2018.”

9.3.5. Meeting of the Working Group on Culture (Belgrade, 22 November 2018)

31. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Culture, held in Belgrade on 22 November 2018.”

9.3.6. Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Culture (Belgrade, 23 November 2018)

32. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council welcomed the “Belgrade Declaration of the Ministers in charge of Culture of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation”, adopted at the Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Culture, held in Belgrade on 23 November 2018, and instructed the BSEC Working Group on Culture to implement its provisions.”

9.4. Cooperation in Social Challenges and other relevant fields

9.4.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Liaison Officers of the BSEC Network on Emergency Assistance (BSEC HQ, 7 November 2018)

33. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Liaison Officers of the BSEC Network on Emergency Assistance, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 7 November 2018.”

9.4.2. Informal Meeting of the Network of Liaison Officers on Combating Crime (BSEC HQ, 8 November 2018)

34. The Committee took note of the Informal Meeting of the Network of Liaison Officers on Combating Crime held at the BSEC Headquarters on 8 November 2018 and submitted to the Council the relevant draft Decision on it under the next sub-item.

9.4.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Combating Crime (BSEC HQ, 9 November 2018)

35. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Network of the Liaison Officers in Combating Crime and of the Report of the Working Group on Combating Crime, in Particular in its Organized Forms, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 8 and 9 November 2018, and instructed the Working Group to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities including combating drug-trafficking contained in the newly adopted Plan of Action.”

9.4.4. Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Health Care and Pharmaceuticals (BSEC HQ, 23 November 2018)

36. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Health Care and Pharmaceuticals, held at BSEC Headquarters on 23 November 2018, and expressed its regrets that, for the second time in a row, convenes without the necessary quorum and instructed the Working Group to prepare and conclude draft Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding to be adopted during the next meeting of the Ministers in charge of Healthcare of the BSEC Member States.”

9.5. Intra-Organizational Matters

9.5.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Organizational Matters (BSEC HQ, 25-26 September 2018)

37. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Organizational Matters held at the BSEC Headquarters on 25-26 September 2018.”

9.5.2. Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction (BSEC HQ, 30 October 2018)

38. The Committee submitted the following draft Decision to the Council:

“The Council took note of the outcomes of the Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction, held in Istanbul on 30 October 2018.”

AGENDA ITEM 10: APPOINTMENTS OF THE COUNTRY-COORDINATORS

39. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

AGENDA ITEM 11: APPOINTMENTS IN THE BSEC PERMIS

40. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

AGENDA ITEM 12: INTERACTION BETWEEN BSEC AND THE RELATED BODIES

12.1. Interaction between BSEC and PABSEC

41. In the absence of PABSEC representative, the Committee did not consider this sub-item.

12.2. Interaction between BSEC and BSEC Business Council

42. In the absence of BSEC Business Council representative, the Committee did not consider this sub-item.

12.3. Interaction between BSEC and BSTDB

43. In the absence of BSTDB representative, the Committee did not consider this sub-item.

12.4. Interaction between BSEC and ICBSS

44. The Committee submitted the following draft Recommendation to the Council:

“The Council took note of the activities of ICBSS in the period of the Chairmanship-in-Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan and congratulated ICBSS on its 20th Anniversary, expressing its satisfaction for the productive work achieved so far.”

* * *

AGENDA ITEM 13: DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

45. The date and venue of the next meeting of the Committee will be determined by the BSEC Calendar of Events under the incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office of the Republic of Bulgaria.

AGENDA ITEM 14: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

46. No issue was raised under this item.

AGENDA ITEM 15: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

47. The Report was adopted by the Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials and will be submitted to the 39th Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Baku, 14 December 2018).

**MEETING
OF THE BSEC COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS**

Baku, 12-13 December 2018

– LIST OF PARTICIPANTS –

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MEETING OF THE BSEC COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS

Baku, 12-13 December 2018

AGENDA

CHAPTER "A"

**DRAFT RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE
DISCUSSED BY THE COMMITTEE**

I. RESOLUTIONS

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM 2: FINANCIAL ISSUES

- 2.1. State of affairs with regard to Mandatory Annual Contributions to the 2018 BSEC Budget
- 2.2. Exchange of views on the possible financial implications for the amendments to the Regulation for the Staff of BSEC PERMIS
- 2.3. Consideration of the draft 2019 BSEC Budget

**AGENDA ITEM 3: INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE
WORKING GROUPS**

AGENDA ITEM 4: RENEWAL OF THE OBSERVER STATUS

- 4.1. France

AGENDA ITEM 5: RENEWAL OF THE SDP STATUS

- 5.1. Republic of Korea

**AGENDA ITEM 6: REGIONAL TRADE PROMOTION THROUGH TRADE
FACILITATION AND SINGLE WINDOW MECHANISM**

- 6.1. Consideration of the Draft Regional Trade Facilitation Strategy for the BSEC Region

6.2. Consideration of the Draft Framework for BSEC Single Window Cooperation

AGENDA ITEM 7: BSEC-EU INTERACTION

II. DECISIONS

AGENDA ITEM 8: ACTIVITIES OF THE BSEC PERMIS

8.1. Report of the Secretary General

AGENDA ITEM 9: REVIEW OF THE STATE OF COOPERATION AMONG THE MEMBER STATES

9.1. Trade and Economic Development

9.1.1. BSEC-FAO Workshop on Promotion of Agri-food Trade in the BSEC Region (BSEC HQ, 10-11 July 2018)

9.1.2. Meeting of the Working Group on Banking and Finance (BSEC HQ, 14 November 2018)

9.1.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Customs Matters (BSEC HQ, 6 December 2018)

9.1.4. Joint Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development and the Working Group on Customs Matters (BSEC HQ, 6 December 2018)

9.1.5. Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development (BSEC HQ, 7 December 2018)

9.2. Sectoral Cooperation in Economic Areas

9.2.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Transport (Baku, 24 October 2018)

9.2.2. Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Transport (Baku, 25 October 2018)

9.2.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Energy (BSEC HQ, 4 December 2018)

9.2.4. Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region (Samsun, 27 November 2018)

9.2.5. Meeting on the Implementation of the Project “BSEC PERMIT System” (BSEC HQ, 27 November 2018)

9.2.6. Meeting of the Working Group on ICT (Baku, 3 December 2018)

9.2.7. Meeting of the Ministers in charge of ICT (Baku, 4 December 2018)

9.3. Science, Education, Tourism and Culture

9.3.1. Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States (Istanbul, 22-25 October 2018)

9.3.2. Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (BSEC HQ, 2 November 2018)

9.3.3. BSEC Workshop on Developing an Information Network on Recognition to Maintain Quality in Higher Education (BSEC HQ, 12 November 2018)

- 9.3.4. Meeting of the Working Group on Education (BSEC HQ, 13 November 2018)
- 9.3.5. Meeting of the Working Group on Culture (Belgrade, 22 November 2018)
- 9.3.6. Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Culture (Belgrade, 23 November 2018)

9.4. Cooperation in Social Challenges and other relevant fields

- 9.4.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Liaison Officers of the BSEC Network on Emergency Assistance (BSEC HQ, 7 November 2018)
- 9.4.2. Informal Meeting of the Network of Liaison Officers on Combating Crime (BSEC HQ, 8 November 2018)
- 9.4.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Combating Crime (BSEC HQ, 9 November 2018)
- 9.4.4. Meeting of the Working Group on Health Care and Pharmaceuticals (BSEC HQ, 23 November 2018)

9.5. Intra-Organizational Matters

- 9.5.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Organizational Matters (BSEC HQ, 25-26 September 2018)
- 9.5.2. Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction (BSEC HQ, 30 October 2018)

AGENDA ITEM 10: APPOINTMENTS OF THE COUNTRY-COORDINATORS

- 10.1. Working Group on Culture
- 10.2. Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts in Seismic Risk

AGENDA ITEM 11: APPOINTMENTS IN THE BSEC PERMIS

- 11.1. First Deputy Secretary General, post vacant from 1 July 2021
- 11.2. Project Coordinator, post vacant from 1 January 2019

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

AGENDA ITEM 12: INTERACTION BETWEEN BSEC AND THE RELATED BODIES

- 12.1. Interaction between BSEC and PABSEC
- 12.2. Interaction between BSEC and BSEC Business Council
- 12.3. Interaction between BSEC and BSTDB
- 12.4. Interaction between BSEC and ICBSS

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AGENDA ITEM 13: DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 14: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM 15: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

CHAPTER “B”

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL (ALREADY AGREED BY THE COMMITTEE)

I. RESOLUTIONS

AGENDA ITEM 1: FINANCIAL ISSUES

1.1. Consideration of the Mid-year report on the implementation of the 2018 BSEC Budget

AGENDA ITEM 2: STATE OF AFFAIRS CONCERNING THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BSEC PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF)

2.1. The issue of the replenishment of PDF

AGENDA ITEM 3: RENEWAL OF THE OBSERVER STATUS

3.1. Republic of Poland

AGENDA ITEM 4: RENEWAL OF THE SDP STATUS

4.1. Montenegro

4.2. Black Sea Region Association of Shipbuilders and Shiprepairers (BRASS)

AGENDA ITEM 5: CONSIDERATION OF THE AMENDMENT PROPOSALS TO THE PABSEC HOST COUNTRY AGREEMENT

II. DECISIONS

AGENDA ITEM 6: REVIEW OF THE STATE OF COOPERATION AMONG THE MEMBER STATES

6.1. Sectoral Cooperation in Economic Areas

6.1.1. Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry (BSEC HQ, 23 October 2018)

6.2. Science, Education, Tourism and Culture

6.2.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology (BSEC HQ, 19 October 2018)

6.3. Cooperation in Social Challenges and other relevant fields

6.3.1. Meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Protection (BSEC HQ, 28 September 2018)

6.3.2. Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Massive Forest Fires (BSEC HQ, 25 October 2018)

6.3.3. Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Floods and Torrents (BSEC HQ, 26 October 2018)

6.4. Intra-Organizational Matters

6.4.1. Meeting of the BSEC TROIKA, BSEC Related Bodies and BSEC PERMIS (BSEC HQ, 12 July 2018)

6.4.2. Coordination Meeting of the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, BSEC Related Bodies and BSEC PERMIS (BSEC HQ, 12 July 2018)

6.4.3. Meeting of the Working Group on Budgetary and Financial Issues (BSEC HQ, 27 September 2018)

AGENDA ITEM 7: APPOINTMENTS IN THE BSEC PERMIS

7.1. Deputy Secretary General, post vacant from 1 July 2019

7.2. Legal Advisor, post vacant from 1 July 2019

7.3. Executive Manager, post vacant from 1 July 2019

**THIRTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

Baku, 14 December 2018

RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(For Related Bodies, Observers, and Sectoral Dialogue Partners)

I. RESOLUTIONS

FINANCIAL ISSUES

1. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

**STATE OF AFFAIRS CONCERNING THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
BSEC PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF)**

2. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

**INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE WORKING
GROUPS**

3. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

RENEWAL OF THE OBSERVER STATUS

Poland

4. The Council, considering the application of the Republic of Poland, agreed to renew the Observer status to the Applicant State for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.

France

5. The Council, considering the application of France, agreed to renew the Observer status to the Applicant State for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.

RENEWAL OF THE SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNERSHIP STATUS

Montenegro

6. The Council, considering the request of Montenegro, agreed to renew the Sectoral Dialogue Partnership Status of the requesting State for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.

Republic of Korea

7. The Council, considering the request of the Republic of Korea, agreed to renew the Sectoral Dialogue Partnership Status of the requesting State for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.

Black Sea Region Association of Shipbuilders and Shiprepairers (BRASS)

8. The Council, considering the request of the Black Sea Region Association of Shipbuilders and Shiprepairers (BRASS), agreed to renew the Sectoral Dialogue Partnership Status of the requesting Organization for another period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.

CONSIDERATION OF THE AMENDMENT PROPOSALS TO THE PABSEC HOST COUNTRY AGREEMENT

9. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

BSEC-EU INTERACTION

10. The Council took note of recent developments in BSEC-EU interaction and reiterated its support for developing a flexible, project-oriented and mutually beneficial cooperation.

11. In this framework, the Council instructed the BSEC PERMIS to continue informing the BSEC Member States on all EU activities and initiatives of potential benefit to the BSEC Member States.

II. DECISIONS

ACTIVITIES OF THE BSEC PERMIS

Report of the Secretary General

12. The Council took note of the Progress Report of the Secretary General on the activities of BSEC PERMIS for the first semester of 2018 (Attachment – to Annex – to BS/FM/R(2018)1) and expressed its appreciation for the work done by the Secretary General and the PERMIS Staff to promote BSEC activities.

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF COOPERATION AMONG THE MEMBER STATES

Trade and Economic Development

BSEC-FAO Workshop on Promotion of Agri-food Trade in the BSEC Region (BSEC HQ, 10-11 July 2018)

13. The Council took note of the Summary Proceedings of the BSEC-FAO Workshop on “Promotion of Agro-Food Trade in the BSEC Region”, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 10-11 July 2018 and advised the Member States to take into consideration the Recommendations of the Workshop.

Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Banking and Finance (BSEC HQ, 14 November 2018)

14. The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Banking and Finance, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 14 November 2018.

Meeting of the Working Group on Customs Matters (BSEC HQ, 6 December 2018)

15. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Customs Matters, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 6 December 2018.

Joint Meeting of the Working Groups on Trade and Economic Development and on Customs Matters (BSEC HQ, 6 December 2018)

16. The Council took note of the Report of the Joint Meeting of the Working Groups on Trade and Economic Development and on Customs Matters, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 6 December 2018.

Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development (BSEC HQ, 7 December 2018)

17. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 7 December 2018, and instructed the Working Group to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the newly adopted Plan of Action.

Sectoral Cooperation in Economic Areas

Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry (BSEC HQ, 23 October 2018)

18. The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry (BSEC HQ, 23 October 2018) and welcomed the

initiative by the Republic of Turkey to establish the BSEC Regional Cooperation Centre for Sustainable Food Systems.

Meeting of the Working Group on Transport (Baku, 24 October 2018)

19. The Council took note of the Report of the Working Group on Transport, held in Baku on 24 October 2018, and invited the Member States to take proper actions for the implementation of its decisions.

20. The Council reiterated its call to the Parties to the Memorandum of Understanding for the Coordinated Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway (BSRH), the Memorandum of Understanding on Development of the Motorways of the Sea (MoS) in the BSEC Region and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region to enhance and step up practical cooperation under the above-mentioned MoUs.

21. Furthermore, the Council invited the Country-Coordinator of the BSEC Working Group on Transport, presidencies in the BSRH Steering Committee and the MoS Ad Hoc Working Group, the BSEC PERMIS, the BSRH Joint Permanent Technical Secretariat and the MoS Joint Technical Secretariat to present coordinated proposals to the incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office in order to streamline their activities on transport cooperation.

22. The Council instructed the Working Group to take further decisive actions required to achieve goals set up in the Declaration of the 25th Anniversary Summit of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (Istanbul, 22 May 2017), the BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership (Goal 3) and the BSEC Public Communication Strategy.

23. The Council encouraged the BSEC PERMIS to continue the practice of the BSEC participation in the ITF Annual Summit and Exhibition in Leipzig in order to increase the BSEC visibility and to present the important role of BSEC in developing transport in the region.

Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Transport (Baku, 25 October 2018)

24. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Transport of the BSEC Member States, held in Baku on 25 October 2018, and expressed its appreciation to the Chairmanship-in-Office for organizing this event.

Meeting of the Working Group on Energy (BSEC HQ, 4 December 2018)

25. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Energy, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 4 December 2018, and instructed it to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the adopted Plan of Action.

Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region (Samsun, 27 November 2018)

26. The Council took note of the Report of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 27 November 2018, and invited the Steering Committee to take further steps necessary for the proper implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region.

27. Furthermore, the Council encouraged the Member States to take appropriate measures in the BSEC subsidiary organs on trade and transport facilitation in order to remove barriers to fair, secure and efficient international road transport, in particular, through introduction of new technologies on transport and at the border crossing points.

Meeting on the Implementation of the Project “BSEC PERMIT System” (BSEC HQ, 27 November 2018)

28. The Council took note of information about the Meeting of the BSEC Member States participating in the Project “BSEC PERMIT System”, which took place at the BSEC Headquarters on 27 November 2018.

Meeting of the Working Group on ICT (Baku, 3 December 2018)

29. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on ICT, held in Baku on 3 December 2018, and instructed it to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the adopted Plan of Action.

Meeting of the Ministers in charge of ICT (Baku, 4 December 2018)

30. The Council welcomed the “Baku Joint Declaration on Cooperation in the field of Information-Communication Technologies in the BSEC Region”, adopted at the Meeting of the Ministers in charge of ICT of the BSEC Member States, held in Baku on 4 December 2018, and instructed the BSEC Working Group on ICT to implement its provisions.

Science, Education, Tourism and Culture

Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology (BSEC HQ, 19 October 2018)

31. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology held at the BSEC Headquarters on 19 October 2018 and instructed it to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the newly adopted Plan of Action.

Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States (Istanbul, 22-25 October 2018)

32. The Council instructed the CSO to discuss at its next meeting the results of the joint BSEC-KAS 1st Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States on “Regional Policies in the wider Black Sea area”, held on 22-24 October 2018 in Istanbul, in order to improve the way in which future events are organized.

Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (BSEC HQ, 2 November 2018)

33. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 2 November 2018, and instructed it to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities contained in the newly adopted Plan of Action.

BSEC Workshop on Developing an Information Network on Recognition to Maintain Quality in Higher Education (BSEC HQ, 12 November 2018)

34. The Council took note of the Summary and Conclusions of the BSEC Workshop on Developing an Information Network on Recognition to Maintain Quality in Higher Education, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 12 November 2018, and expressed its appreciation to the Council of Higher Education of the Republic of Turkey for organizing the event.

Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Education (BSEC HQ, 13 November 2018)

35. The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Education, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 13 November 2018.

Meeting of the Working Group on Culture (Belgrade, 22 November 2018)

36. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Culture, held in Belgrade on 22 November 2018.

Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Culture (Belgrade, 23 November 2018)

37. The Council welcomed the “Belgrade Declaration of the Ministers in charge of Culture of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation”, adopted at the Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Culture, held in Belgrade on 23 November 2018, and instructed the BSEC Working Group on Culture to implement its provisions.

Cooperation in Social Challenges and other relevant fields

Meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Protection (BSEC HQ, 28 September 2018)

38. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Protection held at the BSEC Headquarters on 28 September 2018 and invited the Member States to implement the provisions in the Action Plan for 2018-2019.

Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Massive Forest Fires (BSEC HQ, 25 October 2018)

39. The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Massive Forest Fires held at the BSEC Headquarters on 25 October 2018.

Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Floods and Torrents (BSEC HQ, 26 October 2018)

40. The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Floods and Torrents held at the BSEC Headquarters on 26 October 2018.

Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Liaison Officers of the BSEC Network on Emergency Assistance (BSEC HQ, 7 November 2018)

41. The Council took note of the Report of the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance and Liaison Officers of the BSEC Network on Emergency Assistance, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 7 November 2018.

Meeting of the Working Group on Combating Crime (BSEC HQ, 9 November 2018)

42. The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Network of the Liaison Officers in Combating Crime and of the Report of the Working Group on Combating Crime, in Particular in its Organized Forms, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 8 and 9 November 2018, and instructed the Working Group to continue its activities in accordance with the priorities including combating drug-trafficking contained in the newly adopted Plan of Action.

Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Health Care and Pharmaceuticals (BSEC HQ, 23 November 2018)

43. The Council took note of the Conclusions of the Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Health Care and Pharmaceuticals, held at BSEC Headquarters on 23 November 2018, and expressed its regrets that, for the second time in a row, convenes without the necessary quorum and instructed the Working Group to prepare and conclude draft Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding to be adopted during the next meeting of the Ministers in charge of Healthcare of the BSEC Member States.

Intra-Organizational Matters

Meeting of the BSEC TROIKA, BSEC Related Bodies and BSEC PERMIS (BSEC HQ, 12 July 2018)

44. The Council took note of the outcomes of the Meeting of the BSEC Troika, BSEC Related Bodies, and BSEC PERMIS held at the BSEC Headquarters on 12 July 2018.

Coordination Meeting of the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, BSEC Related Bodies and BSEC PERMIS (BSEC HQ, 12 July 2018)

45. The Council took note of the outcomes of the Meeting of the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, BSEC Related Bodies, and BSEC PERMIS held at the BSEC Headquarters on 12 July 2018.

Meeting of the Working Group on Budgetary and Financial Issues (BSEC HQ, 27 September 2018)

46. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Budgetary and Financial Issues held at the BSEC Headquarters on 27 September 2018.

Meeting of the Working Group on Organizational Matters (BSEC HQ, 25-26 September 2018)

47. The Council took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Organizational Matters held at the BSEC Headquarters on 25-26 September 2018.

Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction (BSEC HQ, 30 October 2018)

48. The Council took note of the outcomes of the Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction, held in Istanbul on 30 October 2018.

APPOINTMENT OF THE COUNTRY-COORDINATORS

Working Group on Culture

49. The Council appointed the Republic of Turkey as the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group on Culture for a period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.

Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts in Seismic Risk

50. The Council appointed the Russian Federation as the Country-Coordinator of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts in Seismic Risk for a period of two years, as of 1 January 2019.

51. The Council appointed Romania as the Country-Coordinator of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts in Seismic Risk for a period of two years, as of 1 January 2021.

APPOINTMENTS IN THE BSEC PERMIS

First Deputy Secretary General, post vacant from 1 January 2019

52. The Council, taking note of the fact that Ambassador Hüseyin Avni KARSLIOĞLU (Republic of Turkey) appointed as the First Deputy Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS as of 1 July 2018, will not assume the post, appointed Ambassador İzzet Selim YENEL (Republic of Turkey) as the First Deputy Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS for a three year term-in-office as of 1 January 2019 until 31 December 2021.

Deputy Secretary General, post vacant from 1 July 2019

53. The Council appointed Ambassador Traian CHEBELEU (Romania) as Deputy Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS for a three year term-in-office, as of 1 July 2019 until 30 June 2022.

Legal Advisor, post vacant from 1 July 2019

54. The Council renewed for two more years the term-in-office of Mr. Teimuraz ANTELAVA (Georgia) as the Legal Advisor of the BSEC PERMIS as of 1 July 2019 until 30 June 2021.

Project Coordinator, post vacant from 1 January 2019

55. The Council renewed the term-in-office of Mr. Yevgen KOZIY (Ukraine) as the Project Coordinator of the BSEC PERMIS for one more year as of 1 January 2019 until 31 December 2019.

Executive Manager, post vacant from 1 July 2019

56. The Council appointed Mr. Ashot KOCHARIAN (Republic of Armenia) as Executive Manager of the BSEC PERMIS for a three year term-in-office, as of 1 July 2019 until 30 June 2022.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

INTERACTION BETWEEN BSEC AND THE RELATED BODIES

Interaction between BSEC and PABSEC

57. The Council took note of the activities of PABSEC in the second semester of 2018.

Interaction between BSEC and BSEC Business Council

58. The Council took note of the activities of the BSEC Business Council in the period of the Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Interaction between BSEC and BSTDB

59. The Council welcomed the appointment of Mr. Dmitry PANKIN as new President of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank, as well as the newly appointed leadership and took note with appreciation the Bank's growing contribution to the regional development.

60. The Council invited the interested BSEC Member States to consider contributing to the Black Sea Project Promotion Facility.

Interaction between BSEC and ICBSS

61. The Council took note of the activities of ICBSS in the period of the Chairmanship-in-Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan and congratulated ICBSS on its 20th Anniversary, expressing its satisfaction for the productive work achieved so far.



**PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

Attachment 3 to Annex VIII to BS/FM/R(2018)2

PROGRESS REPORT

OF THE BSEC PERMIS SECRETARY GENERAL

ARMENIAN BSEC CHAIRMANSHIP-IN-OFFICE

1 JANUARY TO 30 JUNE 2018

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INTRODUCTION

The Progress Report of the Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat (BSEC PERMIS) is submitted to the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States.

The Progress Report aims to outline the activity of BSEC during the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office of the Republic of Armenia (1 January – 30 June 2018). In this framework, the Progress Report contains concise information on the main priorities of the Armenian BSEC Chairmanship and on the main events and developments in BSEC during its mandate.

The Progress Report also provides information on recent developments in all BSEC areas of cooperation, referring to the implementation of previous Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the outcome of the meetings of the BSEC subsidiary organs, as well as the relevant activities of the BSEC PERMIS.

Furthermore, the Progress Report refers to the organizational matters of BSEC, the financial situation of the Organization and the activity of the Organization concerning the elaboration and implementation of projects, including through the “BSEC Project Development Fund” and the “Black Sea Project Promotion Facility”.

Appropriately, the Progress Report also contains information on the activities of the BSEC related bodies, i.e. the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the BSEC Business Council, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank and the International Center for Black Sea Studies, as well as on their interaction with BSEC.

Finally, the Progress Report provides information on the cooperation between BSEC and third parties, e.g. its Observers, Sectoral Dialogue Partners and other international or regional organizations and initiatives.

1. THE ARMENIAN BSEC CHAIRMANSHIP-IN-OFFICE

As the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation from January to June 2018, the Republic of Armenia decided to lead the Organization with an emphasis on enhancing the regional economic cooperation. It also committed to direct its efforts toward the further improvement of effectiveness and efficiency of BSEC and the BSEC PERMIS through elaboration of the relevant policy and thorough implementation of resolutions, decisions and recommendations of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

In the context of the new global trends and new technologies and having a considerable potential in the Information Technology field and software development, as well as industrial computing, electronics, and production of semiconductors, Armenia also focused its efforts on furthering result-oriented collaboration in the field of Information and Communication Technologies and promoting the ICT cooperation among the Member States. Furthermore, Armenia placed emphasis on the entrepreneurial dimension and on the promotion of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises as the key factor for strengthening business cooperation within the BSEC economic community. More project and result-oriented approach in all BSEC strategic areas was another field of special attention by the Armenian Chairmanship-in-Office, in particular through the further support of inclusive actions and initiatives within the BSEC mandate aimed at achieving tangible results to the benefit of the BSEC community. Sustainable tourism development throughout the Black Sea region as a very important area of cooperation among the BSEC Member States was another priority area of the Armenian Chairmanship.

Sectoral priorities

In line with the BSEC Charter, the Istanbul Summit Declaration on the occasion of the Twenty-fifth anniversary of BSEC as well as the BSEC Economic Agenda “Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership”, the Republic of Armenia chose the following sectoral priorities for its Chairmanship-in-Office:

- Strengthening and advancing regional economic cooperation in the BSEC area;
- Further promoting cooperation with the UN and its specialized agencies in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, European Union, Eurasian Economic Union, other international and regional organizations, financial institutions and initiatives on the basis of mutual interest and complementarity;
- Improving interaction settings with and among the BSEC Related Bodies, Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners;
- Promoting elaboration of new and implementation of ongoing strategic infrastructural projects within BSEC;

THE ARMENIAN BSEC CHAIRMANSHIP-IN-OFFICE

- Mainstreaming the project-based agenda through the existing in cooperation with the BSEC Related Bodies and partners;
- Developing multifaceted sectoral interaction among the Member States within the defined field priorities, including Information and Communication Technologies, Science and Technology, Agriculture and Agro-industry, Tourism.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BSEC ECONOMIC AGENDA 2012

The “BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership” (Economic Agenda 2012) was adopted by the BSEC Council (Belgrade, 11 June 2012) and endorsed by the BSEC Summit (Istanbul, 26 June 2012). The “Economic Agenda 2012” is a reference document for guiding the cooperation in the BSEC framework in order to meet the goals set by the BSEC Charter and the new challenges and opportunities that the Member States face. The “Economic Agenda 2012” is also an effort made by the Member States to shape a common vision and to build up a joint agenda, so that the regional cooperation in the BSEC framework could really serve their common interests.

The “Economic Agenda 2012” focuses primarily on achievable actions, programmes and joint projects which are to be implemented within a reasonable time frame, and on the implementation of regional or trans-regional projects which would contribute directly to the success of economic reforms and democratic transformation. In the implementation of the general guidelines of action for the Organization set by the “Economic Agenda 2012”, special attention was given to the strengthening of the project-oriented dimension of the Organization.

The Council (Istanbul, 15 December 2012) adopted by decision a document called “The way forward for an action plan on the implementation of the Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership”, in order to provide an indicative framework for the implementation of the “Economic Agenda 2012”. At the same Meeting, the Council requested the BSEC subsidiary organs to align their activities with the prioritized actions of the “Economic Agenda 2012”.

Consequently, the item “Implementation of the Economic Agenda 2012” has been on the agendas of the all the Working Groups meetings and all Working Groups agreed on the main priorities to be pursued in their respective fields of competence.

The Working Groups convened in the first semester of 2018 continued their work in full compliance with the objectives they previously set and redefined or confirmed their priorities for the next medium-term (2016-2018), also identifying potential deliverables/projects.

3. STATE OF COOPERATION WITHIN THE BSEC WORKING GROUPS

3.1. Sectoral Cooperation in Economic Areas

3.1.1. Transport

During the Armenian Chairmanship the BSEC continued the intensive work on transport cooperation, implementing transport projects, developing BSEC's institutional capacity and expanding its visibility in the BSEC Region and beyond.

At the Meeting of the Steering Committee on the Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway, which was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 21 March 2018, the Member States elaborated a set of actions needed for the proper implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway. The necessary support in this work was provided by the BSRH Joint Permanent Technical Secretariat, which continued collecting the needed data, making an analysis and producing professional recommendations for the future activities. Following the meeting, the BSEC PERMIS continued consultations with the BSRH JPTS and relevant national authorities of the BSEC MS with regard to the implementation of the BSRH project.

On 23-25 May 2018 the BSEC PERMIS Delegation, headed by BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, participated in the Annual Summit of the International Transport Forum (ITF) held in Leipzig, Germany. The Forum was attended by 1,400 participants and more than 40 government ministers from all over the globe. The BSEC PERMIS was present at the event with a separate stand under the name "*The BSEC Organization: point of reference for regional cooperation*", in which visitors found video-, printed- and e-material concerning the organization's history, major BSEC transport projects, their state of implementation, as well as the present-day and the future plans concerning the overall transport and trade facilitation in the region. Material for the Stand was also provided by partner-entities active in the wider Black Sea region, like the *Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB)*, the *Joint Permanent Technical Secretariat of the Black Sea Ring Highway*, the *International Road Transport Union (IRU)*, the *Union of the Road Transport Associations in the BSEC Region (BSEC-URTA)*, the *International Union of Railways (UIC)* and the (OTIF). The rank and number of persons who visited the BSEC stand during the three days of the event exceeded the expectations and justified the strenuous efforts for this initiative of the PERMIS: numerous ministers, heads of delegations, high representatives of international organizations and other interested stakeholders visited the BSEC stand. All guests expressed their appreciation for the extensive and interesting content of the BSEC stand and for the significance of the BSEC organization in the overall efforts to promote better, faster and safer transportation of people, goods and services in the wider Black Sea region.

Upon the invitation of the organizers, Ambassador CHRISTIDES addressed the Ministers' Roundtable entitled "*Overcoming barriers to fair, secure and efficient international road transport*", which was also attended by the responsible Ministers and Deputy Ministers of five BSEC Member States, in particular, of Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Romania, Russia and Ukraine. Ambassador CHRISTIDES underlined the role of the BSEC organization for the promotion of joint projects which facilitate trade and transportation among its Member States and beyond, pointing out that most of the barriers mentioned by participants at the Roundtable are permanent subjects of concern and discussion among the relevant BSEC organs. He concluded with the message to both, BSEC Member States and other interested stakeholders, to take greater advantage of the experience and know-how that the BSEC organization has accumulated during its 26 years of fruitful activity for the facilitation of transports and trade in a region that serves as the natural "inter-connector" between three continents. On the sidelines of the Forum and upon his request, Ambassador CHRISTIDES met with H.E. Mr. Ramin GULUZADE, Minister of Transport, Communications and High Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in order to discuss and exchange views concerning the forthcoming Azerbaijan BSEC Chairmanship (second semester 2018).

BSEC PERMIS Secretary General participated at the "80th Session of the Inland Transport Committee of the UNECE", which was held on 20-21 February 2018 at the "Palais des Nations" in Geneva, and addressed the audience during the session under the title: "Intermodal freight transport and connectivity". Ambassador CHRISTIDES informed participants on the past, recent and future projects and efforts of the Organization to comprehensively promote transport and Trade facilitation in the wider Black Sea region and beyond. He stressed the complementary character of the BSEC initiatives to other trans-continental projects and described the close cooperation and coordination between BSEC and other international organizations with experience in the field, especially with the UNECE.

Ambassador CHRISTIDES was invited to the *10th World Congress on High Speed Rail*, which was held in Ankara on 8-11 May 2018, and act in this prestigious congress as the Co-Moderator of one of the three high-level Round Tables, under the title: "How Can High Speed Rail (Re) shape Local and Regional Development?" Distinguished participants from various countries (China, Turkey, Morocco, Spain, Italy, UK) moderated by Prof. Andrew McNAUGHTON and Ambassador CHRISTIDES, presented their concrete and comprehensive answers to 10 pre-formulated questions, concerning the evolution of High Speed Rail (HSR), its impact on the economy and on society in general, possible negative consequences from its development, etc. The common denominator from the answers and interventions of all participants was that the development of HSR, if well-researched and well-prepared, can offer many advantages to the economy of a state, in many and diverse sectors, like speed of transport, trade, industry, tourism, science and technology, etc. Having the relevant responsibility, Ambassador CHRISTIDES drew and presented to the participants the necessary conclusions from the works of the Round Table.

STATE OF COOPERATION WITHIN THE BSEC WORKING GROUPS

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General discussed the prospects of BSEC cooperation with the businesses transport community at the 33rd Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly, which took place in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 8 June 2018. In his opening remarks Ambassador CHRISTIDES stressed that his presence in almost all General Assembly Meetings of the BSEC-URTA is not only a proof of the importance BSEC PERMIS attaches to its cooperation with this important transport entity, but is, also, a very useful opportunity for the Secretariat to “feel the pulse” of the people in the BSEC Member States directly involved in national and international road transports. He assured participants that the BSEC PERMIS is supporting their legitimate proposals and requests and confirmed that PERMIS will continue to coordinate its relevant efforts for achieving the common objectives of the two entities, which are faster, safer and more competitive transports in the wider Black Sea region.

Ambassador Traian CHEBELEU, Deputy Secretary General of PERMIS, participated in the Thirteenth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) TRACECA, which took place in Yerevan, on 6 March 2018. He informed the TRACECA members about the implementation of the BSEC infrastructure projects and the projects in the field of facilitation of road transport of goods, optimizing intermodal services and identifying constraints affecting intra-regional trade expansion and transportation. He emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation between BSEC and TRACECA, aimed especially at ensuring the complementarity of their efforts.

Ambassador CHEBELEU attended the 17th International Trade and Transport Week in Odessa between 29 May and 1 June 2018, which was included to the Calendar of Events of the Armenian Chairmanship-in-Office in BSEC. Traditionally, the Black and Azov Seas Ports Association (BASPA) and Black Sea International Shipowners Association, (BINSAs), were among co-organizers of the event contributing to promotion of BSEC in the region.

Within the International Trade and Transport Week, the BSEC PERMIS representative presented the BSEC projects at the High-Level Meeting on the Development of Freight Transportation in the Connection Europe-Asia, organized by the Government of Ukraine on 30 May 2018.

Ambassador CHEBELEU also attended the Conference “Transport and Logistics: Effective Instruments for International Trade Development” (29 May), the Workshop “Ukrainian Railways: Investor Day 2018” (30 May) and the official opening ceremony of the 16th Exhibition «Inter-Transport 2018» (30 May). The Address of Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS, was delivered to the participants of the Exhibition.

Mr. Yevgen KOZIY, Project Coordinator, participated in the European Shipping Industry Stakeholders Forum 2018, which was held in Varna on 3-5 May 2018 as an integral part of the activities of the Bulgarian Presidency within the Council of the European Union. Mr. Koziy acquainted participants with the activities of BSEC in the transport sector, dwelling, in particular, on the development of the Black Sea Ring Highway and that of the Motorways

of the Sea, underlining their importance for the extension of the Trans-European Networks and for the development of Euro-Asian transport links.

3.1.2. Information and Communication Technologies

According to the approved Calendar of BSEC events, the Meeting of the Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 25 April 2018. It was attended by representatives of eight Member States, of the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC as a BSEC Related Body and of the Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (BRAAF) and the Republic of Korea in their capacity of the BSEC Sectoral Dialogue Partners. The Chairmanship was represented at the level of Deputy Minister of Transport, Communication and Information Technologies of the Republic of Armenia.

The participants considered and amended the Action Plan, elaborated and presented by the Republic of Armenia as the Country-coordinator of the Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies, as a road map of activities in the field of ICT for the next two years, discussed the recent developments in the field of ICT in the BSEC Member States and made presentations on the specific related issues linked to ICT activities in their countries.

A separate agenda item was dedicated to the 2017 Korea-BSEC ICT Cooperation Program that took place in Seoul, from 30 October to 3 November 2017, organized with the financial support of the Government of the Republic of Korea, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior and Safety and Korea Local Information Research and Development Institute (KLID). The participants took note of the readiness of the Korean Government to continue this ICT cooperation program and of the latter's intention to organize a program for 2018 in two or three BSEC Member States, to be selected in consultation with BSEC PERMIS. The Working Group expressed gratitude to the Korean Government for the 2017 Program and stated their readiness to further cooperate in the forthcoming activities planned in the BSEC Member States.

3.1.3. Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on SMEs was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 4 May 2018. The participants analyzed the implementation of the Goal 9 of the Economic Agenda and the UN Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals related to the SMEs and the priorities identified by the Working Group for its activities during the second medium term 2016-2018. The representatives of the Hellenic Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Turkey delivered country presentations on the theme of "SMEs and E-Commerce". The participants reiterated their support to the organization of the meetings of the Working Group on SMEs with a specific theme, and hold thematic Workshops back-to-back with the Meeting of the Working Group. The Working Group invited the incoming Country-Coordinator to identify and propose at the next Working Group Meeting, three new priorities for the third-term period 2019-2020.

The BSEC PERMIS noted that the UN General Assembly, recognizing the importance of these enterprises, decided to declare 27 June, the Micro-, Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises Day, with the purpose to raise public awareness of their contribution to sustainable development (UNGA Resolution 71/279, of 6 April 2017) and invited the Member States to consider it accordingly.

The Workshop on “Supporting Green Economy in SMEs in BSEC Region” was held at the BSEC Headquarters in the first half of 3 May 2018, and was jointly organized by the BSEC PERMIS and KOSGEB, (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of the Republic of Turkey), as the Country-Coordinator of the BSEC Working Group on SMEs. The representatives of the Member States; Republic of Turkey, Hellenic Republic, Republic of Serbia, delivered “Country Presentations on Policies and Best Practices on Supporting Green Economy in SMEs in the BSEC Region”. The presentations were followed by questions and answers, comments and exchanges of views and experience.

The following Recommendation were made on for future activities and steps of the BSEC Organization and its Member States:

- Developing support programme for the start-up companies.
- Encouraging projects on development and technology issues for SMEs.
- Disseminating information about the possibilities of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) in supporting the development of SMEs in the BSEC Member States.

The Workshop on “The Establishment of BSEC Quality Awards for the SMEs” was held at the BSEC Headquarters in the second half of 3 May 2018, and was jointly organized by the BSEC PERMIS and KOSGEB, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of the Republic of Turkey, as the Country-Coordinator of the BSEC Working Group on SMEs. The representatives of the BSEC Member States presented their views and proposals for Quality Awards for the SMEs applicable in their countries and other regions. The representative of the Republic of Turkey made a presentation about SME Award System practiced by KOSGEB. During the part of the *“Conclusions of the Workshop and Closing Session”*, the Participants emphasized the importance of establishing an award system for the SMEs in the BSEC region and the need to elaborate and agree on how to manage such a system. It was recommended that the BSEC PERMIS should elaborate a project proposal concerning a concept and a pilot version of BSEC Quality Award System for the SMEs in the Member States, the findings of which will be submitted for consideration to a future meeting of the Working Group on SMEs.

3.1.4. Energy

BSEC PERMIS was invited to attend the Official Opening of the 14th edition of the “*South-East Europe Conferences and Exhibitions on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Smart Cities, Environment, Waste Management and Recycling*”, organized by Via Expo Ltd., based in Plovdiv, which took place in Sofia, on 27-29 March 2018, in partnership with the BSEC PERMIS, represented at the meeting by Ambassador Traian CHEBELEU, Deputy Secretary General.

The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Energy was held at the BSEC Headquarters, on 15 May 2018. The participants discussed the priorities for the third medium-term (2019-2021) of the “BSEC Economic Agenda towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership”. The Working Group decided to continue the discussion of that issue during the next Meeting of the Working Group. The draft Plan of Action elaborated by Ukraine, the newly appointed Country-Coordinator, was discussed. Some countries made various proposals and amendments. The Working Group proposed to the Country-Coordinator to present an updated version of the draft Plan of Action as soon as possible. The Working Group discussed, amended and finalized the text of the draft Green Energy Strategy and agreed to submit it to the Committee of Senior Officials for consideration. The Working Group expressed interest in the activities undertaken so far in the BSEC Green Energy Network. The Participants also exchanged views on promoting regional cooperation in the BSEC framework for contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 7 “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”. In its capacity of Observer to the Energy Charter, BSEC PERMIS was invited to participate in the Bucharest International Energy Charter Forum with the theme “Energy efficiency: A priority in combating energy poverty and providing access to affordable energy services for all”, organized under Romanian Chairmanship of the Energy Charter Conference, in Bucharest, on 6-7 June 2018. Ambassador Traian CHEBELEU, Deputy Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS, attended the Forum.

International Conference “Risk Management Leaders in Energy-2018”

The International Conference “Risk Management Leaders in Energy-2018” took place in Istanbul on 15-16 May 2018, in the context of the Armenian Chairmanship -in-Office and it has been organized by the “Institute for Energy and Finance” (IEF) from Russia, in collaboration with the “Institute of Risk Management” (IRM) from the UK and its Regional Group in Turkey, with the support of the Russian Ministry of Energy. The main aim of the Conference was to provide a platform for an exchange of international experience in risk management, generally, and for a presentation, in particular, of best practices in the field of Energy Risk Management through the participation of specialists and stakeholders from many countries.

The Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS, Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES together with the Deputy Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Turkey, H.E. Mr. Alparslan BAYRAKTAR,

the Deputy Minister of Energy of Russia, H.E. Mr. Anatoly YANOVSKI and the Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, H.E. Mr. George CHIKOVANI were invited to address the audience.

Ambassador CHRISTIDES pointed out that the “high-politics” concerning production, transport and distribution of oil or natural gas are beyond the competency of the BSEC Working Groups dealing with Energy matters. He underlined, nevertheless, that the BSEC Organization, could offer valuable support to the solution of some problems as the industrial, informational and ecological safety, that affect the everyday life of the wider Black Sea Area citizens, through its experience gained on the ground. The BSEC PERMIS Executive Manager in charge of Energy issues, Dr. Edouard PANOIAN, informed the participants on the outcome of the Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Energy, held at the BSEC Headquarters on 15 May 2018, stressing in particular the importance of the adoption by the Working Group of the “BSEC Green Energy Strategy”.

3.1.5. Banking and Finance

The informal meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Banking and Finance was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 19 June 2018. The participants of the meeting discussed, amended and agreed upon the Draft Plan of Action of the Working Group on Banking and Finance for 2018-2019, proposed by the Russian Federation as the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group for the same period. Since no quorum was reached during the meeting, it was agreed that the Draft Plan of Action will be submitted for approval at the next meeting of the Working Group. The participants also considered the possibility to establish a union/association of the banks of the BSEC member States and invited the incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office to explore the possibility to coordinate together with the BSTDB and the Country-Coordinator the organization of a Forum which can serve, *inter alia*, as a platform for discussion by the representatives of commercial banks and national banking associations/unions of the Member States regarding the scope of activities of a union/association of banks of the BSEC Member States.

3.1.6. Agriculture

In the field of agriculture, the PERMIS has been in contact with the country-coordinator of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry and with the international organizations, including through consultations, concerning the initiative of establishing the “*Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization Regional Cooperation Centre for Sustainable Food Systems – BSEC RCC SFS*”, aimed at supporting the implementation of projects in the BSEC Member States in the areas of agriculture and agro-industry. The beneficiaries of the project are 12 BSEC Member States and the BSEC region, target groups – farmers, suppliers, food business operators, fisheries and aquaculture. The duration of the project is for three years with a budget of 500,000 USD. In this regard PERMIS had consultations with

the representatives from the Directorate General of European Union and Foreign Relations of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MFAL) of the Republic of Turkey in order to plan the next steps concerning the *BSEC RCC SFS*. After consultations, MFAL elaborated the Summary of the project proposal which has been disseminated by PERMIS to the Member States on 13 March 2018 with the request to consider this initiative and to inform the PERMIS whether the Member States, as beneficiaries of the project, would endorse the project proposal as submitted by the Republic of Turkey. So far two Member States (Bulgaria and Georgia) responded positively. PERMIS is waiting for the reply from other Member States. The issue may be considered at the next meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-industry (autumn 2018). PERMIS also had consultations with FAO sub-regional office in Ankara, during which it was discussed the possible implication of the sub-regional office in implementation of the on-going project, *“Supporting the strengthening of agri-food trade within the BSEC Region”* and the promotion of the *BSEC RCC SFS*. On the second project proposal the sub-regional office is in contact with the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey.

PERMIS participated in the GFCM meeting for the preparation of the High-level meeting on small-scale fisheries, held in Rome on 2 March 2018. The High-level meeting itself is expected to adopt a Declaration and a regional Plan of Action for small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. The representative of PERMIS proposed to include a separate paragraph in the draft Declaration concerning the role of regional organizations in promoting the objectives and principles of the Declaration. The Declaration and its Plan of Action represent a road map to the improvement and sustainability of Small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. After their adoption in September 2018 the documents shall be brought to the attention of and considered within the BSEC Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-industry.

The Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS and the responsible Executive Manager participated in the GFCM/FAO High-Level Conference on Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture organized in Sofia on 6-7 June 2018. Following the adoption in October 2016 of the Bucharest Declaration on enhanced cooperation on Black Sea fisheries and aquaculture, the same countries met once again in order to further strengthen governance and regional cooperation. The Conference was composed of an expert meeting, divided into three sessions on select fisheries and aquaculture regional priorities which discussed, in particular, marine scientific research in Black Sea fisheries, furthering sustainability of aquaculture and enhancing stakeholder engagement in the small-scale fisheries sector. In his statement the Secretary General underlined the progress made since the Bucharest Declaration, including the actions and measures undertaken within the BSEC, and called upon the interested stakeholders to jointly identify the common projects in the field of fisheries and aquaculture that may be implemented in the Black Sea area.

3.2. Science, Education, Tourism and Culture

3.2.1. Science and Technology

The informal meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 3 April 2018. The participants presented several proposals and exchanged views on a number of issues of importance for S&T cooperation among the BSEC Member States: Evaluation Report of the Country-Coordinator (Russian Federation) on the activity of the Working Group for the period 1 July 2016 – 30 June 2018); Steps already taken or to be taken to implement the Third BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology (2014-2018); Cooperation with other international organizations; Implementation of the Memorandum of Intent BSEC-USA; Draft Revised Terms of Reference of the Working Group; Involvement of Youth in Science and Technology. A number of presentations and proposals were delivered for future consideration of the Working Group.

Upon invitation by the organizers, a representative of the BSEC PERMIS participated in the Black Sea Horizon Workshop on Science and Technology (Athens, 25-26 January 2018).

3.2.2. Education

The Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Education of the BSEC Member States was held in Moscow, within the framework of the Moscow International Education Fair, on 20 April 2018. The Ministers and the Heads of Delegations of the participating BSEC Member States exchanged views and shared experiences on the most important issues of Education and reaffirmed the commitment of the BSEC Member States to strengthening their ties in the field of Education, as one of the most significant areas of cooperation since the very inception of the BSEC Organization. They adopted the “*Joint Moscow Declaration*” in which the Member States pledge to work together in the framework of the BSEC Organization in order to strengthen and bolster, where appropriate, cooperation among them and to encourage development of bilateral and multilateral projects related to Education. A number of concrete proposals for future cooperation were advanced and commitments were undertaken; among the latter, the Russian Federation expressed its readiness to examine the hosting of a BSEC stand during the next edition of the Moscow International Education Fair in 2019.

The Meeting of the Ministers was preceded by the Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Education (Moscow, 19 April 2018), which considered a number of practical proposals aimed at enhancing cooperation among the BSEC Member States. The Working Group approved the new Plan of Action for a two year period, elaborated by the Country-Coordinator (Russian Federation) and agreed to take concrete measures for the implementation of various projects, like the finalization of an informative leaflet/brochure

on Higher Education in the BSEC Member States and many others. The BSEC PERMIS was also represented in various activities of the *Moscow International Education Fair* (18-21 April 2018) by Dr. Sergei GONCHARENKO, Deputy Secretary General.

Upon invitation by the BSUN, the Secretary General participated as speaker in *the BSUN 2018 Congress - UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in the Black Sea Region: from Science to Implementation* (Thessaloniki, Greece, 18-19 June 2018).

3.2.3. Culture

The Working Group on Culture met on 21 May 2018 at the BSEC Headquarters. The Working Group considered several proposals on how to enhance cooperation among BSEC Member States with regard to cultural heritage and agreed on the following concrete steps: to establish a network of experts on cultural heritage; to prepare a representative list of intangible cultural heritage from the BSEC Member States that could be jointly nominated for inscription in the UNESCO list; to map Byzantine routes in the BSEC Member States; to organize a joint traveling exhibition of intangible cultural heritage. It also continued the consideration of contemporary arts issues: publishing a collection of the XX century works of the classic literature writers and the proposal on the establishment of a “Black Sea Youth Symphony Orchestra”. With regard to the latter, the BSEC PERMIS proposed to include the issue in the Agenda of the next Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Culture. The Country-Coordinator informed on the intention of the Republic of Serbia to organize a Meeting of Ministers in charge of Culture of the BSEC Member States and a meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Culture, in Belgrade, in November 2018 (TBC), and invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the above mentioned meetings.

3.2.4. Tourism

The Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Tourism of the BSEC Member States was organized by the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria, in Varna, on 14 June 2018. The Ministers and Heads of National Tourism Agencies of the BSEC Member States exchanged views on how to better promote Tourism cooperation among the BSEC Member States and adopted “The Joint Varna Declaration of the Ministers in charge of Tourism of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.” In the Declaration, the BSEC Member States have declared their intention to “work together in the framework of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation to strengthen and bolster Tourism cooperation among the BSEC Member States, as it can help boost Tourism flows between destinations to make sustainable Tourism one of the major drivers of socio-economic development in the BSEC Region.” The Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS in his statement stressed the need for concrete deeds and project-focused action, appealed for a greater “sense of ownership” towards the BSEC Organization from its Member States and asked the latter to consider “our” Organization as a useful vehicle for regional tourism cooperation, taking advantage of the possibilities it can offer in this respect.

The Meeting of the Ministers was preceded by the meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (Varna, 13 June 2018). The experts from the Ministries and other authorities in charge of Tourism of the BSEC Member States finalized the relevant draft documents for the Ministerial Meeting, approved the Evaluation Report of the Country-Coordinator (Bulgaria) on the activities of the Working Group for the past two years and discussed a number of concrete proposals on how to advance cooperation in the field of Tourism among the BSEC Member States. The Working Group was informed that, following the agreement reached between the two candidate Member States, Romania and the Republic of Turkey, the Republic of Turkey presented its candidacy for assuming the Country-Coordination of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2020.

Upon invitation by the organizers, the BSEC PERMIS participated in the following events on Tourism:

- *High-Level International Conference on Tourism and Economic Growth* (Sofia, 13 February 2018), back-to-back with the informal Meeting of the Ministers of Tourism of the EU Member States, organized by the Bulgarian Ministry of Tourism in the context of the Bulgarian EU Presidency;
- *World Tourism Forum Lucerne Think Tank (WTFL) 2018* (Costa Navarino, Greece, 2-3 March 2018);
- *8th UNWTO Silk Road Ministers Meeting*, held on 7 March 2018 on the sidelines of the “ITB Berlin Travel Trade Show”;
- *Balkans and the Black Sea Cooperation Forum. Rail-Road-River – connectivity to the EU via Balkan Region* (Athens, 30 May – 1 June 2018);
- Conference on the “*Role and significance of the Black Sea region and its connection with the Danube Strategy – Cooperation in the field of tourism and the relationship between the Black Sea region and its connection with the Danube Strategy*” (Albena, Bulgaria, 15 June 2018).
- *8th UNWTO Silk Road Task Force Meeting* (Kayseri, Turkey, 26-27 April 2018).

3.3. Cooperation in Social Challenges and Other Relevant Fields

3.3.1. Emergency Assistance

The Special Meeting of the Liaison Officers of the BSEC Network on Emergency Assistance was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 31 May 2018. The Participants exchanged views and discussed various proposals on elaboration and promotion of permanent interconnection in the framework of the Network of Liaison Officers on Emergency Assistance according to the provisions of the Additional Protocol to the Agreement among the Governments of the Participating States of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation on Collaboration in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response to Natural and Man Made Disasters, and decided to

continue the discussion at the next Meeting of Liaison Officers. The Liaison Officers proposed also to contact each other every month by phone and mail in order to assure permanent interconnection of Liaison Officers.

3.4. Intra-Organizational Matters

3.4.1. Decision-Making Bodies

Committee of Senior Officials

The Calendar of Events of the Armenian BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office was finalized during the Coordination Meeting between the Chairmanship-in-Office, the BSEC Member States, the BSEC PERMIS and the BSEC Related Bodies, held at the BSEC Headquarters, on 24 January 2018.

The BSEC Committee of Senior Officials was convened on 26-27 April and on 25-26 June 2018, in order to review BSEC activities and prepare the 38th Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

3.4.2. Organizational Matters

The Working Group on Organizational Matters was convened at the BSEC Headquarters on 14-15 February 2018.

The participants discussed proposals and suggestions on the Terms of Reference of the Working Group and on possible amendments to the BSEC Regulations for the Staff, as well as on the draft Memorandum of Understanding between BSEC and FAO.

3.4.3. Budgetary and Financial Issues

In accordance with the BSEC Statutory Documents, the implementation of the annual BSEC Budget is ensured by the First Deputy Secretary General, with the assistance of the competent BSEC PERMIS Staff, under the responsibility of the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General.

The meeting of the Working Group on Budgetary and Financial Issues considered the Report on implementation of 2017 BSEC Budget, the External Audit Report for FY 2017, took note of the state of affairs with the Mandatory Annual Contributions to the 2018 Budget and considered the draft Budget for 2019.

STATE OF COOPERATION WITHIN THE BSEC WORKING GROUPS

The Committee of Senior Officials meeting on 26-27 April 2018 considered the Report on implementation of 2017 BSEC Budget, but could not agree on the distribution of the savings from 2017 Budget. This is a pending issue which will be dealt with at the CSO meeting in Yerevan. While the External Audit Report for FY 2017 has been considered and endorsed by the CSO, the draft Budget BSEC for 2019 is still under consideration by the Committee.

4. ACTIVITIES OF BSEC RELATED BODIES

4.1. Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC

In the period following the Kyiv General Assembly, the PABSEC Presidency was vested by the Parliament of the Republic of Albania. This Report reviews the activities of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation in the period between January 2018 – June 2018, during which many important events took place.

Special Meeting of the PABSEC Standing Committee

The Special Meeting of the PABSEC Standing Committee, dedicated to the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the Assembly, took place in Istanbul, on 1 March 2018. Heads of the national delegations delivered their statements, concentrating on the efforts which have been made in order to enhance the multilateral economic cooperation in the Black Sea Region, during the twenty-five years of successful cooperation. It was emphasized that the PABSEC has been recognized as an important regional forum for international cooperation and effective parliamentary dialogue in the BSEC Region and the Assembly has asserted itself as a successful model for balancing and harmonising, at parliamentary level, the relations and the different interests of the countries.

Meeting of Secretaries General of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States

Upon the initiative of the PABSEC Secretary General, the second Meeting of the Secretaries General of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States took place in Istanbul, on 6 March 2018, with the participation of the Secretaries General of the inter-parliamentary organizations having observer status with the PABSEC. The main topic of this meeting was “The 25th Anniversary of the PABSEC: Challenges and Expectations for Future Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation”. The initiative of having annual PABSEC meetings in this format was welcomed. There was an exchange of views and ideas regarding the prospects for further strengthening the cooperation between parliaments and parliamentary assemblies and other stakeholders of the Black Sea cooperation process, aiming at enlarging the scope of the activities in the BSEC Region. Upon the proposal of Mr. Ara Saghatelian, Secretary General of the National Parliament of the Republic of Armenia, the next meeting of the Secretaries General of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States will be held in Yerevan, in 2019.

ACTIVITIES OF BSEC RELATED BODIES

Summit of the Speakers of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States

Upon the invitation of Mr. Ismail Kahraman, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT), the Summit of the Speakers of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States was held in Istanbul, on 16 May 2018, on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the PABSEC. The Summit was attended by the Speakers of: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Turkey, the Deputy Speaker of the State Duma of the Russian Federation and the Heads of the PABSEC National Delegations of Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine. The participants delivered their statements on the main topic of the meeting: “The 25th Years of the PABSEC: The Role of the Parliaments in Shaping the Future of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation” and adopted the Joint Statement dedicated to the 25th Anniversary of the PABSEC. Following the speeches, the Speakers of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States, who were present at the meeting, were awarded with the PABSEC Medal of Honour. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of the Republic of Turkey, was awarded with the PABSEC Medal of Honour in recognition and appreciation for his constant and active involvement to the accomplishment of the PABSEC goals and objectives. At the end of the Summit, took place the Signing Ceremony of the PABSEC Commemorative Stamp dedicated to its 25th Anniversary.

Essay Competition “Twenty-five Years of Parliamentary Cooperation in the BSEC Region – Views and Perspectives for the Future”

On the occasion of its 25th Anniversary, the PABSEC organized, in partnership with the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) an Essay Competition for students aged up to 30, from all the BSEC Member States. The aim of the competition was to bring together young people’s views on the future development of the BSEC Region and to shape the vision for the common future in cultural, political and economic terms. The topic of the competition was “Twenty-five years of Parliamentary Cooperation in the BSEC Region – Views and Perspectives for the Future”. The essays were evaluated and selected by the national committees in every Member State. The winners are invited to the PABSEC 51st General Assembly in Tirana, where they will be awarded. The winning essays will be published in a special issue of the BSUN International Journal “Letters from the Black Sea”.

Committee for Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs

The Fiftieth Meeting of the PABSEC Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee was held in Bucharest, on 28-29 March 2018, upon the invitation of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of Romania. The Committee discussed and approved the draft Report and the draft Recommendation 161/2018 on “The Prospects of the Development of Digital Economy in the BSEC Member States” and submitted these documents to the consideration of the Fifty-First Plenary Session in Tirana. The members of the Committee elected Mr. Krasimir Velchev (Bulgaria) for the post

ACTIVITIES OF BSEC RELATED BODIES

of Chairman of the PABSEC Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee and Mr. Vahe Enfiayyan (Armenia) for the post of Vice-Chairman of the Committee, for a two year-term. The Fifty-First Meeting of the Committee will take place in Kyiv, in October 2018, and the main item on the Agenda will be “Development and Support of the Small Business Enterprises in the BSEC Member States.”

Committee for Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs

The Fiftieth Meeting of the PABSEC Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee was held in Novi Sad, on 18-19 April 2018, upon the invitation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. The Committee discussed and approved the draft Report and the draft Recommendation 163/2018 on “Enhancing cultural cooperation and multiculturalism in the BSEC Member States” and submitted these documents to the consideration of the Fifty-First Plenary Session in Tirana. The Fifty-First Meeting of the Committee will take place in Sofia, in September 2018, and the main item of the Agenda will be “Current and Future Perspectives in the Development of Tourism in the BSEC Region”.

The Fifty-First General Assembly of Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) was held in Tirana, on 19-21 June 2018, upon the invitation of the Parliament of the Republic of Albania. The topic of the General Debate was “The Parliaments of the BSEC Member States: Common Challenges of the Economic, Environmental, Cultural and Social Development - Reality and Vision”. During the General Assembly, the Fifty-First Meeting of the **PABSEC Legal and Political Affairs Committee** took place, on 19 June 2018.

4.2. BSEC Business Council

BSEC PERMIS, represented by the Legal Advisor and the responsible Executive Manager, participated in the meeting of the Board of Directors (BoD) of the BSEC Business Council (BC) held in Yerevan, Republic of Armenia, on 17 May 2018. The representatives of the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen of Armenia, Embassy of Bulgaria in Yerevan, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romania, Embassy of the Hellenic Republic in Yerevan, Russian Public Organization “Delovaya Rossiya”, and Embassy of Ukraine in Yerevan attended the meeting. The Board of Directors considered the Statute of the BC, particularly the amendments received from the National Organizations of the BSEC Member States designated to participate in the meetings of the BC BoD after the last meeting of the Board held in Kyiv on 12 December 2017. Since not all the members of the Board of Directors of the BC were present at the meeting, it was agreed to adopt the Statute of the BC by silence procedure within the time limit of one month. The BoD also discussed the organizational aspects of the functioning of the Secretariat of the BC and the possibilities for its financing and agreed to continue the discussion at its next meeting.

4.3. Black Sea Trade and Development Bank

2017 was a year of better growth for the BSEC member countries, with real GDP for the Region as a whole growing by 3.5%. Responding to a stronger demand for BSTDB's financing, the Bank approved a record EUR 525 million in new operations in 2017, an increase of 21% from 2016. The outstanding portfolio of operations stood close to EUR 1.2 billion. Public sector lending grew from around 3 to 10% of the portfolio, and accounted for about 16% of Bank's newly signed operations. The Bank continued and expanded its program of local currency financing. BSTDB maintained profitability in 2017, for the 13th consecutive year.

The Bank expanded its range of contacts internationally, a fact underscored by BSTDB becoming an Observer to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and BSTDB granting Observer Status to the Asian Development Bank, as well as the conclusion of new cooperation agreements with partner organizations promoting economic progress in the Black Sea Region. Of particular importance for the Bank was the launching of the Black Sea Project Promotion Facility, as a result of which BSTDB's clients gain access to technical assistance for project preparation activities and related studies.

This year, BSTDB adopted the new IFRS 9 accounting standard well ahead of most other financial institutions, permitting more accurate evaluation and measurement of portfolio quality. Bank's Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2017 was already prepared according to the new standard. BSTDB is continuing a healthy growth in 2018. This year, the Bank signed operations worth EUR 200 million, mostly aimed at the SME sector development in member countries.

On 1-2 July 2018 the Bank held its Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors and Business Forum in Sochi, Russia. Heads of BSEC PERMIS and of all BSEC Related Bodies were invited to participate in the events. BSEC PERMIS was represented by Dr. Sergei Goncharenko.

In mid-July 2018, the Bank's President Ihsan U. Delikanli completed his term in office, handing over the duties to Mr. Dmitry Pankin of Russia. The Russian Vice President Banking Mr. Leshukov replaced by Mr. Hasan Demirhan of Turkey.

4.4. International Centre for Black Sea Studies

9th International Black Sea Symposium "Blue Growth as a Driver for Regional Development"

The ICBSS organized successfully the 9th International Black Sea Symposium on Blue Growth as a driver for regional development, in Athens, on 20-21 March 2018. In its ninth year, the International Black Sea Symposium (IBSS) built on the success and positive impact of its previous eight editions to bring together the next generation of stakeholders with an interest in the Black Sea area, focusing on *blue growth*, a long term strategy for

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sustainable development in the marine and maritime sectors. Opening the Symposium, ICBSS Director General Mr. Georgios Mitrakos, highlighted the importance of coordinated action among all involved stakeholders that will allow for a result-oriented strategy and inclusive blue growth. To this end, as he noted, the aim of the 9th IBSS was to enable constructive dialogue and generate future synergies. Keynote speech was delivered by the Secretary General of the BSEC Organisation, H.E. Ambassador Michael B. Christides. Opening his speech, Amb. Christides underlined *“Growth was, is and will remain the objective of humans”*. He continued stressing that, our adaptation to the continuously growing technological impact and innovation demands for joint cooperation and coordination. As he noted, *“the BSEC Organisation has invested a lot of efforts in new realities”* and will continue to support initiatives that aim to motivate the youth and *“bring forward a new generation of stakeholders”*. The Symposium was developed in four targeted sessions, focusing on i) interregional cooperation and governance, ii) entrepreneurship and competitiveness, iii) investment in people, skills and services, and iv) knowledge and mitigation measures.

Within two days of interactive discussions, seventy participants, speakers and observers had the opportunity to network, to exchange knowledge and to form ideas for new joint projects related to sustainable blue growth in the wider Black Sea region. Among the distinguished participants of the 9th IBSS were the Vice-Mayor of the Municipality of Piraeus, Mr. Petros Kokkalis, the Deputy Secretary General of PABSEC, Mr. Miltiadis Makrygiannis, the Honorary Consul of Italy in Piraeus, Capt. Mauro Renaldi, the first Secretary of the Embassy of Italy, Mr. Enrico Barbato, Senior Officials from the Embassies of the BSEC Member States in Athens and the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Director of the Romanian Diplomatic Academy and Chairman of the ICBSS Board, Mr. Dan Petre, Mr. Leonardo Manzari, Director of the European Institute of EurAsian Dialogue in Italy, as well as policy-makers, academics, journalists, entrepreneurs, civil society representatives and researchers primarily from the countries of the wider Black Sea area and the EU member states. The results of the 9th IBSS will be published in a collective edition of the ICBSS Xenophon Paper Series, which will include the contributions of speakers and participants to the event. More information about the 9th International Black Sea Symposium is available on www.icbss.org.

Black Sea Horizon Workshop on the Black Sea Cooperation Programme and the Joint Call for Proposals

Building on the momentum created with the drafting of the **Black Sea Cooperation Programme in STI (BSCP)**, a workshop was organised jointly by ZSI, CeRISS and ICBSS, in Athens, on 25-26 January 2018, to discuss the priority topics and consolidate the next steps of their implementation. Senior Officials from international organisations, representatives of funding agencies and researchers from the EU MS and the Black Sea countries, participated in the two-day workshop. Participation to the workshop was by invitation only.

ACTIVITIES OF BSEC RELATED BODIES

Jean Monnet Centre for Excellence of the University of Athens

The ICBSS was invited by the Jean Monnet Centre for Excellence of the University of Athens to support its project proposal “Cross-Fertilizing on EU’s Eastern Policies”, to be submitted in the Jean Monnet Projects 2018, in cooperation with the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) the Khazar University in Azerbaijan and the Odessa Mechnikov National University in Ukraine. Should it get approved, the proposal foresees the enhancement of academic cooperation in the wider region.

Balkan and Black Sea Cooperation Forum

In continuation to the successful cooperation of ICBSS with the Balkan and Black Sea Forum, during its first edition (25-26 May 2017), the ICBSS was strategic partner at the 2nd edition of the Balkan & Black Sea Forum, held in Athens, on 30 May – 1 June 2018. In particular, the ICBSS was in charge of the Session on “Higher Education and Business Innovation”, in cooperation with the Central and East European Management Development Association.

IncoNet EaP PLUS Project (2016-2019)

The Project IncoNet EaP PLUS - STI International Cooperation Network for Eastern Partnership Countries – PLUS was launched in September 2016. Its main objective is to encourage the research and innovation cooperation between the EU and the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries (in particular, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) and to address effectively current opportunities and remaining challenges. This will be achieved through a coherent set of activities addressing, in parallel, research and innovation, as well as policy dialogue in a strongly interlinked and complementary way. For more information, you may visit <https://www.eap-plus.eu>.

Black Sea Horizon Project (2015-2018)

The BSH Project, launched in February 2015 with the participation of 19 partners from different Black Sea countries and EU MS, was officially completed on 31 January 2018. The **final scientific & financial report** for the BSH project was submitted on 30 March 2018. Through its various activities, events and publications, the Project aimed a) to sustainably enhance bi-regional science, technology and innovation (STI) cooperation between the EU and the Black Sea region b) to contribute to the enhancement of research on STI in the Black Sea countries. <https://blacksea-horizon.eu>.

ICBSS Publications

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) regularly issues a variety of publications, focusing on a wide spectrum of topics related to the wider Black Sea region. An Open Call for papers is available with a view to offering the opportunity to researchers to publish their work and address a wide audience. Detailed information about **submission and formatting** is available on www.icbss.org.

5. RELATIONS WITH THIRD PARTIES

5.1. BSEC-EU Relations

Upon the invitation of the organizers, the BSEC PERMIS participated at the 2nd Meeting of the Steering Group of the "*Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea*", held in *Brussels*, on *26 February 2018*. Representatives from all Black Sea riparian States (*Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine*), as well as *Moldova*, participated at the meeting. Participants were able to share information on their national activities and priorities concerning maritime affairs, focusing especially on Environmental protection, Fisheries, Maritime Tourism, Coastal planning, Renewable Energy Sources, Marine research and Maritime transport. The Facility team informed about the recent developments within its scope of action, focusing on the outcome of the national workshops that took place in *Moldova (21.02)* and *Ukraine (22.02)*; it also informed about its future plans to organize workshops in *Bulgaria, Turkey, Georgia and Romania*.

As BSEC Member States have been already informed, BSEC PERMIS deems its involvement in the activities of the Steering Group of the "*Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea*" as very useful since it allows PERMIS to regularly inform the Steering Group of the priorities and activities of BSEC members, thus contributing to the future orientation of the Facility and ensuring an effective monitoring of its activities for the attention of the relevant BSEC subsidiary organs and decision-making bodies.

During the above meeting in *Brussels* a draft Ministerial Declaration of Support towards the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea, prepared by the European Commission, was discussed and amended by the participants (the amended draft will be distributed by the EC in due course). It was agreed that the participating States needed more time to elaborate on the draft text of the Declaration, which was finalized and endorsed during the *European Maritime Day (Burgas, 31 May 2018)*.

4th Meeting for Developing a Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation (BSEC HQ, 27 March 2018)

On *27 March 2018* BSEC PERMIS hosted in *Istanbul* the *4rd Meeting for Developing a Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea*. The meeting was organized and chaired by the DG Mare of the European Commission. Experts and academics from all Black Sea riparian States plus *Moldova*, all BSEC Member States, participated at the meeting. Officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs from some of the BSEC Member States also took part. The main goal of this research body of stakeholders from all Black Sea countries plus *Moldova* is to develop a *Vision Paper* leading to a *Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda* for the Black Sea basin (SRIA), on the model of the work done for the Mediterranean Sea. The SRIA will be a major pillar of a broader *Maritime Strategy* for the Black Sea region. The *Vision Paper* is expected to help fill the gaps in the research and

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innovation area concerning the Black Sea and will provide a clear picture of the type of research that has to be funded with the new financial scheme of 2020.

Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction (BSEC HQ, 27 April 2018)

The Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 27 April 2018. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on current and future activities of BSEC related to its interaction with the European Union. Upon the instruction by the Council (Kyiv, December 2017) to continue informing the BSEC Member States on all EU activities and initiatives potentially interesting to BSEC, in particular in the framework of the “Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea”, the BSEC PERMIS invited Mr. Christophe LE VISAGE, expert from the “Facility for Blue Growth” Team, to deliver a short presentation about Facility activities and future plans. The participants exchanged views on the recent developments related to the Facility and reiterated their understanding that the cooperation between BSEC and the European Union has to be developed in a project-oriented, flexible and mutually beneficial direction. The BSEC PERMIS was encouraged to continue proactively exploring the opportunities for securing EU’s financial assistance for BSEC projects, falling within the objectives and priorities of the Organization and fully respecting the prerogatives of the BSEC Member States.

3rd Meeting of the Steering Group of the "Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea", to be held in Brussels, on 3 May 2018

BSEC PERMIS participated in the 3rd Meeting of the Steering Group on the Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea, hosted by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) of the European Commission (Brussels) on 3 May 2018. The main subject of discussions at the meeting was the draft Ministerial Declaration on the occasion of the “European Maritime Day”, celebrated this year in Burgas, Republic of Bulgaria, on 31 May 2018. In line with the mandate given by the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, the PERMIS – represented at the meeting by its Legal Advisor, Mr. Teimuraz Antelava – participated in the discussions with the view to providing consultative support in the process of finalizing the draft declaration, when such support was requested. The BSEC Member States intending to be parties to the Declaration (Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Republic of Turkey, and Ukraine) were all present at the meeting and actively contributed to the discussions.

5th Meeting for Developing a Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation (Burgas, 30 May 2018)

RELATIONS WITH THIRD PARTIES

Upon the invitation of the organizers, the BSEC PERMIS participated at the *5th Meeting for Developing a Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea*, held in Burgas, on 30 May 2018. The meeting was organized and chaired by the European Commission. Experts and academics from all Black Sea riparian States plus Moldova, all BSEC Member States, participated at the meeting. Officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs from some of the BSEC Member States also took part. The experts from all Black Sea countries plus Moldova finalized "*Burgas Vision Paper – A Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea*". The document is attached herewith. The expert group confirmed its goal to work towards developing a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) that will guide researchers, academia, funding agencies, industry and policy makers to promote the social well-being, prosperity of Black Sea citizens and support economic growth and jobs of countries bordering it. The experts aim is to advance a shared vision for a productive, healthy, resilient, sustainable and better valued Black Sea by 2030.

Participation of the BSEC PERMIS in the "European Maritime Day 2018" (Burgas, 31 May – 1 June 2018)

The BSEC PERMIS took part in the "European Maritime Day 2018" (EMD), upon the invitation of the DG MARE (European Commission), held in Burgas, Republic of Bulgaria, on 31 May – 1 June 2018. The event was co-organized by the European Commission and the Bulgarian Presidency of the European Union. The "European Maritime Day" is an annual series of maritime-themed events all over Europe. It was attended by 1025 participants from the Black Sea littoral countries plus Moldova, as well as Sweden, Portugal, Greece, Netherlands, France, Belgium, Finland, Romania, Germany, Italy, Armenia, Denmark, Malta and etc. For the first time since its inception, the EMD took place in the Black Sea region. The next edition 2019 will be held in Lisbon, Portugal. The BSEC PERMIS was involved in the organization of two Workshops: one dealing with "Sustainability in Marine and Coastal Tourism" and the second - dealing with "Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture". The EMD was capped by a Black Sea Ministerial Meeting to which the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, was invited as an official guest. All Black Sea littoral States plus Moldova participated in this high-level event, during which the "*Ministerial Declaration Towards a Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea*" (Burgas Declaration) was endorsed. The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General participated also in the high-level debate on "Big Bang Black Sea", which examined the current state of maritime cooperation in the region, as well as future perspectives and targets.

5.2. Relations with Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners

BSEC-CPMR Workshop on Project Promotion (BSEC HQ, 28 March 2018)

The BSEC PERMIS and the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) and its Balkan & Black Sea Commission (BBSC) organized a joint Workshop on Project Promotion addressed to Regional and Local Authorities and other stakeholders from the wider Black

Sea region, which was held on 28 March 2018 at the BSEC Headquarters. The aim of the Workshop was to present the significant role of Regional Authorities in policy-making, the available funding instruments and sustainability of actions, as well as a number of successful regional cooperation examples in various parts of Europe and the Black Sea area. Further, the newly launched AI-NURECC Initiative (*Adriatic Ionian Network of Universities, Regions, Chambers of Commerce and Cities*) – linked to the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) was also presented as a useful model for closer cooperation among public and private entities in the Black Sea area. Approximately 70 distinguished stakeholders from different countries and professions actively participated in the Workshop, contributed to the lively discussions and had an excellent opportunity for networking.

5.3. Relations with International Organizations and Other Institutions

Implementation of the Letter of Agreement between BSEC and FAO for Provision of Supporting the Strengthening of Agri-Food Trade within the BSEC Region

BSEC signed with FAO a “Letter of Agreement for provision of supporting the strengthening of agri-food trade within the BSEC Region” on 19 December 2017. In pursuance of implementation of the Letter of Agreement, a “*Report with analysis of the intra-regional agri-food trade and constraints to expanding trade, together with recommendations for expanding and facilitating intra-regional trade in the BSEC Member States*” was prepared to define strength, weaknesses challenges and opportunities in agri-food trade in the region. In parallel, the BSEC PERMIS is preparing BSEC-FAO Workshop on promotion of agri-food trade in the BSEC Region, to be held at the BSEC HQ on 10-11 July 2018. The Workshop will define a roadmap for preparation of the bankable project.

United Nations and Its Specialized Agencies

In the first semester of 2018, BSEC continued to foster its cooperation and interaction with other international organizations, including the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programs.

6. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project Development Fund

In line with the project-oriented approach of BSEC to its activities, the Member States paid thorough attention to ways of improving operation of the Project Development Fund. At the meeting, which was held at the BSEC HQ on 16 February 2018, the Steering Committee of the took note of the common concern, expressed by the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States at its Meeting in Kyiv on 15 December 2017, with regard to the depletion of the PDF resources, precluding operations of this multilateral Fund. The Project Coordinator of the BSEC PERMIS made a presentation on the state-of- affairs with regard to history, operations and present state of the Fund. The Steering Committee suggested the consideration of optimizing the decision-making in the PDF in order to streamline its operations as well as requested the BSEC PERMIS to provide, at its next Meeting, information on the follow-up to the projects funded by the PDF in the relevant areas of cooperation. The BSEC PERMIS informed the Steering Committee on the interest of Member States and other entities in developing projects within the Fund. In this regard, the BSEC PERMIS informed of its initiative, developed with the UNWTO Affiliated Tourism Training and Research Centre of Boğaziçi University from Istanbul and supported by the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism, to prepare a project proposal on collection, analysis and positive use of tourism statistical data of the BSEC Member States on an annual basis, which could be financed by the PDF. The Steering Committee took note of the BSEC PERMIS proposal to create a new mechanism of PDF replenishment based on annual contributions of the Member States, which would allow renewing the Fund operations, and invited the Member States to present their positions on the above proposal.

Black Sea Project Promotion Facility (BSPPF)

The Black Sea Project Promotion Facility (BSPPF) continues its routine, considering various applications on project proposals presented by the BSEC Member States. Since beginning of its functioning, BSPPF received 18 project proposals from the BSEC Member States. During the last six months two Grant Agreements were signed: 1) with UNECE on the energy efficiency project, which already started to be implemented; and 2) with “ICD-Media” Inc. on the establishment of Single Information Space in the BSEC Region. Another project proposal on “ICT for SMEs”, presented by the Armenian entity, was approved by the BSPPF Steering Committee, pending “*no objection*” clearance from the Armenian MFA. The BSPPF Steering Committee held its 2nd Annual Meeting on 29 May 2018, where the relevant issues related to the activities of the Facility were discussed as well as documents adopted.

**THE INFORMATION ON THE STATE OF AFFAIRS
WITH RESPECT TO THE BSEC LEGAL DOCUMENTS**

CHARTER OF THE BSEC (5 June 1998)

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Entered in Force</i> |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| ALBANIA | 1 May 1999 |
| ARMENIA | 1 May 1999 |
| AZERBAIJAN | 1 May 1999 |
| BULGARIA | 1 May 1999 |
| GEORGIA | 1 May 1999 |
| GREECE | 1 May 1999 |
| MOLDOVA | 1 May 1999 |
| ROMANIA | 1 May 1999 |
| SERBIA | 14 April 2004 |
| RUSSIA | 1 May 1999 |
| TURKEY | 24 September 1999 |
| UKRAINE | 1 May 1999 |

Entered in force: 1 May 1999.

**NEW ARTICLE 24 OF THE CHARTER
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
(ADOPTED AT THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES
(Istanbul, 25 June 2004)**

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession</i> | <i>Entered in Force</i> | <i>Reservations, Statements, Objections</i> |
|----------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 27 June 2011 | - | - |
| ARMENIA | 16 December 2005 | - | - |
| AZERBAIJAN | - | - | - |
| BULGARIA | 20 June 2006 | - | - |
| GEORGIA | 13 July 2005 | - | - |
| GREECE | 01 August 2006 | - | - |
| MOLDOVA | 22 September 2011 | - | - |
| ROMANIA | 18 March 2008 | - | - |
| SERBIA | 8 July 2005 | - | - |
| RUSSIA | 18 January 2008 | - | - |
| TURKEY | - | - | - |
| UKRAINE | - | - | - |

The new Article 24 shall enter into force according to the procedure set forth in Article 33 of the Charter of BSEC.

- Number of instruments of ratification,
acceptance or approval required: **9 Founding Members**
- Number of Instruments deposited
with the PERMIS: **9 Total – 8 Founding Members**

**ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL ON THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF BSEC
(30 April 1999)**

| Country | Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession | Entered in Force | Reservations, Statements, Objections |
|----------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | - | - | |
| ARMENIA | 2 November 2000 | 1 May 2004 | |
| AZERBAIJAN | 11 October 2000 | 1 May 2004 | |
| BULGARIA | 24 November 1999 | 1 May 2004 | |
| GEORGIA | 30 April 2004 | 1 May 2004 | |
| GREECE | 5 February 2002 | 1 May 2004 | |
| MOLDOVA | 19 December 2000 | 1 May 2004 | |
| ROMANIA | 14 April 2006 | 14 April 2006 | |
| SERBIA | 14 April 2004 | 1 May 2004 | |
| RUSSIA | 23 October 2000 | 1 May 2004 | |
| TURKEY | 3 March 2003 | 1 May 2004 | |
| UKRAINE | 26 January 2001 | 1 May 2004 | |

Entered in force: 1 May 2004.

**HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
(Chisinau, 27 April 2000)**

The Headquarters Agreement entered into force on 24 August 2000.

**AMENDMENTS TO THE HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
(agreed on 1 June 2006)**

- To add as the second paragraph of the article VI “permanent Representation”:
“2. *Representatives of Member States possessing rank and a diplomatic passport and their spouses, who are neither Turkish nationals nor permanent residents in Turkey, shall be exempted from Value Added Tax and Special Consumption Tax subject to the rules and regulations of the Host Country.*”
- To add as the fourth paragraph of the Article VII “Privileges and Immunities”:
“4. *The Secretary, his Deputies, and their spouses, who are neither Turkish nationals nor permanent residents in Turkey, shall be exempted from Value Added Tax and Special Consumption Tax subject to the rules and regulations of the Host Country.*”

The amendments to the Headquarters Agreement entered into force on 11 July 2007.

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ON THE AMENDMENT OF THE ANNEX OF THE HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
AND THE MODALITIES OF THE PERMANENT RELOCATION OF THE BSEC HEADQUARTERS
(Thessaloniki, 12 December 2014)**

The amendments to the Headquarters Agreement entered into force on 25 June 2015.

**PROTOCOL ON THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF PABSEC
(BAKY, 31 OCTOBER 2003)**

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Signature</i> | <i>Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession</i> | <i>Entered in Force</i> | <i>Reservations, Statements, Objections</i> |
|----------------|------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 31 October 2003 | 1 March 2010 | 1 March 2010 | - |
| ARMENIA | 31 October 2003 | 20 September 2004 | 1 March 2009 | - |
| AZERBAIJAN | 31 October 2003 | 24 December 2007 | 1 March 2009 | - |
| BULGARIA | 31 October 2003 | 17 June 2005 | 1 March 2009 | - |
| GEORGIA | 31 October 2003 | 13 July 2005 | 1 March 2009 | - |
| GREECE | 31 October 2003 | 12 February 2007 | 1 March 2009 | - |
| MOLDOVA | 31 October 2003 | 22 September 2004 | 1 March 2009 | - |
| ROMANIA | 31 October 2003 | 14 April 2006 | 1 March 2009 | - |
| SERBIA | - | - | - | - |
| RUSSIA | 31 October 2003 | 15 August 2005 | 1 March 2009 | - |
| TURKEY | 31 October 2003 | 10 February 2009 | 1 March 2009 | - |
| UKRAINE | 31 October 2003 | 24 March 2009 | 24 March 2009 | - |

“The present Protocol shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the date when nine signatory States have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval” (Article 14).

Entry in force: 1 March 2009.

**AGREEMENT AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS
OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION PARTICIPATING STATES
ON COOPERATION IN COMBATING CRIME, IN PARTICULAR IN ITS ORGANIZED FORMS
(Kerkyra, 2 October 1998)**

| Country | Signature | Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession | Entered in Force | Reservations, Statements, Objections |
|----------------|------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 2 October 1998 | 23 June 2008 | 23 July 2008 | - |
| ARMENIA | 2 October 1998 | 2 November 2000 | 2 December 2000 | - |
| AZERBAIJAN | 2 October 1998 | 17 June 2002 | 17 July 2002 | - |
| BULGARIA | 2 October 1998 | 17 March 1999 | 4 October 1999 | - |
| GEORGIA | 2 October 1998 | 27 June 2000 | 27 July 2000 | Declaration |
| GREECE | 2 October 1998 | 5 February 2002 | 7 March 2002 | - |
| MOLDOVA | 2 October 1998 | 23 September 1999 | 23 October 1999 | - |
| ROMANIA | 2 October 1998 | 13 April 2000 | 13 May 2000 | - |
| SERBIA | 17 April 2008 | 14 November 2011 | 14 December 2011 | - |
| RUSSIA | 2 October 1998 | 1 August 2000 | 1 September 2000 | - |
| TURKEY | 2 October 1998 | 28 August 1999 | 4 October 1999 | - |
| UKRAINE | 2 October 1998 | 4 September 1999 | 4 October 1999 | - |

Entered in force: 4 October 1999.

**ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE AGREEMENT
AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION PARTICIPATING STATES
ON COOPERATION IN COMBATING CRIME, IN PARTICULAR IN ITS ORGANIZED FORMS
(Kyiv, 15 March 2002)**

| Country | Signature | Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession | Entered in Force | Reservations, Declarations, Objections |
|----------------|------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 15 March 2002 | 27 October 2003 | 26 November 2003 | - |
| ARMENIA | 15 March 2002 | 30 January 2007 | 1 March 2007 | - |
| AZERBAIJAN* | - | 3 June 2008 | 3 July 2008 | Declaration |
| BULGARIA | 15 March 2002 | 2 February 2003 | 16 April 2003 | - |
| GEORGIA | 15 March 2002 | 30 April 2004 | 30 May 2004 | - |
| GREECE | 17 April 2004 | 31 May 2005 | 30 June 2005 | - |
| MOLDOVA | 15 March 2002 | 30 January 2003 | 16 April 2003 | - |
| ROMANIA | 15 March 2002 | 10 October 2003 | 9 November 2003 | - |
| SERBIA | 17 April 2008 | 14 November 2011 | 14 December 2011 | - |
| RUSSIA** | - | 14 February 2006 | 16 March 2006 | Reservation |
| TURKEY | 15 March 2002 | 17 March 2003 | 16 April 2003 | - |
| UKRAINE | 15 March 2002 | 3 February 2005 | 5 March 2005 | - |

Entered in force: 16 April 2003.

** The consent of the Republic of Azerbaijan to be bound by the Additional Protocol was expressed by accession.*

*** The consent of the Russian Federation to be bound by the Additional Protocol was expressed by accession.*

**ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL ON COMBATING TERRORISM
TO THE AGREEMENT AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS
OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION PARTICIPATING STATES
ON COOPERATION IN COMBATING CRIME, IN PARTICULAR IN ITS ORGANIZED FORMS
(Athens, 3 December 2004)**

| Country | Signature | Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession | Entered in Force | Reservations, Statements, Objections |
|----------------|------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA* | 3 December 2004 | 23 May 2006 | 23 July 2008 | - |
| ARMENIA | 3 December 2004 | 23 January 2008 | 22 February 2008 | Objections |
| AZERBAIJAN | 3 December 2004 | 19 July 2007 | 18 August 2007 | Reservation |
| BULGARIA | 3 December 2004 | 1 July 2005 | 16 October 2005 | - |
| GEORGIA | 3 December 2004 | 13 July 2005 | 16 October 2005 | - |
| GREECE | 3 December 2004 | 15 May 2006 | 14 June 2006 | - |
| MOLDOVA | 28 October 2005 | - | - | - |
| ROMANIA | 3 December 2004 | 16 Sept. 2005 | 16 October 2005 | - |
| SERBIA** | 17 April 2008 | 14 November 2011 | 14 December 2011 | - |
| RUSSIA | 3 December 2004 | 27 March 2007 | 26 April 2007 | - |
| TURKEY | 3 December 2004 | 22 January 2007 | 21 February 2007 | - |
| UKRAINE | 23 April 2005 | 22 April 2009 | 22 May 2009 | - |

Entered in force: 16 October 2005.

*Article 14 para 2: *The Party which has signed the present Additional Protocol may not become party to it, if it does not become party to the BSEC Agreement.*

On 23 July 2008 Albania became a party to the BSEC Agreement (Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms, signed in Kerkyra on 2 October 1998).

** Serbia and Montenegro signed the Additional Protocol on 3 December 2004.

**AGREEMENT AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE PARTICIPATING STATES
OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION (BSEC) ON COLLABORATION IN EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AND
EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS**

(Sochi, 15 April 1998)*

| Country | Signature | Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession | Entered in Force | Reservations, Statements, Objections |
|----------------|------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | - | 20 May 2011 | - | - |
| ARMENIA | 15 April 1998 | 13 September 2000 | 11 March 2003 | - |
| AZERBAIJAN | - | - | - | - |
| BULGARIA | 15 April 1998 | 11 March 2003 | 11 March 2003 | - |
| GEORGIA | 15 April 1998 | 29 September 2004 | 29 September 2004 | - |
| GREECE | 15 April 1998 | 24 July 2003 | 24 July 2003 | - |
| MOLDOVA | 15 April 1998 | 15 December 1998 | 11 March 2003 | - |
| ROMANIA | 15 April 1998 | 18 November 1999 | 11 March 2003 | - |
| SERBIA | 13 December 2016 | - | - | - |
| RUSSIA | 15 April 1998 | 20 July 1998 | 11 March 2003 | - |
| TURKEY | 15 April 1998 | 19 January 2006 | 19 January 2006 | - |
| UKRAINE | 15 April 1998 | 17 February 2003 | 11 March 2003 | - |

Entered in force: 11 March 2003.

* *The Depository of this Agreement is the Government of the Russian Federation. The instrument of accession of the Republic of Albania to the said Agreement was sent to the Russian Federation with the PERMIS Note No.BS/INFO.2011.0472, dated 29 June 2011. The information on state of affairs will be updated upon the receipt of relevant notification from the depository.*

**ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE AGREEMENT
AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE PARTICIPATING STATES
OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION (BSEC) ON COLLABORATION IN EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE
AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS
(Kyiv, 20 October 2005)**

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Signature</i> | <i>Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession</i> | <i>Entered in Force</i> | <i>Reservations, Statements, Objections</i> |
|----------------|------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | - | 26 May 2011 | 25 June 2011 | - |
| ARMENIA | - | 18 March 2008 | 17 April 2008 | Objections |
| AZERBAIJAN | 20 October 2005 | - | - | Declaration |
| BULGARIA | 20 October 2005 | 27 August 2007 | 26 September 2007 | - |
| GEORGIA | 20 October 2005 | 28 December 2006 | 5 July 2007 | - |
| GREECE | 20 October 2005 | 4 January 2007 | 5 July 2007 | - |
| MOLDOVA | 7 June 2006 | 5 June 2007 | 5 July 2007 | - |
| ROMANIA | 20 October 2005 | 29 June 2007 | 29 July 2007 | - |
| SERBIA | 13 December 2016 | - | - | - |
| RUSSIA | 7 June 2006 | 2 July 2007 | 1 August 2007 | - |
| TURKEY | 7 June 2006 | 4 May 2009 | 3 June 2009 | - |
| UKRAINE | 20 October 2005 | 20 July 2007 | 19 August 2007 | - |

Entered in force: 5 July 2007.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
ON THE FACILITATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT OF GOODS IN THE BSEC REGION
(Kyiv, 6 March 2002)**

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Signature</i> | <i>Notification</i> | <i>Entered in Force</i> | <i>Reservations, Statements, Objections</i> |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 6 March 2002 | 19 July 2002 | 20 July 2006 | - |
| ARMENIA | 5 November 2002 | 22 May 2006 | 20 July 2006 | Objections |
| AZERBAIJAN | 6 March 2002 | 04 November 2003 | 20 July 2006 | Reservation |
| BULGARIA | 6 March 2002 | 08 May 2002 | 20 July 2006 | - |
| GEORGIA | 6 March 2002 | 21 November 2002 | 20 July 2006 | - |
| GREECE | 6 March 2002 | 09 October 2003 | 20 July 2006 | - |
| MOLDOVA | 6 March 2002 | 06 October 2003 | 20 July 2006 | - |
| ROMANIA | 8 November 2005 | 20 June 2006 | 20 July 2006 | Reservation |
| SERBIA | 19 April 2007 | 24 October 2007 | 19 April 2007 | - |
| RUSSIA | 25 June 2007 | 03 April 2009 | 3 May 2009 | Reservation |
| TURKEY | 6 March 2002 | 13 April 2005 | 20 July 2006 | Reservation |
| UKRAINE | 6 March 2002 | 24 July 2003 | 20 July 2006 | - |

Entered in force: 20 July 2006.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOTORWAYS OF THE SEA AT THE BSEC REGION
(Belgrade, 19 April 2007)***

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Signature</i> | <i>Notification</i> | <i>Entered in Force</i> | <i>Reservations, Statements, Objections</i> |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 19 April 2007 | 06 February 2008 | 1 December 2008 | Statement |
| ARMENIA | 14 February 2008 | 28 November 2008 | 1 December 2008 | Objection |
| AZERBAIJAN | 19 April 2007 | - | - | Reservation |
| BULGARIA | 19 April 2007 | 9 April 2008 | 01 December 2008 | Statement |
| GEORGIA | 19 April 2007 | 5 March 2008 | 1 December 2008 | - |
| GREECE | 19 April 2007 | 19 May 2011 | 19 May 2011 | Statement |
| MOLDOVA | 19 April 2007 | 10 December 2008 | 1 January 2009 | - |
| ROMANIA | 19 April 2007 | 30 April 2008 | 1 December 2008 | - |
| SERBIA | 19 April 2007 | 24 October 2007 | 1 December 2008 | Statement |
| RUSSIA | 19 April 2007 | 15 February 2008 | 1 December 2008 | Statement |
| TURKEY | 19 April 2007 | 19 April 2011 | 19 April 2011 | Statement |
| UKRAINE | 25 June 2007 | 17 December 2007 | 1 December 2008 | - |

* *Article 5: "This Memorandum will become effective on the first day of the month following the date when **eight** parties sign it **or** notify BSEC PERMIS that they completed the legal procedures required for this purpose".*

The completion of national procedures is required for the entry into force of the Memorandum with respect to the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine.

Under the Laws of Georgia and the Republic of Serbia this memorandum of understanding is not subject to ratification, approval or acceptance. The consent to be bound is expressed by signature.

Entry in force: 1 December 2008.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT
OF THE BLACK SEA RING HIGHWAY**

(Belgrade, 19 April 2007)*

| Country | Signature | Notification | Entered in Force | Reservations, Statements, Objections |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 19 April 2007 | 21 October 2008 | 1 November 2008 | - |
| ARMENIA | 19 April 2007 | 16 December 2008 | 1 January 2009 | Objection |
| AZERBAIJAN | 19 April 2007 | - | - | Reservation |
| BULGARIA | 19 April 2007 | 9 April 2008 | 1 November 2008 | - |
| GEORGIA | 19 April 2007 | 12 February 2008 | 1 November 2008 | - |
| GREECE | 19 April 2007 | 17 October 2008 | 1 November 2008 | - |
| MOLDOVA | 19 April 2007 | 25 February 2008 | 1 November 2008 | - |
| ROMANIA | 19 April 2007 | 30 April 2008 | 1 November 2008 | - |
| SERBIA ** | 19 April 2007 | 24 October 2007 | 1 November 2008 | - |
| RUSSIA | 19 April 2007 | 8 February 2011 | 8 February 2011 | - |
| TURKEY | 19 April 2007 | 21 March 2011 | 21 March 2011 | - |
| UKRAINE | 25 June 2007 | 15 October 2008 | 1 November 2008 | - |

* Article 7: *This Memorandum of Understanding will become effective on the first day of the month following the date when **eight** parties sign it **and** notify BSEC PERMIS that they completed the legal procedures required for this purpose.*

** *Under the Laws of the Republic of Serbia memoranda of understanding are not subject to the process of ratification and shall enter into force on the date they have been signed.*

Entry in force: 1 November 2008.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON COOPERATION AMONG DIPLOMATIC ACADEMIES
AND INSTITUTES OF THE MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE MEMBER STATES
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
(Belgrade, 19 April 2007)**

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Signature</i> | <i>Notification</i> | <i>Entered in Force</i> | <i>Reservations, Statements, Objections</i> |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 19 April 2007 | 31 January 2008 | 7 February 2008 | - |
| ARMENIA | - | - | - | - |
| AZERBAIJAN | 19 April 2007 | - | - | - |
| BULGARIA | 19 April 2007 | - | - | - |
| GEORGIA | - | - | - | - |
| GREECE | 19 April 2007 | 7 February 2008 | 7 February 2008 | - |
| MOLDOVA | - | - | - | - |
| ROMANIA | 19 April 2007 | - | - | - |
| SERBIA * | 19 April 2007 | 24 October 2007 | 7 February 2008 | - |
| RUSSIA | 19 April 2007 | 24 November 2009 | 24 November 2009 | - |
| TURKEY | 19 April 2007 | - | - | - |
| UKRAINE | 19 April 2007 | - | - | - |

Entered in force: 7 February 2008.

* *Under the Laws of the Republic of Serbia memoranda of understanding are not subject to the process of ratification and shall enter into force on the date they have been signed.*

**AGREEMENT ON SIMPLIFICATION OF VISA PROCEDURES
FOR PROFESSIONAL LORRY DRIVERS NATIONALS OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES
(Tirana, 23 October 2008)**

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Signature</i> | <i>Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession</i> | <i>Entered in Force</i> | <i>Reservations, Statements, Objections</i> |
|----------------|------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 23 October 2008 | 1 March 2010 | - | - |
| ARMENIA | 23 October 2008 | - | - | - |
| AZERBAIJAN | - | - | - | - |
| BULGARIA | - | - | - | - |
| GEORGIA | - | - | - | - |
| GREECE | - | - | - | - |
| MOLDOVA | 23 October 2008 | - | - | - |
| ROMANIA | - | - | - | - |
| SERBIA | - | - | - | - |
| RUSSIA | - | - | - | - |
| TURKEY | 23 October 2008 | 23 April 2009 | - | - |
| UKRAINE | - | - | - | - |

**AGREEMENT ON SIMPLIFICATION OF VISA PROCEDURES
FOR THE BUSINESSPEOPLE NATIONALS OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES
(Tirana, 23 October 2008)**

| Country | Signature | Date of Deposit of Instrument of Ratification, Approval or Accession | Entered in Force | Reservations, Statements, Objections |
|----------------|------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| ALBANIA | 23 October 2008 | 1 March 2010 | - | - |
| ARMENIA | 23 October 2008 | - | - | - |
| AZERBAIJAN | - | - | - | - |
| BULGARIA | - | - | - | - |
| GEORGIA | - | - | - | - |
| GREECE | - | - | - | - |
| MOLDOVA | 23 October 2008 | - | - | - |
| ROMANIA | - | - | - | - |
| SERBIA | - | - | - | - |
| RUSSIA | - | - | - | - |
| TURKEY | 23 October 2008 | 23 April 2009 | - | - |
| UKRAINE | - | - | - | - |