



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

BS/WG/T/R(2018)1

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPORT

Baku, 24 October 2018

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Transport was held in Baku, on 24 October 2018.
 2. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Azer ALIYEV, Head of Department for Transport Policy, and Mr. Bakhtiyar MAMMADOV, Deputy Head of the Legal Department, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
 3. The following BSEC Member States participated in the Meeting:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
 4. The representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt participated in the Meeting as the BSEC Observer.
 5. The representative of the Union of Road Transport Associations in the BSEC Region (BSEC-URTA) participated in the Meeting in the capacity of the BSEC Sectoral Dialogue Partner.
 6. The representative of the International Road Transport Union (IRU) participated in the Meeting as a Guest.
- The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.
7. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex II**.

AGENDA ITEM 2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND MEETINGS OF MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT WITH REGARD TO:

8. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the Delegation of Romania, as a Country-Coordinator, and the BSEC PERMIS about implementation of the decisions of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States, Ministers in Charge of Transport of the BSEC Member States and the Action Plan of the BSEC Working Group on Transport for the period of 1 July 2017 – 30 June 2019.

9. Furthermore, the Working Group noted the need for 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.

10. The Working Group invited the Country-Coordinator, the BSEC PERMIS, the Joint Permanent Technical Secretariat of the Black Sea Ring Highway (BSRH JPTS) and the Joint Technical Secretariat of the Motorways of the Sea (MS JTS) to present coordinated proposals on transport activities to the incoming BSEC Chairmanships-in-Office in order to streamline activities for achieving those goals.

11. The Working Group highly appreciated the efforts of the BSEC PERMIS undertaken for the successful presentation of BSEC and its transport key activities at the Annual Summit of the International Transport Forum (ITF), which was held in Leipzig, Germany, on 23-25 May 2018. Noting the great contribution of this endeavor to the increase of the BSEC visibility and implementation of the BSEC Public Communication Strategy, the Working Group recommended continuing the practice of the BSEC participation in the future ITF Summits.

a/ Appointment of representatives to the Working Group on Transport

12. The Working Group invited the BSEC Member States to timely update, whenever necessary, information regarding their representatives in the Working Group. The newly updated list of representatives is attached as **Annex III**.

b/ Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding for the Coordinated Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway

13. The Working Group considered the state of affairs with regard to implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding for the Coordinated Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway.

14. The Working Group took note of:

- Information of the BSRH JPTS, presented by the BSEC PERMIS, regarding implementation of the decisions of the Tenth Meeting of the Steering Committee on the Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway (BSRH SC), which was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 21 March 2018.

- Information of the BSEC-URTA and the BSEC PERMIS regarding the IRU Model Highway Initiative (MHI) along the Baku – Tbilisi – Trabzon BSRH route.

- Information that, in accordance with the Rotation List of the Steering Committee, the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey and the Vice-Presidency of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Steering Committee will expire on 31 October 2018, and that the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Hellenic Republic will assume, respectively, the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency for a biannual period as of 1 November 2018.

15. The Delegation of the Russian Federation provided information about activities on the development of the BSRH route at the national level as well as informed that the Questionnaire on the BSRH route passing on its territory has been prepared in Russian and it will be submitted to the BSRH JPTS shortly after translating it to English.

16. The Working Group invited the BSEC Member States, which have not yet provided their replies to the Questionnaire, to do so at their earliest convenience.

17. The Working Group underlined the importance of the IRU Model Highway Initiative for the development of transport, auxiliary and logistic infrastructure in order to secure the high level of working and social conditions for the transport business community along the BSRH route.

18. In order to undertake concrete steps for achieving the goals of the MoU, the Working Group invited the relevant parties to undertake the following:

- the incoming leadership in the BSRH Steering Committee, in cooperation with the BSRH JPTS and the BSEC PERMIS, and in consultations with the incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, to organize the next meeting of the BSRH Steering Committee in the first semester of 2019 with the objective to finalize the BSRH Route and to steer the work on programming and preparing feasibility studies for the selected segments of the projects in the territories of the Parties to the MoU in order to form a portfolio of bankable projects and to facilitate the attraction of interest of BSTDB and other IFIs;

- the BSRH JPTS and the BSEC PERMIS to hold consultations with all parties involved to the IRU Model Highway Initiative along the BSRH route on the concrete steps needed for its implementation and to present the outcome of the consultations to the meeting of the BSRH Steering Committee;

- the BSRH Steering Committee to consider also the form and the text of a BSRH sign post that could be visibly placed on the segments of the Black Sea Ring Highway according to the internal regulations of each Member State.

19. The Working Group reiterated its call to the Parties to the Memorandum of Understanding for the Coordinated Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway to undertake concrete steps for achieving the goals of the MoU.

20. The Delegation of Ukraine made a Statement, which is attached as **Annex IV**.

21. The Delegation of the Russian Federation made a Statement, which is attached as **Annex V**.

c/ Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea in the BSEC Region

22. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS regarding state of affairs with regard to implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on

Development of the Motorways of the Sea in the BSEC Region.

23. The Working Group took note that, in accordance with the Rotation List, the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey and Vice-Presidency of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the MoS Ad Hoc Working Group will expire on 31 October 2018, and that the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Hellenic Republic will assume, respectively, the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency for a biannual period as of 1 November 2018.

24. The Delegation of the Hellenic Republic made remarks under this Agenda item. The text is attached as **Annex VI**.

25. The Working Group invited the incoming leadership in the MoS Ad Hoc Working Group, in cooperation with the MoS JTS and BSEC PERMIS, and in consultations with the incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, to organize the next meeting of the MoS Ad Hoc Working Group in the first semester of 2019 with the objective to elaborate on the Master Plan on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea and to conduct the work on programming and preparing feasibility studies for the MoS projects in the territories of the Parties to the MoU in order to form a portfolio of bankable projects and to facilitate the attraction of interest of BSTDB and other IFIs.

26. The Working Group called on the Parties to the MoU to undertake concrete steps for achieving its implementation.

d/ State of affairs with regard to implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region

27. The Working Group took note of the BSEC PERMIS information regarding state of affairs with regard to implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region.

28. The Working Group was informed about arrangements for the forthcoming Thirteenth Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods to be held at the BSEC Headquarters on 27 November 2018 back-to-back with the Meeting of the Member States participating in the project Permit System.

29. The BSEC-URTA informed the Working Group about the resolutions of the 33rd and 34th Meetings of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly conveying the deep concern of the business transport community with the enormous delays of commercial vehicles, exceeding 12 hours, at the borders of the BSEC Member States along the main transport corridors connecting Europe to the Middle East and the Central Asia.

30. Stressing that insufficient infrastructure, inefficient procedures and lack of coordination between border authorities at the adjacent borders is the result of increased cost of the goods transported, the BSEC-URTA appealed to the BSEC Member States for proper execution of the UNECE and WCO conventions, as well as the MoU on the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region, which are efficient legal tools for facilitating trade and transportation in the BSEC Region.

31. The Working Group invited the BSEC Member States to give proper consideration of the resolutions of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly at the mentioned Thirteenth Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods.

32. The BSEC-URTA proposed to convene the next meeting of the Working Group on Transport back-to-back with the Working Group on Customs in order to give the comprehensive consideration of problems of road transport at border crossing points.

33. Furthermore, the Working Group invited the BSEC Member States to timely update, whenever necessary, information regarding their representatives in the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in order to secure its due operation.

AGENDA ITEM 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 JULY 2017 – 30 JUNE 2019

34. The Working Group considered the state of affairs with regard to the implementation of the Action Plan of the BSEC Working Group on Transport for the period of 1 July 2017 – 30 June 2019.

35. Furthermore, the Working Group made updates in the text of the Action Plan of the BSEC Working Group on Transport for the period of 1 July 2017 – 30 June 2019. The updated text is attached as **Annex VII**.

AGENDA ITEM 4. STATE OF AFFAIRS WITH REGARD TO THE DRAFT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTIMODAL FERRY AND PASSENGER LINES IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

36. The Working Group continued exchanging views on the Draft Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of Multimodal Ferry and Passenger Lines in the Black Sea Region, presented earlier by the Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation.

37. The Working Group recommended to incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office to convene a Meeting of Experts of Interested Member States for considering the Draft Memorandum of Understanding and informing the Working Group on the further actions needed in this regard.

AGENDA ITEM 5. COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE BSEC SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNERS

38. The Working Group took note of the BSEC PERMIS information regarding cooperation in the concrete fields of transport between BSEC and UNECE, IRU, UIC, BSEC-URTA, BASPA, BRASS and BINSAs since its last meeting in Kyiv on 16 November 2017.

39. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the IRU and the BSEC-URTA on the activities promoting facilitation of transport of goods in the BSEC Region.

40. The Working Group appreciated the valuable contribution of the BSEC partners to the overall efforts aimed at development of road/maritime infrastructure and facilitation of transport of goods in the BSEC Region.

AGENDA ITEM 6. CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE MEETING OF MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF TRANSPORT OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES (BAKU, 25 OCTOBER 2018)

41. The Working Group considered and amended the text of the Draft Joint Baku Declaration of the Ministers in Charge of Transport of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation “Boosting Trade through Connectivity”. The Draft will be submitted to the Ministers at their Meeting on 25 October 2018 in Baku for consideration and taking relevant decision on it. The text of the final draft is attached to the present Report as **Annex VIII**.

AGENDA ITEM 7. CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF TRANSPORT OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES (BAKU, 25 OCTOBER 2018)

42. The Working Group considered, amended and agreed on the text of the draft Report of the Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Transport of the BSEC Member States (Baku, 25 October 2018). The draft Report is attached as **Annex IX**.

AGENDA ITEM 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

43. No issues were raised under this Agenda Item.

AGENDA ITEM 9. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

44. The Working Group adopted the present Report to be submitted to the Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Transport of the BSEC Member States and to the Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials.