



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

16 November 2021

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**REPORT
OF THE MEETING
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON TRANSPORT**

Videoconference, 16 November 2021

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Transport was held online on 16 November 2021.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Ivan TOKATLY, Chief Specialist of the Division of International Affairs, Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine, as a representative of the Country-Coordinator of the BSEC Working Group on Transport.
3. The participants were welcomed by Ambassador Lazăr COMĂNESCU, Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS.
4. The following BSEC Member States participated in the Meeting:
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Azerbaijan
 - Georgia
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Republic of Moldova
 - Republic of North Macedonia
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
5. The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) participated in the Meeting as a BSEC Related Body.
6. The representatives of the Republic of Slovenia, the Union of Road Transport Associations in the BSEC Region (BSEC-URTA) and the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) attended the Meeting as Sectoral Dialogue Partners.
7. The representatives of the International Road Transport Union (IRU) and the Permanent Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Commission TRACECA participated in the Meeting as Guests.

8. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.
9. 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 AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT

10. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the state of implementation of the relevant Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of the Declarations and Joint Statements adopted by the Ministers in charge of Transport of the BSEC Member States.

AGENDA ITEM 3: APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPORT

11. In line with the resolution “Assessment of the work deployed in the BSEC Working Groups”, adopted by the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States in Belgrade on 19 April 2007, the Working Group considered the List of representatives to the Working Group and took note of the updates to it.

12. The delegations of the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Moldova, the Republic of North Macedonia and Romania presented updated information about their representatives.

13. The Working Group invited the BSEC Member States to timely update, whenever necessary, information regarding their representatives in the Working Group, in order to facilitate a direct communication between the BSEC PERMIS and the relevant Ministries. The newly updated List of representatives is attached as **Annex III**.

AGENDA ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 JANUARY 2021 – 31 DECEMBER 2022

14. The Working Group considered, amended and approved the Plan of Action of the BSEC Working Group on Transport for the period of 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2022, presented by Ukraine as the Country-Coordinator, as a road map with concrete objectives and priorities, as well as a number of activities in the field of transport. The Plan of Action, as approved by the Working Group, is attached as **Annex IV**.

15. The Member States and partner organizations were invited to communicate to the BSEC PERMIS their proposals to the Calendar of transport activities for the year 2022.

AGENDA ITEM 5: INTEGRATED ROAD AND SEA TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK IN THE BSEC REGION. STATE OF AFFAIRS WITH REGARD TO:

a. Coordinated Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway

16. The Working Group took note of the Report of the 12th Meeting of the Steering Committee on the Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway, held online on 18 May 2021, and encouraged 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.

17. The Working Group invited the leadership in the BSRH Steering Committee to organize the next meeting of the latter during the first semester of 2022, in cooperation with the BSRH Joint Permanent Technical Secretariat (JPTS), the BSEC PERMIS and in consultation with the incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office.

18. Furthermore, the Working Group took note of information, provided by the BSEC PERMIS on its participation in the following events:

- «*Adriatic Connectivity Forum*» (17-18 February 2021, online);
- Training workshops on «*Strengthening capacity to develop bankable transport infrastructure projects for enhanced connectivity*» (18-20 May 2021, online) and on «*Strengthening capacity to design and implement policies and identify solutions that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals*» (30 September – 1 October 2021, online).

19. The Delegation of Ukraine made a Statement, which is attached as **Annex V**.

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

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

21. The Working Group took note of the Report of the Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea, held online on 24 March 2021, and encouraged the Parties to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea at the BSEC Region to proceed further with achieving goals of the MoU.

22. The Working Group invited the leadership in the MoS Ad Hoc Working Group to organize the next meeting of the latter during the first semester of 2022, in cooperation with the MoS Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS), BSEC PERMIS and in consultations with the incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office.

23. Taking into account that the term of office of Ukraine in the MoS JTS expired on 30 April 2021, the Working Group reiterated the invitation to the Parties to the MoU to present **by 20 December 2021** their candidacies for assuming the duties of managing the MoS JTS as of 1 January 2022.

24. The Working Group took note of information, provided by the BSEC PERMIS on its participation in the following events:

- Info Day: «*EU Funding tools for Ports and Logistics: HORIZON EUROPE and Connecting Europe Facility (CEF2)*» (30 April 2021);
- Workshop: «*Ammonia as a green shipping fuel: challenges and opportunities*» (23 September 2021, online);
- Regional Webinar: «*Greening the Maritime Transport and Preparedness for Marine Pollution Prevention in Black Sea Region*» (11 November 2021, online).

25. Furthermore, the Working Group took note of information, provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the forthcoming «*Motorways of the Sea Digital Forum*», to be organized by Prof. Kurt BODEWIG, European Coordinator for MoS (26 November 2021, online).

26. The delegation of the Russian Federation made a presentation on autonomous navigation in the maritime transport in Russia, focusing on improving the safety of navigation, reduction of onboard crew number, improving personal policy, better transport safety control. The delegation informed that the Russian Federation opened up the practical operation of maritime autonomous vessels and is ready to share the experience with other countries, aiming to improve the safety and efficiency of the entire global maritime transport industry. The presentation is attached as **Annex VII**.

c. Draft Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of Multimodal Ferry and Passenger Lines in the Black Sea Region

27. The delegation of the Russian Federation informed on the state of affairs with regard to the revised text of the Draft Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of Multimodal Ferry and Passenger Lines in the Black Sea Region, presented by the Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation.

28. It was agreed that the Russian Federation will submit to the BSEC PERMIS a revised text of the Draft MoU which will reflect the new tendencies of ferry transportation in the Black Sea region, as well as suggestions and remarks received from the interested Member States. The BSEC PERMIS will disseminate the revised text of the Draft MoU to the interested Member States for their final consideration. Upon the final consideration of the Draft MoU by the interested Member States, a new Meeting of the Group of Experts will be convened in consultations with the Russian Federation and the acting BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office.

AGENDA ITEM 6: FACILITATION OF TRANSPORT OF GOODS IN THE BSEC REGION

a. Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods

29. The Working Group took note of the:

- Report of the Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region, held online on 9 November 2021, and encouraged the Parties to the Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region to proceed further with achieving goals of the MoU.

- Information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the consultations on e-CMR, which were held online on 11 November 2021, as a follow-up to the Meeting of the BSEC Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods, held on 9 November 2021.

30. The participants were also informed on the BSEC PERMIS participation in the Webinar: «*Digitalization of road transport in Europe: the great progress under the Connecting Europe Facility*» (25 March 2021, online).

31. Mr. Vadim ZAKHARENKO, IRU General Delegate to Eurasia, shared the IRU update concerning the electronic consignment note (e-CMR), highlighting some of the key challenges in implementing e-CMR and possible solutions, e-TIR specifications, etc. The statement is attached as **Annex VIII**.

32. Mr. Baurzhan KUSSUBAYEV, Head of Team of Experts of the Permanent Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Commission TRACECA, informed on the TRACECA activities in the field of transport, focusing on the implementation of the Strategy and programme

documents, digitalization of transport documents, development of road and container transport, etc. The presentation is attached as Annex IX.

b. Project “BSEC Permit System”

33. The Steering Committee took note of information, provided by the BSEC PERMIS and the BSEC-URTA on the outcomes of the Meeting of the BSEC Member States participating in the ‘BSEC Permit System’, held online on 12 October 2021, in particular concerning the:

- Intention of the Republic of North Macedonia to join the BSEC Permit System as of 1 January 2022;

- Decision by the participating Member States to double the number of BSEC permits for the year 2022 from 1500 to 3000 for the Republic of Albania, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, the Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine and to issue 800 permits for the Republic of Armenia.

- Proposal by the BSEC-URTA Secretary General, Mr. Adrian ALBU, to consider the possibility of financing the Project ‘BSEC Permit System’ from the BSEC Budget, starting from the year 2023.

c. Development of Intermodal Transportation

34. The Working Group took note of the Report of the Meeting of the BSEC Task Force on Intermodal Transportation, held online on 17 March 2021.

35. The Working Group underlined the importance of the development of sustainable intermodal transport and logistics system in the region, and invited the incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office to convene the next meeting of the Task Force on Intermodal Transportation during the first semester of 2022.

36. In order to strengthen the links between different modes of transport to ensure stable and reliable international transport as well as to prevent the disruption of the supply chains, particularly during emergencies, like the current pandemic, and in order to drive the post-Covid recovery and to build back better, the IRU representative emphasized the importance of accepting subcontracting under TIR at the national level in all TIR Contracting Parties and called on BSEC Member States to facilitate its use in accordance with Article 1 of the TIR Convention. The above proposal by the IRU was supported by the BSEC-URTA.

AGENDA ITEM 7: CONSIDERATION OF THE ABOLISHMENT OF THE TASK FORCE ON THE BSEC IVWC PILOT PROJECT

37. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS and the BSEC-URTA in the context of this item.

38. On the basis of exchange of views, the Working Group decided to terminate the mandate and, thus, abolish the Task Force on elaboration of a road map for the BSEC Pilot Project on the introduction of the International Vehicle Weight Certificate (Task Force on the BSEC IVWC Pilot Project).

AGENDA ITEM 8: COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THE BSEC SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNERS

39. The Working Group took note of the BSEC PERMIS information regarding the BSEC cooperation with the international organizations and the BSEC Sectoral Dialogue Partners in the concrete fields, since its last meeting on 23 November 2020, and appreciated the valuable contribution of the partners to the BSEC cooperation on transport.

AGENDA ITEM 9: DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

40. The date and venue of the next Meeting will be communicated in due course.

AGENDA ITEM 10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Expression of thanks:

41. The participants expressed their gratitude to the outgoing Secretary General of the BSEC-URTA Mr. Adrian Iosif ALBU for his valuable contribution to the work of the BSEC Organization and wished him success in his future endeavors.

42. The representative of the Republic of Armenia underlined the importance of transport and shipping connectivity and the development of inland/dry ports particularly for the landlocked Member States and emphasized special needs of non-littoral countries for unfettered, efficient and cost-effective access to and from the sea by all means of transport.

AGENDA ITEM 11: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

43. The Working Group adopted the present Report for its submission to the Committee of Senior Officials and the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.