



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

10 November 2020

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REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Online, 10 November 2020

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Trade and Economic Development was held online on 10 November 2020.
2. The Meeting was attended by the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
3. The following BSEC Related Body attended the Meeting:

Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC (PABSEC)
4. The following BSEC Observer attended the Meeting:

Republic of Poland
5. The representative of International Road Transport Union (IRU) participated in the Meeting as a Guest.
6. The List of Participants in the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.
7. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Constantin APOSTOL, Senior Counsellor, Foreign Trade Department, Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment of Romania.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was considered and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex II**.

AGENDA ITEM 2: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS RELATED TO TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE JOINT DECLARATIONS ADOPTED BY THE MEETINGS OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF ECONOMY

9. The Working Group took note of the 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, as well as of the Joint Declarations adopted by the Ministers in charge of Economy of the BSEC Member States.

AGENDA ITEM 3: CONSIDERATION OF THE EVALUATION REPORT OF THE PREVIOUS COUNTRY-COORDINATOR OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (REPUBLIC OF TURKEY) FOR THE PERIOD 01.07.2018 - 30.06.2020

10. The representative from the Republic of Turkey presented the highlights of the Evaluation Report for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2020.

11. The Working Group considered and approved the Evaluation Report of the Republic of Turkey, for its submission to the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) of the BSEC Member States. The Evaluation Report is attached as **Annex III**.

AGENDA ITEM 4: EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS AMONG THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

- Negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic to the development of trade in and beyond the BSEC region and possible ways out of the situation.

12. The Delegations of the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine informed the Working Group on recent developments of economic and trade relations of their respective countries with the other BSEC Member States; special emphasis was made on the measures taken by their respective Governments to alleviate the negative impact of the pandemic situation on the national economies.

13. The information presented in the above context by the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia is attached as **Annex IV**.

14. The Working Group invited the Member States to send to the PERMIS by 15 December 2020 information about their extraordinary measures taken in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, in order to upload it to the BSEC PERMIS website and to distribute electronically to the Member States.

- Setting up an Information Exchange Mechanism on trade and economic issues in the BSEC Region

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15. The Working Group further considered the Project Proposal entitled “*Setting up an Information Exchange Mechanism on Trade and Economic Issues in the BSEC Region*”, elaborated by the BSEC PERMIS.

16. The Delegation of the Republic of Moldova informed that currently the country participates in a number of similar projects and initiatives, and thus, draw the attention to the necessity of elaboration of the Information Exchange Mechanism in such a way that to avoid overlapping with other similar projects.

17. The Delegation of the Russian Federation emphasized the importance of statistics and experts in the respective area in elaboration of such Information Exchange Mechanisms.

18. Given the above, the Working Group agreed with the idea to hold a joint meeting of the BSEC Working Groups on Trade and Economic Development and on Customs Matters with the participation of experts in statistics, in consultations with the BSEC Chairmanships-in-Office. The issue of setting up an Information Exchange Mechanism on Trade and Economic Issues in the BSEC Region will be also discussed at this meeting.

19. The Working Group reiterated its invitation to the Member States to send their further comments and proposals regarding the content of the Project Proposal to the BSEC PERMIS *in written form* until 1 February 2021; upon the receipt of this feedback from the Member States, BSEC PERMIS will elaborate the draft Project Proposal and submit it respectively for further consideration.

20. The Project Proposal is attached as **Annex V**.

AGENDA ITEM 5: COOPERATION AMONG THE BSEC MEMBER STATES IN THE SPHERE OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

21. The Working Group approved the Draft Framework for BSEC E-commerce Cooperation and decided to submit it to the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials for further consideration.

AGENDA ITEM 6: REGIONAL COOPERATION IN SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

22. The BSEC PERMIS informed the Working Group on the *High Level Virtual Conference of the BSEC Member States on “The intensification of regional cooperation for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals”*, that takes place today – 10 November 2020, and is jointly organized by the Department of Sustainable Development within the Government of Romania and the Romanian BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, under the aegis of the BSEC PERMIS, Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) and the Black Sea Chapter of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). The copy of the speech delivered by the Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS in the above-mentioned event is attached as **Annex VI**.

23. Furthermore, the BSEC PERMIS informed the Working Group on the project entitled “*Feasibility Study for a Black Sea SDGs Observatory*”, that is being implemented by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) with the grant allocated from the Black Sea Project Promotion Facility (BSPPF).

AGENDA ITEM 7: CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUE OF APPOINTMENT OF THE COUNTRY COORDINATOR OF THE WORKING GROUP

24. The Working Group was reminded by the PERMIS about the absence of applications from the Member States for the position of the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development and urged the Member States to apply for the position of the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group, as requested by the upper BSEC bodies.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

25. No issue was raised under this Agenda Item.

AGENDA ITEM 9: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

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