



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

17 November 2021

BS/WG/TED/R(2021)2

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

Online, 17 November 2021

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Trade and Economic Development was held online on 17 November 2021.
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
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 Sectoral Dialogue Partner attended the Meeting:

BSEC Union of Road Transport Associations (BSEC-URTA)
5. The List of Participants in the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.
6. Upon the agreement of the Working Group, the Meeting was chaired by Mr. Anıl EVMEZ, EU Expert, Directorate General for International Agreements and European Union, Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Turkey.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. 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

8. 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: EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS AMONG THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

9. The Delegations of the Republic of Armenia, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey informed the Working Group on recent developments in their respective countries, on state programs and plans adopted by the Governments to cope with economic challenges brought by Covid-19 pandemic, as well as on trade relations with other BSEC Member States.

10. The Secretary General of the BSEC-URTA Mr. Adrian ALBU briefed the Working Group on the project (Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul Road Transport Corridor - ITI) that was implemented with some members of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). He also brought into the attention of the participants the challenges that the road transportation sector faces with in the ongoing pandemic situation and, in this regard, made a reference to the IRU Resolution adopted at the IRU Goods Transport Council on 4 November 2021.

11. The information presented in the above context by the Delegations of the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation, as well as the IRU Resolution are attached as **Annexes III, IV and V**.

AGENDA ITEM 4: SETTING UP AN INFORMATION EXCHANGE MECHANISM ON TRADE AND ECONOMIC ISSUES IN THE BSEC REGION

12. The Working Group exchanged views on the updated Project Proposal entitled "*Setting up an Information Exchange Mechanism on trade and economic issues in the BSEC Region*". The Working Group reiterated its invitation to the Member States that did not yet send their feedback on the updated Project Proposal, to provide the BSEC PERMIS with their further written comments and proposals regarding the content of the updated Project Proposal.

13. The WG instructed the BSEC PERMIS to examine possible ways to further elaborate the project proposal, based on the feedback to be received from the Member States, and present its updated text at the next meeting of the Working Group.

14. The updated Project Proposal and the comments received from the Republic of Turkey are attached as **Annexes VI and VII**.

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

15. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the approval of the “*Framework for BSEC E-commerce Cooperation*” by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs at its meeting held online on 30 June 2021, as well as on the Resolution adopted by the Council to that effect.

16. Pursuing invitation of the Council extended to the Member States and the BSEC PERMIS in the above mentioned Resolution, the Working Group considered the provisions of the Framework and exchanged views on the ways of their implementation.

17. Working Group agreed on the usefulness of organizing dialogue events concurring with the priority areas stipulated in the Framework, invited the forthcoming BSEC Chairmanships-in-Office to consider the possibilities for organizing such events during their Chairmanships, and instructed the BSEC PERMIS to follow and accordingly inform the Working Group on the matter.

AGENDA ITEM 6: REGIONAL COOPERATION IN SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

18. The BSEC PERMIS informed the Working Group on the participation of the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Lazar COMANESCU in the Thessaloniki Sustainability Summit, held online on 15 September 2021; detailed presentation on the BSPPF-funded “Feasibility Study for a Black Sea SDGs Observatory” project was also delivered by the joint implementation team (AUTH and FinU) in the mentioned event.

19. The Delegations of the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation informed the participants on the recent developments in their respective countries with regard to measures taken to ensure smooth and sustainable achieving of the SDGs. These interventions are attached as **Annexes VIII and IX**.

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

20. 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

21. No issue was raised under this Agenda Item.

AGENDA ITEM 9: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

22. 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.