



PRESS RELEASE
PARTICIPATION OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL
IN THE AGRIBUSINESS FORUM 2019
(Serres, 31 October – 2 November 2019)

In conformity with the Calendar of events of the Hellenic Chairmanship in the BSEC and upon the invitation of the organizing committee, the Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS Ambassador Michael B. Christides participated in the AgriBusiness Forum held in Serres, Hellenic Republic, on 31 October – 2 November 2019. The responsible Executive Manager of PERMIS, Mr. Alexei NISTREAN, also followed the extensive works of the event.

The AgriBusiness Forum (ABF) 2019 was focused on “The future of agriculture in the digital era” and aimed to advance the knowledge concerning the digitization & digital transformation of the agri-food value chain.

Beside the numerous participants from the Hellenic Republic, representatives from Bulgaria, the United States, the Netherlands, Sweden and other countries attended the event. The Forum hosted almost 60 distinguished speakers, among them Ministers and other high-ranking officials; more than 200 delegates of farmers, leading businesses, financial services, innovative scaleups, research, academia and the public sector followed the interesting presentations and took part in the discussions that followed.

In his statement the Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS highlighted the activities and priorities of the BSEC Organization in the field of agriculture, stressed the importance of the 2017 Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Agriculture of the BSEC Member States and briefly informed on the activities of the BSEC Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-industry, always related to the prospects of regional cooperation in the field of agriculture. Ambassador Christides informed participants on the regional projects that have been implemented in the BSEC framework, as well as on the incoming project on the establishment of the BSEC Regional Cooperation Center for Sustainable Food Systems, to be implemented in close cooperation with FAO. He underlined that today’s challenges require more and deeper regional cooperation and that the BSEC Organization has all the necessary mechanisms in order to assume the role of a valuable vehicle for dialogue and synergies. On a more practical level, the Secretary General proposed to the organizers of the event to jointly consider the possibility of organizing at a regional level a custom-tailored Agri-Business Forum, in order to enhance the transborder cooperation in the crucial field of agriculture.

On the margins of the Conference Ambassador Christides and Mr. Nistrean had bilateral meetings with the Ministers of Agriculture, Rural Development and Food and of Infrastructure and Transport of the Hellenic Republic, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry of Bulgaria, the representative of the Dutch Embassy in Greece and other high-level participants.

A special meeting was held with the organizers of the AgriBusiness Forum with the aim to explore the opportunities of interaction and collaboration between BSEC and the ABF.