



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**ON THE INAUGURAL SPEECH OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL AT THE MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY (METU)**  
*(Ankara, 12 February 2020)*

The Chair of the *Center for the Black Sea and Central Asia (KORA)* of the *Middle East Technical University (METU)* in Ankara, Prof. Dr. Ayşe AYATA, invited the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador M.B. CHRISTIDES to deliver the inaugural speech of a series of seminars that the Center will host in its premises on issues related to the wider Black Sea region and to the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

In the above seminars Ambassadors of BSEC Member States accredited to Turkey will also be invited in order to present the perceptions of their countries regarding the Black Sea region and their participation in the BSEC Organization.

Secretary General Ambassador CHRISTIDES spoke on 12 February 2020 before a numerous group of graduate students and academics of the METU and answered to their many questions concerning the functioning and the effectiveness of the BSEC Organization in promoting economic cooperation among its Member States and in establishing a culture of dialogue and understanding among them.

Thus, BSEC PERMIS continues its efforts to better explain and project the activities of the BSEC Organization and its role as a point of reference in the geostrategic Black Sea region, especially among young students and academics involved in research and studies covering the broader Eur-Asian area.

On the sidelines of his visit to Ankara Ambassador CHRISTIDES met with the President of the METU Prof. Dr. Mustafa Verşan KÖK, with whom he discussed how to further promote the scientific cooperation between BSEC PERMIS and the METU. The two entities already cooperate in the implementation of projects promoting the Marine and Maritime Research and Innovation in the Black Sea, as well as in the joint organization of important events concerning mainly the “Blue Growth Initiative” and marine litter pollution in the Black Sea.