



**PRESS RELEASE THE
MEETING OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP
ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOTORWAYS OF THE SEA**

(24 March 2021, Online)

In accordance with the Calendar of Events of the Albanian BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office, the Meeting of the **BSEC Ad Hoc Working Group on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea** was held online on 24 March 2021, with participation of experts from the respective Authorities responsible for Transport from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine. The meeting was also attended by experts from the *European Commission*, the *Danube Commission* and the *Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR)*.

As is known, the BSEC PERMIS is actively exploring possible ways and means of potentially revitalizing the BSEC Motorways of the Sea Project, including the possibility of potential coordination with similar efforts by the European Commission.

In order to further jointly explore the possibilities of establishing a contact mechanism for coordinating efforts concerning the Motorways of the Sea, especially in the Black Sea area, the BSEC PERMIS invited *Prof. Kurt BODEWIG*, European Coordinator for the Motorways of the Sea, to participate and contribute to the Meeting.

In his presentation Prof. BODEWIG provided a comprehensive review of the EU-promoted concept of MoS, the idea of which is to extend the *Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)* of roads and railways to the sea and support related infrastructures. Special attention was paid to the *Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) for Motorways of the Sea* which sets the priorities for the creation of a sustainable, smart and seamless *European Maritime Space*; particular focus of MoS DIP in the Black Sea is on: growing traffic (thus, capacity expansion may be necessary); modernization of existing facilities; optimal use of rail and barges, etc.

Answering questions from the representatives of BSEC Member States Professor BODEWIG elaborated on the new possibilities of funding concrete infrastructure projects, even in non-EU countries and on the significance of the wider Black Sea region as the “bridge” between Europe and Asia.

The Ad Hoc Working Group welcomed the PERMIS initiatives aimed at revitalizing the MoS Project, and encouraged the Parties to the *Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea in the BSEC Region* to steer the next phase of work to the preparation of the necessary Master Plan.