



PRESS RELEASE

BSEC PRESENTS ITS CASE TO JOIN THE COE'S ENLARGED PARTIAL AGREEMENT ON CULTURAL ROUTES (EPA)

BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B Christides has appeared before the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA) Governing Board today to present BSEC's case for Participative Status with the EPA. It follows the signing of a Letter of Intent on Cooperation between the two organisations a year ago.

The Council of Europe's Cultural Routes are a series of theme-based journeys through the countries of Europe and beyond that demonstrate a shared and vibrant historical and cultural heritage.

Ambassador Christides told the Board that the BSEC region "deserves to have more cultural routes that will better and more effectively present to the world its rich and unique past and its important present and future".

By applying for Participative Status "we wish to fully capitalize on the potential for enhancing cultural tourism in and among our Member States **with the expert support and involvement of the EPA,**" he said.

"We wish to promote, again in cooperation with the EPA, 'home grown' Cultural Routes like "Cultural Routes of Byzantium" and "Black Sea Cuisine Cultural Routes". We also wish to encourage more of our Member States to participate in existing Cultural Routes, for example, the 'European Cultural Routes of Saints Cyril and Methodius', the 'Cultural Route of Historic Gardens' and the 'Cultural Route of Nicola Tesla'".

Ambassador Christides added that BSEC PERMIS hoped to work on joint projects with the EPA in the future, including joint applications to the EU or other funding entities, to secure their implementation.

Birgitta Ringbeck, the Chair, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, thanked Ambassador Christides for his presentation and said the board would consider BSEC's request for Participative Status and would let him know in a matter of weeks.