



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

8 November 2019

BS/AHWGE/BSEC-EU/R (2019)2

REPORT OF SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP OF EXPERTS ON BSEC-EU INTERACTION

Athens, 8 November 2019
(09:30 -13:30 p.m.)

1. The 17th Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction was held in Athens on 8 November 2019.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Vassilis KATAKALIDIS, Deputy Head, B2 Directorate for Economic Relations with SE Europe, CIS and the BSEC countries, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) and the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) attended the Meeting as BSEC Related Bodies.
5. The representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany and the European External Action Service (on behalf of the European Commission) attended the Meeting as BSEC Observers, while the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) – as a Sectoral Dialog Partner.

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6. The list of participants is attached as **Annex 1**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex 2**.

AGENDA ITEM 2: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BSEC COUNCIL AND FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT AND THE BSEC COUNCIL

8. The Ad Hoc Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on its participation in the 10th Meeting of the Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea and in the first ever European Research and Innovation Days, held in Brussels, on 24-27 September 2019, and in the first Meeting of the Black Sea Focal Points, held in Brussels, on 1 October 2019.

9. The participants exchanged views on recent developments on BSEC- EU interaction and on further promoting cooperation in practical, balanced, mutually beneficial and project oriented direction.

AGENDA ITEM 3: PARTICIPATION OF BSEC PERMIS IN CALLS FOR PROPOSALS (HORIZON 2020, EU GRANTS) AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE JOINT PROJECTS

10. Following the Council's instruction (Belgrade, 13 December 2016) the BSEC PERMIS continues to proactively engage in the formulation of project proposals falling within BSEC objectives, fully respecting the prerogatives of the Member States.

11. The BSEC PERMIS informed about three main developments related to the EU projects/financial grants for the region: 1) participation as part of the consortium under the Horizon 2020 Call for Proposals: "Coordination of marine and maritime research and innovation in the Black Sea"; 2) creation of the Virtual Knowledge Centre (VKC); 3) direct grant of 400.000 EUR under the EU Regional Action Program for strengthening the project implementation capacity of BSEC.

12. Information about the opportunities for future joint projects within the European funding instruments was presented by PERMIS, touching upon the recently published Call for proposals (15 October) under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (18 million Euros for projects in the neighboring sea basins, including the Black Sea basin).

13. The participants encouraged the BSEC PERMIS to continue proactively exploring the opportunities for securing EU's financial assistance for BSEC projects, falling within the objectives of the Organization and fully respecting the prerogatives of the Member States.

AGENDA ITEM 4: INFORMATION ABOUT THE REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS CONFERENCE ON “BLACK SEA SYNERGY: THE WAY FORWARD”, ORGANIZED BY THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR BLACK SEA STUDIES (7 NOVEMBER 2019, ATHENS)

14. The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)’s representative provided information about the results of the Regional Stakeholders Conference on “Black Sea Synergy: the way forward”, held on 7 November in Athens. The event was co-funded by the DG NEAR, within the framework of the ENI East Instrument.

15. The EEAS representative informed about the future steps of the Black Sea Synergy concerning the wider Black Sea area.

16. The participants took note of the provided information and expressed their positive reaction for organizing such events in the future.

AGENDA ITEM 5: PREPARATIONS FOR THE ANNUAL INFORMAL BSEC-COEST MEETING (BRUSSELS, 6 DECEMBER 2019)

17. The Working Group took note of the information provided by BSEC PERMIS on the programme and preparations for the forthcoming informal meeting of BSEC with the COEST Working Party (Brussels, 6 December 2019).

18. The Working Group also noted the kind request of the representative of PERMIS to provide information on the composition of their delegations by 22 November 2019, in order to facilitate the organization of the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19. The representative of Ukraine welcomed the upcoming visit of the ICBSS Director General, Mr. George Mitrakos, to Kyiv and informed that the procedure of endorsement by the Parliament of Ukraine of the New Article 24 of the BSEC Charter will be soon finalized.

AGENDA ITEM 7: DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

20. The date and venue of the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction will be communicated in due course.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

21. The Ad Hoc Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials, to be held in Athens, on 11-12 December 2019.