



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

BS/WG/CS&T/R(2018)2

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

BSEC Headquarters, 19 October 2018

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology was held at the BSEC Headquarters, on 19 October 2018.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Alexei CHEKMAREV, Third Secretary, the Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Istanbul.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:
Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
4. The representative of the PABSEC attended the Meeting as a BSEC Related Body.
5. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

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

AGENDA ITEM 2: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BSEC COUNCIL, AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

7. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the implementation of the Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations of the BSEC Council

and the follow up of the Declarations and the Statements of the Ministers in charge of Science and Technology since the last Informal Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology (BSEC Headquarters, 3 April 2018).

AGENDA ITEM 3: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE EVALUATION REPORT OF THE COUNTRY-COORDINATOR FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1 JULY 2016 TO 30 JUNE 2018

8. The Country-Coordinator (Russian Federation) presented the highlights of the Evaluation Report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018 and noted that the Working Group should continue promotion and further development of digital initiatives and platforms for exchange of information and best practices.

9. The Working Group considered and approved the Evaluation Report of the Country-Coordinator, for its submission to the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) of the BSEC Member States. The Evaluation Report is attached as **Annex III**.

10. The BSEC PERMIS pointed to the need to send a clear message to the relevant authorities of the BSEC Member States on the necessity for greater involvement and participation of experts in the activities of the Working Group.

AGENDA ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1 JULY 2018 TO 30 JUNE 2020

11. The Country-Coordinator (Russian Federation) introduced the draft Plan of Action of the Working Group for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2020, which represents the continuation of the previous Plan of Action. The presentation on the draft Plan of Action is attached as **Annex IV**.

12. The delegation of the Russian Federation emphasized the significant role of university-based initiatives related to the field of science and education in enhancing regional cooperation and reiterated its ambition to create a platform for bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the field of science, innovation and education and presented the information on Black Sea Academic and Research Consortium that has been developed by the Southern Federal University.

13. The platform is aimed at implementation of joint scientific and educational projects and programmes, harnessing technological potential of universities (research facilities and infrastructures) and enhancing bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the field of science, technology and education in the BSEC Region in the context of the Digital economy, challenges of the Fourth industrial revolution and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The platform is also viewed to be implemented in line with the “BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership” (adopted in 2012), inter alia GOAL 11 — “Strengthen Regional Cooperation in Scientific Research and Technology” and GOAL 14 — “Higher Standards in Education and Training”.

14. The delegation of the Russian Federation invited all interested parties from the BSEC Member States to participate in this initiative and will inform the BSEC Member States about the updates of the project at a later stage.

15. The delegation of the Russian Federation emphasized the importance of the international cooperation in the field of promising areas of research, *inter alia* convergent and naturally-based technologies that serve as a cornerstone in achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, ensuring prosperity for both present and future generations in the BSEC Region.

16. The Working Group considered, amended and approved the draft Plan of Action. The Plan of Action, which is open for further amendments and concrete ideas by the BSEC Member States, is attached as **Annex V**.

AGENDA ITEM 5: ACTIONS TAKEN OR TO BE TAKEN WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THIRD BSEC ACTION PLAN ON COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (2014-2018)

17. The Working Group took note of the information on the steps taken to implement the Third BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology (2014–2018), provided by the BSEC PERMIS.

18. The delegation of the Russian Federation presented the updates on the digital initiatives related to the database of national and regional research infrastructures of the BSEC Member States and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the BSEC Region.

19. As only five BSEC Member States (the Hellenic Republic, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Turkey) responded up to now, the Working Group reiterated its call to the relevant authorities of the BSEC Member States that have not yet done so, to reply to the Questionnaire on national innovation related structures, as soon as possible. The Questionnaire is attached as **Annex VI**.

20. As the last Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States was held in 2014, the Working Group recommended to the incoming BSEC Chairmanships-in-Office to organize another Ministerial Meeting in 2019.

AGENDA ITEM 6: YOUTH AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

21. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the consideration of Youth and Sports issues within BSEC and reiterated its call to the Member States to propose projects reflecting the interconnection between Science and Technology and Youth.

22. The delegation of the Russian Federation, noting the importance of supporting digital platforms and initiatives related to young scientists working in the field of SDGs, expressed the readiness to prepare a draft proposal on establishing an award “Annual BSEC Prize” for young scientists working in the promising areas of research related to the Black Sea Region with a view to possibly implement it, *inter alia*, within the Black Sea Project Promotion Facility.

23. The representative of the Republic of Turkey proposed to also consider the possibility of organizing an annual BSEC contest / award for young entrepreneurs and successful startups.

AGENDA ITEM 7: CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP

24. The Working Group considered and amended the draft Revised Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology and agreed to finalize the text at its next meeting. The draft Revised Terms of Reference as amended is attached as **Annex VII**.
25. The BSEC Member States are invited to send to the BSEC PERMIS their final drafting comments on the text **by 31 January 2019**.

AGENDA ITEM 8: MEMORANDUM OF INTENT ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BSEC–USA

26. The Working Group requested the BSEC PERMIS to keep it informed on the efforts to organize a Joint Workshop / Seminar with the United States as an initial step in the implementation of the Memorandum of Intent.

AGENDA ITEM 9: COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

27. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the latest developments with regard to the discussion with UNESCO on the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Organizations and requested the BSEC PERMIS to keep it informed on the issue.

AGENDA ITEM 10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

28. The representative of the Republic of Bulgaria informed that an EU contest for young scientists will be held in Sofia in September 2019 and encouraged young people from the BSEC Member States to take part in it. The detailed information about the event will be provided in due course.

AGENDA ITEM 11: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

29. The Working Group adopted the present Report for its submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.