

**REPORT
OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE
AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS ON BSEC – EU INTERACTION**

Mati, 15-16 May 2006

1. The third Meeting of the ad hoc Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction was held in Mati (Attica), Greece on 15 – 16 May 2006, at the invitation of the ICBSS as appointed coordinator of the Group.

2. The Meeting was chaired by Dr. Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, Director General of the ICBSS, and by Dr. Sergey Goncharenko, Deputy Director, Department of Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, who conveyed to the participants the personal greetings of the Chairman-in-Office of the Organisation of the BSEC, His Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Albania
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine

4. A representative of the BSEC PERMIS participated in the Meeting.

5. The Meeting was also attended by representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), the BSEC Business Council (BSEC BC) and the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB).

6. His Excellency Mr. Herbert Kröll, Ambassador of Austria to the Hellenic Republic, greeted the participants on behalf of the current Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

7. A representative of the Secretariat of the Council of the European Union participated in the Meeting as an official guest.
8. The list of participants is attached as Annex I.
9. The annotated Programme is attached as Annex II.
10. The Director General of the ICBSS presented the conceptual framework and the main ideas of the preliminary draft Working Paper on BSEC-EU Interaction prepared by the ICBSS on the basis of the table of contents approved by the ad hoc Group of Experts at its second Meeting (Istanbul, 1-2 March 2006), the written contributions forwarded by some BSEC Member States, and the views expressed in the debates during the previous two Meetings of the Group. The participants accepted the preliminary draft Working Paper as a sound basis for their further deliberations and commended the ICBSS for having produced a meaningful synthesis of the positions presented by the BSEC Member States as well as for the preparation of comprehensive document and reference files. The preliminary draft Working Paper is attached as Annex III.
11. The Delegation of the Hellenic Republic briefed the participants on the latest developments in the implementation of the mandate entrusted to it by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Chisinau, 28 October 2005) to undertake substantive demarches vis-à-vis the European Union institutions and Member States with a view to promoting the ideas of a Black Sea regional dimension of the EU policies and of an enhanced BSEC-EU partnership.
12. The participants appreciated the initiative of the past Romanian Chairmanship-in-Office to organize a working meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials with officials of the EU institutions and Member States (Brussels, 11 April 2006).
13. The delegations of the BSEC Member States welcomed in particular the prominent attention given by the current Russian Chairmanship-in-Office to the subject of BSEC-EU interaction in its statement of priorities, as recently reiterated by His Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, during his meeting with the Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS in May 2006.
14. The participants proceeded with a thorough examination of the structure and substance of the preliminary draft Working Paper and presented a number of new ideas, amendments and recommendations to be incorporated in a revised version of the draft document, which the ICBSS was instructed to prepare and circulate to the participants at least two weeks prior to the next meeting of the ad hoc Group of Experts.

15. It was further agreed that, subject to the outcome of the ongoing deliberations in the EU institutions, it may be appropriate for the BSEC Troika, together with a delegation of the Hellenic Republic as holder of the CMFA mandate, the Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS, with the assistance of the ICBSS, to undertake a briefing and exploratory mission to the EU institutions in Brussels in order to present the revised draft Working Paper on BSEC-EU Interaction and to exchange ideas on the way forward.

16. The date and venue of the next Meeting of the ad hoc Group of Experts will be decided through consultations at a later stage.

17. The participants expressed their gratitude to the ICBSS for the exemplary preparation of the Meeting and for the warm hospitality extended to them at Mati.

18. The participants in the Meeting adopted the present Report, with its Annexes, for submission to the next Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials.
