



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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**REPORT
OF THE SIXTH MEETING
OF THE
AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS
ON BSEC-EU INTERACTION**

Istanbul, 17 April 2013

1. The Sixth Meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction was held at the Vilayetler Evi in Istanbul on 17 April 2013.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Vsevolod CHENTSOV, Director of the EU Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, as a representative of the Chairman-in-Office.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The representatives of the International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) participated in the Meeting in the capacity of a BSEC Related Body.
5. The representatives of the EU and the Republic of Poland participated in the Meeting as BSEC Observers.

The list of participants is attached as **Annex I**.

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

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

7. The AHGE considered the guidelines on enhancing BSEC-EU interaction contained in the Declaration of the BSEC Heads of State and Government, adopted at the Summit Meeting on the Occasion of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Organization of the BSEC, held in Istanbul, on 26 June 2012, the relevant references included in the new BSEC Economic Agenda towards an enhanced BSEC Partnership, approved by the 26th Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers, held in Belgrade, on 11 June 2012 and endorsed by the said Summit Meeting, as well as previous BSEC declarations and documents on the issue of BSEC-EU relations.

8. The AHGE confirmed the importance of establishing a strategic relationship between BSEC and the EU and expressed its readiness to contribute to a closer, balanced and mutually beneficial cooperation between BSEC and the European Union, in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

9. In this framework, the AHGE welcomed the initiative of the BSEC Ukrainian Chairmanship-in-Office to schedule the present Meeting, after the relevant proposal of the ICBSS, in its capacity as coordinator of the Ad Hoc Group.

10. The AHGE invited the ICBSS and the BSEC PERMIS to continue the practice of holding regular contacts and consultations with EU institutions, in order to identify common tools, possible areas for the development of synergies and, finally, concrete common projects and initiatives and invited the ICBSS and the BSEC PERMIS to inform regularly the Member States on the outcome of its contacts.

11. The AHGE invited, also, the BSEC Member States that are also EU Member States to continue the practice of informing BSEC on the outcome of their initiatives, within the EU institutions, concerning BSEC-EU cooperation.

12. The AHGE decided to be convened regularly, in order to provide the Member States with the opportunity to discuss and elaborate, at expert level and on a regular basis, BSEC proposals and activities in its mandated field of activity.

REVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN BSEC-EU COOPERATION

13. The AHGE acknowledged the growing importance of the Wider Black Sea Area in economic, commercial, cultural and environmental fields.

14. The AHGE took note of the proposal by the BSEC PERMIS to organize the next BSEC-COEST joint meeting in Istanbul.

15. The AHGE invited the BSEC PERMIS to continue the practice of submitting BSEC ideas for common projects, after their elaboration in the relevant BSEC Working Groups, for the consideration of the competent EU DGs.

16. The AHGE invited also the ICBSS, as coordinator of the Group of Experts, to engage its contacts and academic expertise in the promotion of BSEC-EU cooperation.

17. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey stressed that the activities in the framework of BSEC-EU cooperation in maritime issues and in particular in the fields of safety of navigation, maintenance of security, protection of marine environment and fisheries could be further developed via homegrown initiatives and mechanisms to be established with the participation of the littoral countries.

REVIEW OF BSEC-EU COOPERATION IN SPECIFIC AREAS OF BSEC ACTIVITY

18. The AHGE considered the consequences of the adoption of the new BSEC Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership in BSEC-EU cooperation and expressed the view that the Way Forward Towards an Action Plan on its implementation, adopted by the Council, should take into due consideration the possibility of elaborating concrete proposals for joint projects with the EU in areas of common interest.

19. The AHGE took note of the proposals by the BSEC PERMIS for exploring BSEC-EU cooperation, namely in the areas of Environment, Transport, Energy – in particular Renewable Energy Sources – Education, Science and Technology, Culture, Tourism, and Trade and SMEs.

20. The AHGE expressed its appreciation for the information provided by the representatives of the EU on EU activities in the areas of cooperation covered in the new BSEC Economic Agenda and invited the ICBSS and the BSEC PERMIS to schedule direct consultations with the relevant Directorates General of the European Commission to explore the possibility of enhanced cooperation in these areas.

21. The AHGE expressed the view that the regular participation of European Commission representatives in BSEC Meetings, at expert level, can be instrumental in the formulation and elaboration and implementation of joint projects and the working-out of possible synergies and common activities.

22. The AHGE invited the BSEC PERMIS and the ICBSS, in its capacity as Coordinator, to prepare, for its consideration, working papers on the practical modalities and particular objectives of sector cooperation between BSEC and the EU, to be followed by concrete project proposals.

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE MODALITIES OF WORK OF THE AHWGE

23. The AHGE requested the BSEC PERMIS, in cooperation with the ICBSS, to propose new Terms of Reference of the AHGE to be considered at its next Meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

24. No issue was raised under this Agenda Item.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

25. The date and the venue of the next Meeting will be communicated in due time through the BSEC PERMIS, after consultations with the Chairman-in-Office.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

26. The present Report was adopted for submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials to be held in Istanbul on 18-19 April 2013.

