



# ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

## Permanent International Secretariat

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BS/WGC/R(2023)2

### REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON CULTURE

*BSEC Headquarters, 18 October 2023*

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Culture was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 18 October 2023.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Ms. Astghik MARABYAN, Head of the Department of Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia.
3. The Opening Remarks were made by:
  - Ambassador Dimitrios RALLIS, Deputy Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS on behalf of the Secretariat;
  - Ms. Astghik MARABYAN, on behalf of the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group.
4. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:  
  
Republic of Armenia  
Republic of Azerbaijan  
Georgia  
Hellenic Republic  
Republic of Moldova  
Romania  
Russian Federation  
Republic of Serbia  
Republic of Türkiye  
Ukraine
5. The following BSEC Related Bodies attended the Meeting:  
Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC (PABSEC)  
International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)
6. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present Report.

## **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 II**.

## **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 MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF CULTURE OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

8. Within this agenda item, the BSEC PERMIS informed on the developments with regard to the process of updating the “BSEC Economic Agenda”. Further involvement of interested parties in the relevant discussion was encouraged in order to improve the document.

9. In addition, the BSEC PERMIS provided information on the state of affairs regarding the latter’s cooperation with the Secretariat of the *Enlarged Partial Agreement* (EPA) on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and informed regarding the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General participation in the Annual Statutory Meeting of the EPA Governing Board in Luxembourg on May 10, 2023.

10. Furthermore, the Secretariat briefed on the sixth edition of the Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States on “*The Importance of Connectivity in the Wider Black Sea Region*” jointly organized by the BSEC PERMIS and the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation, Türkiye, held on 4-6 October 2023 in Antalya.

## **AGENDA ITEM 3: PRESENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 JULY 2023 – 30 JUNE 2025 DEVELOPED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE AND SPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA, THE CURRENT COUNTRY-COORDINATOR OF THE WORKING GROUP**

11. The delegation of the Republic of Armenia, the current Country-Coordinator, elaborated and presented the draft *Plan of Action of the Working Group on Culture* covering the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2025, outlining the general objectives and key priorities, while proposing activities and initiatives for a stronger cooperation within the Working Group.

12. The Working Group considered and amended the presented Plan of Action. Since no consensus was reached, the Working Group decided to finalize its adoption at its next meeting. The Plan of Action, as considered, is attached as **Annex III**.

## **AGENDA ITEM 4: PROMOTING THE DIVERSE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE BLACK SEA REGION AND ENHANCING ITS VISIBILITY TO THE WIDER PUBLIC; EXPLORING POTENTIAL FOR REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP**

13. Building on the cultural diversity and potentials of the Black Sea region, the participants continued to exchange views on ways and possibilities to further expand regional partnership and cooperation.

14. In this context, the representative of the Hellenic Republic updated on the initiative to promote culinary tradition and intangible heritage of the BSEC Member States by organizing a gastronomy and wine festival, elaborated in cooperation with the BSEC PERMIS and briefed about the relevant preparations for the Festival: “*Celebrating Culinary Tradition and Vine culture in the Black Sea region, from Antiquity to the Present*,” to be organized by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture in the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki during May next year; the relevant concept and program will be provided in a timely manner.

15. The delegation of the Republic of Armenia informed about their presentation “Promoting Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Program Through Transnational Frameworks: Practicing the Cultural Potential of the BSEC Region” delivered in the framework of the 12<sup>th</sup> Cultural Routes Annual Advisory Forum (Łódź, 20-22 September 2023). In this regard, the potential of the Black Sea area and its cultural routes was underlined.

16. The representative of the Republic of Serbia informed about the *National Capital of Culture*, which for this year is the city of Užice, and invited interested Member States to participate. The same representative informed about the specialized exposition *Expo 2027* on the theme “Play for Humanity – Sports and Music for All”, to be hosted in Belgrade from 15 May to 15 August 2027 and, called on BSEC Member States to take full advantage of their participation. In addition, the prospect for BSEC’s participation was also touch upon.

17. The delegation of Ukraine made a statement that was followed by a statement of the representative of the Russian Federation. Both statements are attached to this Report as **Annex IV** and **Annex V** respectively.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5: COOPERATION WITH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERS**

18. The representative of the ICBSS announced the 7<sup>th</sup> *BSEC Month of Culture*, a special feature for this edition is cultural cities to be held in digital format during November 2023, and in this context invited the BSEC Member States to timely submit (by 10 November 2023 at [events@icbss.org](mailto:events@icbss.org)) any relevant and interesting electronic material that will be promoted on this occasion. The presentation is attached as **Annex VI**.

19. The delegation of the Russian Federation made a presentation which is attached as **Annex VII**.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

20. No discussion was held under this agenda item.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 7: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING**

21. The Working Group on Culture adopted the present Report for its submission to the next Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials.