

News from the Black Sea

Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS)



PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT (PERMIS)



Message of the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Lazar Comanescu

Dear Readers,

After a summer break, BSEC turned back to its busy schedule with lots of news about its activities to share with you in this 24th issue of the "News from the Black Sea", covering the months of September and October 2023.

It was a busy period. BSEC PERMIS representatives participated in and brought their contribution to the debates of several important meetings of international and regional organizations such as the UNWTO 25th General Assembly, the 42nd Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly, the Tbilisi Road Silk Forum, etc.



The BSEC PERMIS has also been intensively working on the updating of the "BSEC Economic Agenda" - the framework strategy document of the Organization that outlines the actions needed to meet the goals set by the BSEC Charter. The Agenda is planned to be finalized by the end of this year.

Our activity has been carried out in close cooperation with and under the guidance of the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office which, over the second half of 2023, is being held by the Republic of Türkiye. Happily, this coincides with the celebration in this very year, more precisely on 29 October, of its centenary and that gives us the opportunity to renew our warmest congratulations to our host Country and to the Turkish people.

Sadly, during the period covered by this issue, we witnessed some natural disasters such as the large-scale torrential rains and floods that hit Greece, Bulgaria and Türkiye, causing extensive damage and human loss. I hereby express once again our solidarity with those in the three BSEC Member States that were affected.

Finally, I feel I need to share with you the fact that developments in our region and beyond continue to raise serious concerns. I keep however hoping that reason and wisdom will prevail and the prerequisites will be created to overcome them the soonest possible and thus stop human sufferings.

Dear Readers,

You may wish to be informed that this is the last paper issue of our Newsletter. Starting with the next issue and drawing on the opportunities offered by the digitalization you will have it only in interactive format. We therefore invite you to subscribe to our newsletter via <http://www.bsec-organization.org/> .

We wish you the best and invite you to stay tuned with us via BSEC website and social media accounts.

Ambassador Lazar Comanescu

WORKING AND COURTESY VISITS

Courtesy visit by the Consul General of the Slovak Republic in Istanbul, Ms. Sona Budayova, 6 September 2023.



Working visit by the President of the Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation, Dr. Akkan Suver, 20 September 2023.



Courtesy visit by the Consul General of the State of Israel in Istanbul, Mr. Rami Hatan, 21 September 2023.



Working visit by the Director of UNOPS Multi-Country Office in Vienna, Ms. Freya von Groote, 25 September 2023.



Working visit by the Union of Road Transport Associations in the BSEC Region (BSEC-URTA), Delegation headed by Secretary General Mr. Mehmet Uylukçu, 29 September 2023.



Courtesy visit by the Consul General of Georgia in Istanbul, Mr. Aleksandre Jishkariani, 13 October 2023.



EVENTS AND MEETINGS ORGANIZED AND/OR ATTENDED BY THE BSEC PERMIS

BSEC WORKING GROUPS

During the period covered by this Newsletter, the BSEC PERMIS also held a number of Working Group meetings covering such areas as Budgetary and Financial Issues, Cooperation in Science and Technology, Cooperation in Tourism, Culture.



PABSEC

COMMITTEES

Four Committees of the BSEC Parliamentary Assembly (PABSEC) were held in the month of October in Burgas, Istanbul and Yerevan on 2, 19 and 31 October 2023 respectively: The Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee; the Economic, Commercial and Financial Affairs Committee; the Legal and Political Affairs Committee; and the Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee.

The said Committees considered respective Reports and Recommendations on “The Role of Parliaments in Strengthening Child Protection Policies in the BSEC Member States”, “Strengthening Parliamentary Cooperation in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Assistance in the BSEC Region”, “30 years of the PABSEC: Strengthening Cooperation in the Black Sea Region” and “National Strategies in the Field of Artificial Intelligence in the BSEC Member States” which will be submitted for consideration to the 62nd Plenary Meeting of the PABSEC General Assembly to be held in Kyiv on 16-17 November 2023.

In the framework of cooperation with PABSEC, the BSEC PERMIS Executive Managers participated in the above meetings and presented information on the BSEC current activities being performed under the Turkish Chairmanship-in-Office.

25th General Assembly (GA) meeting of the UNWTO

The General Assembly (GA) held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan on 16-20 October 2023, focused on two areas - Education and Investments - considered to be of key relevance for the future of tourism.

The GA was attended by UNWTO Member States, high level representatives of other UN bodies/specialized agencies, and of regional organizations.

Within the General Assembly, a Plenary Meeting of the UNWTO Affiliated Members (AM) also took place. For the first time, since BSEC’s attendance to UNWTO meetings, the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General was invited to address such a Plenary. In his address, he

stressed the importance of involving the business communities in supporting the development of the tourism sector in sustainable way.

On the sidelines of the event, the BSEC Secretary General had bilateral exchanges of views among others with the UNWTO Secretary General Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili.



Summit of the Three Seas Initiative (3SI)



The 3SI Business Forum was held in Bucharest on 6-7 September 2023, attended by high officials of the 3SI countries, representatives of the business communities and of international financial/banking institutions.

The need of strengthening cooperation in areas like energy, infrastructure and digitalization as prerequisites for a resilient

and sustainable economic development of the region was stressed during the Forum. Particular importance of developing and implementing relevant projects with genuine regional dimension, while outreaching the neighboring regions and partners (Western Balkan and South East-Black Sea and Caucasus) was highlighted in this context.

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Lazar Comanescu who spoke at the Round Table dedicated to investments, emphasized on the importance of a better prioritization of projects, as well as the need of better cooperation among business communities and financial/banking institutions. He also suggested, in this context, a 3SI Business Forum and BSEC Business Council interaction.

Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (BRAf)

The annual meeting of the Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (BRAf) and the Workshop on Disinformation and Digital Media Literacy were held in Antalya, on 18-19 September 2023, with the aim for the participants to exchange views and experiences in their field of action, to promote, wherever possible, common standards and to establish closer cooperation and synergies among BSEC Member States.

The BSEC PERMIS was represented by First

Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Merve Kavakcı, who during her statement emphasized on the crucial role BRAf plays in promoting the objectives of the BSEC Organization, including cooperation among the national regulatory authorities.



Workshop for Young Diplomats

The sixth edition of the Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States, jointly organized by BSEC PERMIS and the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation Türkiye (KAS), was held in Antalya, on 4-6 October 2023 with the topic “The Importance of Connectivity in the wider Black Sea Region”.

The Workshop provided a most valuable opportunity for emphasizing the importance of regional cooperation and the role the young diplomats may have as future foreign policy decision-makers in promoting and strengthening this cooperation in the Black Sea area.

In their welcoming speeches, both the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Lazar Comanescu and the Director of KAS Türkiye

Mr. Walter Glos, underlined the importance and value of events like this Workshop as a most precious “investment” for the future and as vehicles for promoting the spirit of friendship and good neighborliness between young diplomats from the BSEC Member States.



Workshop on Logistical Cooperation (BSEC BC)

The BSEC Business Council organized in Istanbul, on 24 October 2023, a Workshop on Logistical Cooperation. The Workshop consisted of two sessions on “Regional Logistics Cooperation within the Scope of the Middle Corridor” and on “Digitalization and seamless border crossings: smart connectivity”.

Representatives from several BSEC Member States, BSEC Related Bodies, Observers and Sectoral Dialogue partners, as well as business

circles participated in the event and discussions on the topics of the respective sessions.



Tbilisi Silk Road Forum



The Forum, which reached its 4th edition was held in Tbilisi on 25-27 October 2023. It consisted of several thematic panels with high profile speakers focused on the new architecture of the East-West Trade, increasing role of the Middle Corridor, digital connectivity, and diversification in the energy sector, tourism sustainability, and diversified investments for resilient future.

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Comanescu participated in the Ministerial Panel on “Trade4Future” where he highlighted the role and contribution of BSEC Organization in developing economic cooperation and trade in the BSEC area as well as the role of the region as hub for global trade and connectivity. He referred in this context to projects developed or on which work is in progress within BSEC such as “Regional Trade Facilitation Strategy for the BSEC Region”, “Framework for BSEC Single Window Cooperation”, “Framework for BSEC Ecommerce Cooperation” and the “BSEC PERMIT System.”

ENERGY

10th Green Energy Investments Forum

The Forum organized by the Energy Policy and Development Center (KEPA) of the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) under the auspices of the BSEC Organization, was held within the framework of the 16th International Scientific Conference on Energy and Climate Change, in Athens on 11-13 October 2023.

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Lazar Comanescu attended the Forum and highlighted the importance BSEC attaches to investments in green energy, sustainability, harmonization of the national legislation of the BSEC Member States, strengthening the cooperation between BSEC and other international organizations and agencies active in the field of energy.

While appreciating the close cooperation with the KEPA and the BSEC-GEN, Ambassador Comanescu encouraged the expansion of the Network and making best use of additional opportunities of communication and exchange of professional expertise.

The participants to the forum expressed their hope that no efforts will be spared by the Governments in terms of transforming the BSEC Region into a model for clean energy by the year 2050 as set forth by the BSEC Green Energy Strategy.



ENVIRONMENTAL/MARITIME ISSUES

Annual Meeting of the "Large scale RESToration of COASTal ecosystems through rivers to sea connectivity - REST-COAST"

Among the main topics discussed during the Annual Meeting which took place on 19-21 September 2023 in Gdansk, Poland, was the current status of restoration of the Pilot sides with special attention on the climate risk reduction through innovative restoration approaches. The progress with the financial/business plans for restoration upscaling have been also touched upon.

The BSEC PERMIS was represented at the Meeting by its Executive Manager in charge of project management, Ms. Rositsa Stoeva.

For more information: <http://www.bsec-bsvkc.org/Forms/News/newsDetails?targetID=2149>



BRIDGE-BS General Assembly (GA)

As partner of the "BRIDGE-BS: Advancing Black Sea Research and Innovation to Co-Develop Blue Growth within Resilient Ecosystems" project consortium, the BSEC PERMIS was represented in the General Assembly held in Ankara on 27-29 September 2023, by its Executive Manager in charge of project management, Ms. Rositsa Stoeva.



Among topics discussed by the General Assembly, were the establishment of the Virtual Blue Career Center in the Black Sea (VBCC) and the Ocean Literacy Network; launching of the Black Sea Accelerator; Master Course on Blue Economy; a Summer Training on Science Communication for the Black Sea Young Ambassadors (BSYA), etc. Alongside insightful presentations, there were also workshops on data collection, resilience, climate simulation scenarios and policy development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

12th Korea-BSEC ICT Cooperation Program



The 2023 Program organized by the Korean National Information Society Agency (NIA) was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 30 October to 3 November 2023. The objectives of

the Program were to share Korea's policies and strategies in the ICT area for improving communication and providing high quality services to citizens and private sector as well as to exchange Korean experience and expertise in the development of digital government at national and local levels.

The Program was attended by the national experts in charge of development of ICT systems from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. The BSEC PERMIS was represented by Executive Manager Mr. Alexei Nistean.

TRANSPORT

Multimodal Transport and Logistics Forum

The Forum, organized by the Permanent Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Commission TRACECA under the aegis of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) was held in Istanbul, on 13-14 September 2023, with the main objective to discuss ways for further improving connectivity in the field of multimodal transport between TRACECA and OTS Member States as well as other regional



and international players such as BSEC and UN.

Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Dimitrios Rallis, who addressed the Forum on behalf of the BSEC PERMIS, highlighted BSEC's focus on developing regional projects on facilitating the road transport of goods and easing border crossing challenges, as well as on simplifying administrative procedures, inter alia by introducing the BSEC Permit System. Ambassador Rallis stressed the need for coordinated regional efforts and for adjusting transport policies in line with new demands and challenges. He underlined the role the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) can potentially play in this respect and concluded by stressing the role that regional organizations such as BSEC may have to play in this context.

International Road Transport: Driving Resilience and Prosperity Conference



The Conference organized by the Association of International Road Carriers of Uzbekistan (AIRCUZ) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU), was held in Tashkent on 13 September 2023. The event focused on challenges and opportunities in connectivity, transport and transit multimodal corridors, with particular focus on resilience of supply chains, digitalization of commercial transport and customs procedures.

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Lazar Comanescu addressed the main plenary session, entitled “Resilience of supply chains in times of crisis”. He highlighted that BSEC has been concentrating on real problems affecting road-transport in the region, like border-crossing delays, lack of digitalization, and lack of information exchange. He underlined that BSEC projects, such as the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods and the BSEC Permit System, constitute concrete contributions to the extension and development of Trans-European Networks and the Euro-Asian area.



DIGITAL WORKSHOP

**Offshore renewable energy
and synthetic & e-fuels.**

**Port infrastructural
challenges &
prospectives for the
maritime sector**



Motorways of the Sea Digital Workshop

The Workshop was organized on 6 October 2023 by the European Coordinator for Motorways of the Sea (MoS) Professor Kurt Bodewig, with the aim to explore the latest developments and trends regarding port infrastructural challenges in relation to offshore renewable energy and synthetic & e-fuels, focusing on their applications and potential impact on the maritime and port industry.

The experts who participated in the Workshop discussed case studies of successful offshore wind projects in ports, wind energy and its growth in the maritime sector, e-fuels and their role in decarbonizing shipping, as well as opportunities and challenges in adopting sustainable technologies.

42nd Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly and a Study Visit to the Alat Port

The 42nd General Assembly, hosted by the Azerbaijan International Road Carriers Association (ABADA), in Baku on 27 October 2023, marked the 30th Anniversary of the BSEC-URTA.

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Lazar Comanescu, attended the General Assembly and underlined that fruitful cooperation of BSEC with the IRU, BSEC-URTA and their member associations, are the most convincing proof of how important and beneficial joint efforts of the public and private sectors are in seeking innovative approach for the improvement of regional transport infrastructure networks and increase of the transit capacity of the regional

trade flows. The growing partnership of BSEC with BSEC-URTA translated into concrete projects and actions in the area of road transport, among which he particularly mentioned the BSEC Permit System, digitalization of transport documents, border-crossing facilitation.

On 28 October 2023, the participants to the BSEC-URTA General Assembly took part in the Study visit to the Alat Port, which actively supports the development of trade, logistics, and supply chains, spurring regional connections along the Middle Corridor, linking Asia and Europe



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120th Anniversary of renowned composer Aram Khachaturian

A special event dedicated to the 120th anniversary of renowned Armenian composer Aram Khachaturian, was organized at Pera Museum in Istanbul, on 20 September 2023 by the Permanent Mission of Armenia to BSEC. The composer's legacy and his important contribution to the world classical music was highlighted during the event.





Darüşşafaka Caddesi, Seba Center İş Merkezi, No:45 Kat 3, İstinye 34460 Sarıyer - İstanbul / Türkiye
Phone: +90 212 229 63 30-35 Fax: +90 212 229 63 36

✉ info@bsec-organization.org www.bsec-organization.org
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