



**PRESS RELEASE ON
THE 8th UNWTO INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON SILK ROAD TOURISM,
(Thessaloniki, 10-12 October 2018)**

Upon the invitation of the organizers, the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES and the responsible Executive Manager, Ambassador Bratislav DORDEVIC, participated at the *8th UNWTO International Meeting on Silk Road Tourism*, held in Thessaloniki, Greece, on 10-12 October 2018, organized by the UNWTO, the Ministry of Tourism and the Region of Central Macedonia of the Hellenic Republic.

The Meeting was opened by Ms. E. KOUNTOURA, Minister of Tourism of Greece, Mr. Z. POLOLIKASHVILI, UNWTO Secretary General, Ms. V. PATOULIDOU, Deputy Regional Governor and Mr. Y. BOUTARIS, Mayor of City of Thessaloniki. Ambassador CHRISTIDES participated at the Ministerial Roundtable, during which Ministers of Tourism, Heads of Tourism Administrations and international organizations involved in the Silk Road Programme exchanged views on the main theme entitled: *"The Silk Road within a globalized tourism framework: tourism priorities, regional development plans and the role of historic routes"*.

In his remarks, Ambassador CHRISTIDES underlined that the most important common denominator in the speeches of all speakers that preceded him were the words *"cooperation, coordination, synergies"*, thus, he was very proud to inform participants that the BSEC Organization constitutes, exactly, a useful and trusted vehicle for achieving the above lofty aims of cooperation. He further presented the activities of BSEC in the field of Tourism, pointing to the fact that the BSEC region is the natural bridge between Asia and Europe and invited interested stakeholders to use the mechanisms that the Organization possesses as well as its long experience while considering projects on Silk Road Tourism.

On the sidelines of the event, Ambassador CHRISTIDES held a number of meetings with various dignitaries, among them with the UNWTO Secretary General Mr. Z. POLOLIKASHVILI, the Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism of Turkey Mr. Ö. ARISOY and with the Rector of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Prof. P. MITKAS.