



**PRESS RELEASE ON
MEETING OF THE MEDCRUISE BLACK SEA WORKING GROUP
(Odessa, Ukraine, 17 October 2018)**

The “MedCruise Association” launched its “Black Sea Working Group” during a meeting held in Odessa, Ukraine, on 17 October 2018. MedCruise, the leading association of cruise ports in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, established its Black Sea Working Group in order to consider ways and means for attracting large cruise vessels back to the Black Sea. Upon the invitation of the organizers, Ambassador Bratislav DORDEVIC, Executive Manager, represented the BSEC PERMIS at the event.

The Meeting was opened by Mr. Y. Lavrenyuk, Deputy Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine. Representatives of Odessa local authorities, Odessa Sea Port Authority and Mr. Airam D. Pastor, President of MedCruise, also made welcome statements. During the Meeting, the representatives of the Ports of Odessa, Varna and Burgas as well as a number of companies involved in the cruise industry in the Black Sea, delivered their presentations on the problems of cruise tourism in the Black Sea. The main focus was on the examination of ways and means for creating a joint approach and marketing strategy for the “outside” world and, especially, cruise companies, in order to attract big cruise vessels back to the Black Sea.

Ambassador DORDEVIC informed on the BSEC PERMIS initiative to organize an International Conference on Cruise Tourism in the Black Sea (Istanbul, 2019-TBC), organized jointly by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, the UNWTO and BSEC PERMIS and invited the “MedCruise Black Sea Working Group” to collaborate with BSEC PERMIS by exchanging information and views on the substantive issues and by identifying relevant stakeholders to participate both in the preparations and during the Conference proceedings. The Working Group accepted the proposal and in its written conclusions expressed the readiness to collaborate with BSEC PERMIS.