



PRESS RELEASE
ON THE BSEC ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE 2019 ITF ANNUAL SUMMIT
(Leipzig, 22-24 May 2019)

The *2019 ITF Annual Summit* was held under the Presidency of the Republic of Korea on 22-24 May 2019 in Leipzig.

Around 1400 participants from more than 80 countries participated at the Summit and discussed the future of transports through the prism of: “*Transport Connectivity for Regional Integration*”.

In line with the Calendar of Events of the Bulgarian Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC, an *Informal Meeting of the Ministers of Transports and Heads of Delegation from the BSEC Member States* present in Leipzig was organized as a side event to the Summit. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Rosen JELIAZKOV, Minister of Transport, Information Technology and Communications of the Republic of Bulgaria and was attended by the Ministers and Deputy Ministers of six BSEC Member States, as well as the Secretaries General of BSEC-URTA, ITF, IRU and BSEC PERMIS. The participants exchanged views on current transport developments in the BSEC Region, on the significance of the BSEC projects on the development of the *Black Sea Ring Highway*, the *Motorways of the Sea* and the *Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods*, especially in what concerns better regional and Euro-Asian connectivity.

Following the Meeting, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation visited the BSEC Stand under the label “*The BSEC Organization: point of reference for regional cooperation*”. Audio-visual, printed and e-material concerning the organization’s history, major BSEC transport projects, their state of implementation, as well as the present-day and future plans concerning the overall transport and trade facilitation in the region were presented at the above stand, attracting the interest of the public.

Together with the *China Highway and Transportation Society (CHTS)* and the *International Road Federation* the BSEC PERMIS hosted a high-level debate on “*The Belt & Road Initiative (BRI): Bridging the gaps for sustainable transport and growth in Eurasia*”. H.E. Mr. Mehmet Cahit Turhan, Minister of Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Turkey, addressed the event as a keynote speaker, while H.E. Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS, along with senior officials from leading organizations, financial institutions and companies participated as a speaker at this event. Participants focused on the measures that must be implemented to incentivize investments in the BRI projects, requirements to create conducive environments for the development of sustainable transport infrastructure projects and the ways to maximize the international cooperation and coordination.

Upon the invitation of the Organizers, Ambassador CHRISTIDES addressed also the Open Ministerial session titled “*Improving global connectivity: Transport, energy and telecommunications networks*”, presenting the BSEC Organization as an important actor in facilitating transports in the Region and its role as a bridge between Europe and Asia. The Secretary General took also a part in the Plenary Session “*Fostering connectivity across borders*” which addressed the problems of physical and non-physical barriers hampering international trade and transportation.



Mr. Yevgen KOZIY, Project Coordinator of BSEC PERMIS, participated as a panellist in the Round Table “*Sustainable road transport connectivity across borders*” organized by UNECE, IRF, IRU and the *World Road Association (PIARC)*, presenting the BSEC activities aimed at fostering trade and transport facilitation in the Region.

The Summit resulted in the adoption of *the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Connectivity for Regional Integration*, in which the Ministers underlined the role of the Transport connectivity and agreed on measures enhancing development of sustainable transport. The Declaration is attached herewith.

The BSEC presence at the Summit proved to be a very effective tool for presenting to the rest of the world the Organization’s activities and achievements in the key-sector of transports and for enhancing the visibility of the BSEC Organization.