



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**ON INVESTING IN TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE**  
*(Sunny Beach (Bulgaria), 30-31 May 2019)*

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, was invited by the Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria, H.E. Ms. Nikolina ANGELKOVA and the Former Secretary General of the UNWTO, Dr. Taleb RIFAI, to participate at an international event titled *“Investing in Tourism Sustainability Conference”* (ITSC), held in the Bulgarian Black Sea Resort *Sunny Beach* on 30-31 May 2019.

The main theme of the event was the rapidly growing worldwide tourism and the enormous development potential the wider Black Sea region offers.

The rich program of the event included many diverse and interesting panels, with the participation of international experts from many parts of the world, guided by experienced moderators and presenters.

The Opening Session with the address by Minister ANGELKOVA was followed by presentations offered by Ministers and Deputy Ministers as well as other high-ranking dignitaries of countries in South-East Europe and the wider Black Sea region. All speakers presented the accomplishments of their countries in the overall Tourism and Hospitality sector, spoke about their imminent plans and underlined the importance of cooperation among regions and states.

In his intervention, BSEC PERMIS Secretary General stated that tourism is the most effective way of having people get to know each other better, understand and appreciate their respective culture and traditions; in short, it is the most effective way to establish contacts, dialogue and understanding among people. He went on to explain the contribution of BSEC to the establishment of concrete and fruitful relations of cooperation among BSEC Member States in the Tourism sector, he underlined the excellent cooperation of BSEC PERMIS with the UNWTO and informed participants on the many and multifaceted projects of concrete cooperation on which BSEC PERMIS is currently working upon, with the support and involvement of its Member States.

The overall conclusion of this important event was that countries in the Black Sea region can and should do more in order to attract the interest of the global Tourism Industry to their unique cultural heritage and natural beauties, as well as to their attractive social and popular traditions. A better and more focused “branding” of the region could be a catalyst to achieve the above.