



**PRESS RELEASE ON  
THE 23<sup>rd</sup> SESSION OF THE UNWTO GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
(St. Petersburg 10-13 September 2019)**

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, was invited by the UNWTO Secretary General Mr. Zurab POLOLIKASHVILI and the Head of the Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation Mrs. Zarina DOGUZOVA, to participate at the *23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UNWTO General Assembly*.

More than 1,300 participants from 117 countries took part in the most important high-level meeting for the global tourism sector. The main focus of this prestigious event was on working to make global tourism more sustainable and accessible, as well as enhance its role as a key driver of growth and employment through the embrace of entrepreneurship, innovation and education.

The rich program of the event included many diverse and interesting items on the agenda, concerning the activities of the UNWTO and its plans for the immediate future. Ambassador Christides followed all plenary sessions of the Assembly and had the opportunity to discuss issues of common interest mainly with the Heads of Delegations from the BSEC Member States, as well as briefly with the UNWTO Secretary General, Mr. Zurab POLOLIKASHVILI.

On the sidelines of the Meeting, Ambassador Christides had a one-hour long working meeting with the responsible representatives of the UNWTO on the many issues concerning the agenda of cooperation between the two Organizations.

Both sides expressed their satisfaction with the development of their cooperation, reflected in many joint efforts and initiatives. They agreed that by implementing the renewed Memorandum of Understanding between the two entities, BSEC PERMIS will continue functioning as the “regional partner” of the UNWTO, amplifying the latter’s voice and effectiveness in the geostrategic wider Black Sea region.