



PRESS RELEASE
ON THE ONLINE INFORMAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES
(25 September 2020)

The Romanian BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office hosted on the 25th of September 2020, an online Informal Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States. The theme of the informal discussions was focused on “Enhancing cooperation post COVID-19: the need of innovative priorities of action to be addressed in the framework of the BSEC Organization”.

This was the first ever online informal meeting of the Ministers as well as their first meeting in 2020. It offered a useful opportunity for them to have an informal exchange of views on the appropriate measures and innovative actions to be taken within the framework of BSEC in order to respond together to the adverse economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in the wider Black Sea region.

The Romanian BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office also provided an update on its activities during the first six months of its Chairmanship, which was exceptionally extended until the end of the year 2020.

The Secretary General of BSEC, Ambassador Michael B. Christides also made an intervention outlining the activities of the BSEC PERMIS, the projects initiated and funds received during the pandemic period.

Several concrete proposals were put forward by the Ministers to coordinate efforts and exchange good practices in specific sectors of economic activity particularly affected by the pandemic such as, inter alia, health, transports, trade, SME's, tourism and ICT. Some were within the framework of current subsidiary organs of the Organization and others that could be established to facilitate the post COVID-19 economic recovery for the region.

The Ministers also reiterated the importance of multilateral cooperation and the role of BSEC to serve as the platform for solidarity, enhanced cohesion, constructive and coordinated action among the Member States during this challenging period. The issue of reform to empower the Organization to be more effective and productive as well as better equipped in meeting the requirements of the present day and future challenges was also addressed.

The European Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement H.E. Olivér Várhelyi was also invited to the meeting as a guest speaker, to give a brief overview on the state of play in EU-BSEC relations and the desire to take this cooperation further.