

# News from the Black Sea

## Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS)



### MEETING OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF EDUCATION OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES



*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”.*

We, in the Black Sea region, are of the same opinion as the late President Nelson Mandela. The countries of the Black Sea region have a promising potential in Education, which may serve as a tool in their efforts to modernize their economies and achieve enhanced regional cooperation. BSEC has, therefore, a Working Group dedicated to Education, which functions under the guidance of Ministers responsible for this sector.

The last *“Meeting of the BSEC Ministers in Charge of Education”* took place in Moscow on 20 April 2018, in the framework of the prestigious *“2018 Moscow International Education Fair”*. The *“Joint Moscow Declaration of the Ministers in charge of Education and the Heads of Delegations of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation”* was adopted during the meeting, envisaging, among other, the development of higher standards in Education and Training in the BSEC Region. The possibility of hosting a BSEC stand at the next edition of the above International Fair, proposed by the PERMIS Secretary General, was positively considered by the Russian hosts.



## EIGHT UNWTO SILK ROAD MINISTERS MEETING

The “Silk Road”- the ancient network of trade routes that connected the East and West for centuries is resuscitated nowadays, at least in its touristic dimension!

The “8th UNWTO Silk Road Minister’s Meeting” was held on 7 March 2018 on the side-lines of the “ITB Berlin Travel Trade Show”.

The Meeting focused on the long-term tourism vision for the historic Silk Road routes and how to establish the Silk Road as one of the most important transnational tourism routes in the 21st century. Special attention was given to the tourism potential of Maritime Silk Road thematic routes, mainly across Asia.

It was generally accepted that sustainability and trans-border regional cooperation and coordination will be key to fully develop the benefits of the Silk Road Tourism initiative. PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Christides, informed participants on the already existing close cooperation with the UNWTO for the realization of joint efforts in that direction, as well as on similar plans for the immediate future; he conveyed the message to all 34 Silk Road member countries and to other stakeholders involved, to view and approach the BSEC Organization as a trustworthy interlocutor and partner in the joint effort to establish the Silk Road as an internationally renowned and seamless cultural tourism route, which already captivates the imagination of millions of potential visitors.

## EIGHTH UNWTO SILK ROAD TASK FORCE MEETING

*Kayseri, 26-27 April 2018*

Marketing and promotion, capacity building and destination management, as well as travel facilitation are the three pillars on which the UNWTO bases the promotion of its Silk Road Tourism Programme. The above items, together with the “Silk Road Tourism Intelligence”, covering specialized research activities, analysis and data collection, were the main topics of discussion at the latest meeting of the Silk Road Task Force Meeting, held in Kayseri, Turkey.

Ambassador Bratislav Dordevic, Executive Manager representing PERMIS, informed participants on the latest BSEC activities in



the sector and underlined the supportive role that PERMIS could assume, especially in what concerns the effective organization of seminars and workshops in its Istanbul premises, for the benefit of all States, Members of the WTO Silk Road Program.

## VISIT OF THE AMBASSADOR OF GERMANY TO THE BSEC HEADQUARTERS

**BSEC** pays special attention to its relationship with the Federal Republic of Germany, Observer in BSEC since 1999.



Secretary General Ambassador Christides received the German Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Mr. Martin Erdmann, at the BSEC premises. He informed his guest in detail on the activities, plans and achievements of the BSEC Organization, with a special emphasis on its project-oriented character; he asked Ambassador Erdmann to convey to the German Government the sincere appreciation of the Organization for the valuable support received in the past years.

Ambassador Erdmann expressed his keen interest in BSEC activities, especially in areas where his country might be more helpful in collaborating on possible joint projects of mutual benefit. The two sides agreed to periodically meet and exchange views on issues of shared interest, in order to concretize and intensify their cooperation.

## VISIT OF PROF. EDEN MAMUT, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE BLACK SEA UNIVERSITIES NETWORK (BSUN)

Twenty years ago, the rectors and representatives of more than 60 universities founded the *Black Sea Universities Network* (BSUN) as an inter-university cooperation framework for the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization.

The Secretaries General of BSUN and BSEC met at the latter's Headquarters in Istanbul on 5 March 2018 and had a thorough exchange of views on a number of issues of shared interest, with a view to develop collaboration on possible joint projects, especially in Education, Science and Technology. They agreed to undertake concrete steps to revive and enhance cooperation between the two organizations and to meet more often in the future.





**SECOND MEETING OF THE SECRETARIES GENERAL OF THE  
PARLIAMENTS OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES,  
WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE SECRETARIES GENERAL OF THE  
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH HAVE THE  
OBSERVER STATUS IN THE PABSEC**



*“National Parliaments are not only the bastions of Democracy, but also the true depository and promoter of the popular will!”... This is how the Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS, Ambassador Michael B. Christides addressed Parliamentarians who participated at the above meeting, just on the eve of PABSEC’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, to be officially celebrated on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2018 in Istanbul.*

Ambassador Christides underlined that Members of National Parliaments are able to better and more genuinely interpret and express the wishes of their voters – being directly elected by the latter, so the responsibility of Parliamentarians to contribute to a better understanding and an enhanced cooperation in our wider region is of paramount importance, especially since the people and voters in the countries in the Black Sea region want peace, cooperation, prosperity and dialogue.

The PERMIS Secretary General expressed his belief that both PABSEC and BSEC have contributed a lot in what concerns dialogue and understanding in the region; they both helped establish a web of cooperation – networks in many sectors and introduced a precious culture of dialogue in the region.

#### FOURTH MEETING FOR DEVELOPING A BLUE GROWTH INITIATIVE FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN THE BLACK SEA

Supporting sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors, in other words “Blue Growth”, has a significant place on BSEC’s agenda.

Experts, academics and researchers from the BSEC Member States, riparian to the Black Sea, as well as from Moldova, participated at the “4th Meeting for Developing a Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the



Black Sea” hosted by BSEC PERMIS on 27 March 2018, in its Istanbul premises. The Meeting was organized and chaired by the DG Mare of the *European Commission*.

Views were exchanged on the work of the research body of stakeholders from the riparian Black Sea countries, plus Moldova, who are working on the development of a “Vision Paper” which is expected to help fill-in the gaps in the research and innovation area concerning the Black Sea.

The aim of hosting the above important meeting in PERMIS’ headquarters was to bring the discussion on the *EU Blue Growth Initiative* on the “home turf” of the Black Sea region, in order to give a greater saying and a leading role to the riparian countries, all BSEC Member States.

#### “Blue Growth as a driver for regional development”

The “9th edition of the International Black Sea Symposium” organized in Athens on 20-21 March 2018 by the International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) was dedicated to the “Blue Growth”.

PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Michael B. Christides delivered the keynote speech under the title “Blue Growth as a driver for regional development”, during which he touched upon the main factors that could help transform the “Blue Growth” strategy into a comprehensive and efficient vehicle for achieving sustainable development.

Mrs. Rositsa Stoeva, responsible Executive Manager at the PERMIS, introduced the relevant efforts of the BSEC Organization in the same field.



## JOINT WORKSHOP ON PROJECT PROMOTION



Approximately seventy participants from various countries took active part in the Workshop, contributed to the lively exchange of views and had an excellent opportunity for networking.

The aim of the Workshop was to present the significant role of Regional Authorities not only in policy-making but also in the promotion of concrete projects, to describe available funding instruments, as well as to introduce a number of successful regional cooperation examples in various parts of Europe and the Black Sea area.

Together with the countries in the region, International Organizations and other important stakeholders, BSEC PERMIS is actively pursuing efforts to further develop joint initiatives in all areas of shared interest.

BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. Christides, welcomed the participants, who, given the success of the event, expressed the fervent wish to organize the Workshop on an annual basis.

With this in mind, BSEC PERMIS, the *Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)* and its *Balkan & Black Sea Commission (BBSC)* jointly organized a “*Workshop on Project Promotion*” on 28 March 2018, held at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul.

## 19th INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARCHEOLOGICAL FILM (Belgrade, 29 March 2018)



In this context, the “*19th International Festival of Archeological Film*” was organized by the National Museum in Belgrade, on 29 March 2018, to which BSEC Member States were also invited to participate by the Serbian representative to the respective BSEC *Working Group on Culture*.

The geographic area of the BSEC Member States’ territories covers a vast area which is rightly considered as the cradle of many civilizations. Its Member States attach therefore great importance to Archeology, in order to bring to light the evidence of their rich historic and cultural heritage.

Seven BSEC Member States, including Serbia as the host country, were represented at the said Festival with a total of 24 films: Azerbaijan (2), Bulgaria (1), Greece (4), Russia (4), Turkey (1), Ukraine (1) and Serbia (11).

As in the previous years, the films were characterized by their innovative approach to the cultural and civilizational heritage and were of high artistic and educational value.



## The Black Sea Ring Highway (BSRH)

The Steering Committee of the BSRH, considered as one of the most important joint projects of BSEC in the Transport sector, held its 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 21 March 2018 at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul.

The Member States exchanged information on the state of the main route within their national territories and decided to better coordinate with the responsible “*Joint Technical Secretariat*” on the faster promotion of this significant infrastructure project.



BSEC was represented at the “*21st Eurasian Economic Summit*” held on 11-12 April 2018 in Istanbul, by Ambassador Michael B. Christides.

The Summit, organized annually by the *Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation*, focused on topics such as energy, economy, technology, climate change, dialogue and peace, as well as exploring ways of enhancing relations between countries of the Eurasian region.

In his speech during the opening session of the event, Ambassador Christides presented the activities of BSEC, its contribution to regional peace, its presence as a vehicle of cooperation in many sectors as well as its role in establishing a culture of dialogue among its Member States.

He further drew the attention of the audience to the importance of technology as a priceless instrument of improvement in almost every sector of human activity; yet he cautioned that for this to occur politics and politicians should learn to accept and make use of the technological achievements and, vice versa, scientists and technology should accept and respect the limits dictated by human values, fundamental freedoms and by human rights. In conclusion, he appealed to participants to help **make technology an instrument for peace** and for the sustainable development of our globe.

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS:**

## Leipzig International Transport Forum

*Leipzig (Germany), 23-25 May 2018*

BSEC is a regional Organization promoting mainly the economic cooperation between Member States and beyond, therefore its efforts to promote better transport opportunities and alternatives continue unabated.

In order to present its achievements and plans in this vital sector, BSEC PERMIS decided to amplify its presence at the prestigious “Leipzig International Transport Forum” beyond the mere participation of its representative in one or more sessions of the Forum; consequently, it will be putting-up an ad hoc stand and organize, on the sidelines of the event, a focused meeting of BSEC Ministers of Transport / Infrastructure present in Leipzig.

BSEC PERMIS firmly believes that its participation together with the joint presence of the BSTDB, IRU, BSEC-URTA, OTIF, BSRH JPTS, MoS JTS and other partners in this important event, by exhibiting in the same stand printed or electronic documentation on their activities and plans in the wider Black Sea region, concerning transports in general, will decisively enhance the visibility and prestige of all partners involved in this effort.



## Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States on “Regional Policies in the wider Black Sea area”

*Istanbul on 22 - 25 October 2018.*

BSEC PERMIS has on many occasions informed on its intention and efforts to establish a bi-annual event to bring young diplomats from BSEC Member States together in order to discuss and exchange views on issues of regional economic cooperation and with the aim to acquaint the leaders of tomorrow both with the Organization itself, as well as to get to know each other better.

PERMIS is happy to announce that with the substantial support of the *Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS)* in Turkey it will be organizing the first similar workshop in Istanbul on 22 - 25 October 2018.

The Ministries of Foreign Affairs of BSEC Member States have already been invited to select two young diplomats each for participating in this 3-day workshop; PERMIS firmly believes that the event will further increase the sense of “BSEC ownership” among its Member States, a vital prerequisite for upholding the role of the Organization as the point of reference for cooperation and understanding in the wider Black Sea region.



www.bsec-organization.org

## BSEC 2nd MOTORCYCLE RIDE

**BULGARIA - ROMANIA** (30 June - 7 July 2018)

You are cordially invited to discover historical cities and natural beauties of Bulgaria and Romania, as well as to ride on the legendary Transfagarasan and Transalpinia routes.

Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation  
Permanent International Secretariat



This trip is organized by Baltac Tourism, under the patronage of BSEC, and the tour guidance of Kazoom Moto Adventures. For participation and price details kindly contact Mr. Kazım Ürümöğlü on (+90 232) 284 25 22 or visit <https://www.facebook.com/KazoomMotoAdventures>. We thank the monthly MotorON magazine for promoting the event.

KAZOOM MOTO ADVENTURES

Baltac

2018

The Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) considers Tourism as one of the best ways to establish a culture of friendship and understanding between people and States: therefore it encourages, among other, motorcycle touring, which att-

racts an ever- growing number of adventure travelers, as it offers a unique sense of liberty and greater opportunities to enjoy the trip.

With the aim to promote the *Black Sea Ring Highway* (BSRH), which is connecting the territories of BSEC's 12 Member States, PERMIS organizes this year the "2nd BSEC Motorcycle Ride", which will cover two of its Member States: Bulgaria and Romania. The route includes historic cities and spectacular scenery, comprising the legendary Shipka and Transfagarasan alpine-pass roads.

Local authorities of the two countries will facilitate border crossing formalities and the smooth realization of the ride.

The event is open to all motorcyclists ready to discover different sites and make new friends. Anybody wishing to be part of this adventure, which promises to offer unique moments of diversion, culinary delights and sheer "motorcycle adrenaline", can announce her/his interest for participation by sending an e-mail to [kazoom@kazoom-moto-adventures.com](mailto:kazoom@kazoom-moto-adventures.com).



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