



Borovets, 7 November 2008

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**REPORT OF THE
MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Borovets, Republic of Bulgaria, 6-7 November 2008

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology was held in Borovets, the Republic of Bulgaria, on 6-7 November 2008.
2. The following BSEC Member States participated in the Meeting:
 - Republic of Bulgaria
 - Georgia
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Republic of Moldova
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Serbia
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
3. The representative of the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) participated in the Meeting as the BSEC Related Body.
4. The representative of the United States of America participated in the Meeting in its capacity of the BSEC Observer.
5. The representative of the Black Sea University Network (BSUN) attended the Meeting as the Official Guest.
6. The list of participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex I.
7. The Meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Albena VUTSOVA, Director of the Scientific Research, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria, and Mr. Silviu ROMAN, Senior Counsellor of the Department of European Integration and International Cooperation, Ministry of Education, Research and Youth; National Authority for Scientific Research (ANCS).
8. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed and agreed. The agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex II.

WELCOME SPEECH BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF BULGARIA

9. The welcoming speech on behalf of Ms. Vanya DOBREVA, Deputy Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria was delivered by Ms. Guenoveva JECHEVA, the Head of Transnational Research Initiatives Division of the Scientific Research Department. The text of the welcoming speech is attached as Annex III.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:

a) The BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology and the Work Program (2005-2009);

11. The BSEC PERMIS representative briefed the participants on the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology and the follow-up of the Istanbul (2007) Ministerial Declaration.

12. The Working Group decided that the Country-Coordinator together with the ICBSS and PERMIS will establish a task force with the aim to draft BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology and the Work Program (2009-2013) to be discussed at the next Meeting of the Working Group (April 2009).

b) Statement of the Ministers Responsible for Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States (Istanbul, 31 October 2007).

13. The participants agreed that the actions of the Working Group have been consistent with the content of the Statement.

STATE OF AFFAIRS WITH RESPECT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY 2006-2008

14. The representative of Romania, in its capacity of former Country-Coordinator, made comments to the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Working Group on Science and Technology for 2006-2008, emphasizing on the joint projects that Romania has with some BSEC Member States, as well as on regional dimension on cooperation at the academic level (BSUN).

15. The representative of the Republic of Turkey informed on the projects which the Republic of Turkey has with some BSEC Member States.

PLAN OF ACTION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR THE PERIOD 2008-2010

16. The representative of the Republic of Bulgaria, in its capacity of the Country-Coordinator, made a presentation of the draft Plan of Action of the Working Group for 2008-2010, which is attached as Annex IV.

17. The participants agreed to communicate through the PERMIS to the Country-Coordinator their eventual amendments to the Action Plan not later than 1 February 2009 to be included in the draft.

18. The Country-Coordinator took a commitment to prepare a revised draft Plan of Action upon eventual amendments from the BSEC Member States, to be presented at the next Meeting of the Working Group (April 2009).

19. The participants took note of the information provided by the representative of the ICBSS on the proposal for a binding Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement among the BSEC Member States in the field of S&T and agreed to forward their comments to the PERMIS by the end of January 2009. The information is attached as Annex V.

20. The Working Group instructed the ICBSS to proceed with the preparation of the draft Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement, based on the comments of the BSEC Member States, to be discussed at its next Meeting.

PRESENTATIONS OF COOPERATION PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:

a) State of affairs with respect to BSEC-EU cooperation in the field of Science and Technology within the 7th Framework Program;

21. The participants took note of the information provided by the representative of the ICBSS on the recent developments in the context of the EU co-funded project (under the 7th Framework Programme) “Science and Technology International Cooperation Network for Eastern European and Central Asian Countries - IncoNet EECA”.

22. The Working Group encouraged the ICBSS as the Coordinator of the said project to continue its activities in this respect.

23. The representative of Romania made a presentation of the project under the 7th Framework Programme “Black Sea – European Research Area Net - BS-ERA.NET”.

24. The participants exchanged their views on the ongoing cooperation between BSEC and the EU under the 7th Framework Programme and appreciated the efforts done by the ICBSS and Romania to secure the cooperation.

b) Presentations and projects by Member States and ICBSS in the field of Science and Technology.

25. The Working Group decided to review the results of the EU co-funded ResPOT project for discussion at the next Meeting of the Group with regard to future joint regional activities.

26. The representative of the Republic of Bulgaria made presentation on “Research Infrastructures – European Facilities for the Benefit of the Black Sea Research Cooperation”, attached as Annex VI.

27. The participants took note of the presentation and decided to forward their comments to the PERMIS not later than end of January 2009 with a possibility to include it in the next Plan of Action.

COOPERATION WITH REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS (BSUN, COPNAS)

28. The participants took note of the presentation made by Ms. Georgiana BERCARU on the activities of the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN), which now includes more than 100 universities from 11 BSEC Member States and is implementing programs in areas, such as Sustainable Development, Networking on Innovation and Knowledge Transferring, Renewable Energy Sources, Advanced and Multifunctional Materials, E-Health and Telemedicine etc.

29. The Working Group appreciated the activities of BSUN and underlined the necessity to continue the legal procedures required under the BSEC Statutory Documents for granting the Status of the BSEC Related Body.

30. The participants took note of the presentation made by Prof. Dr. Dinçer ÜLKÜ, Chairman of International Relations Commission of the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TUBA), on the activities of CoPNAS.

COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SEISMOLOGY WITH REGARD TO THE ACTIVATION OF THE BSEC ASSOCIATION FOR SEISMIC PROTECTION

31. The representative of the Republic of Moldova informed on the past cooperation in the field of seismology (Bulgaria, Moldova Romania). He invited the BSEC Member States to join the future seismologic project, which will be presented to the European Commission for funding, and asked the Working Group to acknowledge the project upon its presentation at the next Meeting of the Group.

ASSESSMENT OF PDF STANDARD APPLICATIONS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

32. The BSEC PERMIS representative informed that the Steering Committee of the BSEC Project Development Fund (Istanbul, 17 September 2008) approved the Project Application and decided to allocate the amount of 15,000 US Dollars to the project, named “New cardiovascular planning and diagnostic tool for coronary arteries in BSEC countries using computational simulation by institutions from the Republic of Serbia (Lead Partner), the Hellenic Republic and Romania.

33. The BSEC PERMIS representative also informed that the project “Hydro and thermodynamic processes in the Black Sea-land-atmosphere system and regional climate – Development of fundamentals of monitoring and forecasting system”, implemented by institutions from Georgia (Lead Partner), the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation, has been completed.

34. The participants took note of the information.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

35. The representative of the Hellenic Republic informed the Working Group that the Greek Ministry of Development will hold a BSEC-related Ministerial Meeting on Research and Development in S&T in Athens on 9 December 2008.

36. He informed that the purpose of the proposed Ministerial Meeting in Athens is to consolidate the efforts of the BSEC Member States and explore opportunities by utilizing crucial elements of the triptych Education & Research-Innovation & Entrepreneurship for the benefit of all these countries, as well as the political willingness for a stronger collaboration that could be expressed. Science and Technology Parks of the Black Sea could form a cluster or an association for further collaboration.

37. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the representative of the Hellenic Republic.

38. The representative of the United States of America informed the Working Group that USA would offer a non-binding S&T cooperation agreement to the BSEC Organization. Further details will be communicated to the BSEC PERMIS.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

39. The Working Group decided to hold its next Meeting in Istanbul, at the BSEC Headquarters, on either 2-3 or 9-10 April 2009. The exact date will be decided and communicated in due time.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

40. The participants expressed their high appreciation to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria for the warm hospitality extended to them in Borovets and the excellent organization of the Meeting.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

41. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.