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**REPORT OF THE
THIRD MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF INTERIOR
OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES AND
SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE
“MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE
BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION PARTICIPATING STATES ON
COOPERATION IN COMBATING CRIME, IN PARTICULAR IN ITS
ORGANIZED FORMS”**

Corfu, Greece, 1-2 October 1998

1. The Third Meeting of the Ministers of Interior of the BSEC Member States and Signing Ceremony of the “Multilateral Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms”, hereinafter referred to as the “Agreement”, proposed by the Hellenic Republic, was held in Corfu, Greece, on 1-2 October 1998.

2. The Meeting was attended by the Ministers or Heads of Related Agencies from the following Participating States of the BSEC:

The Republic of Albania
The Republic of Armenia
The Republic of Azerbaijan
The Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
The Hellenic Republic
The Republic of Moldova
Romania
The Russian Federation
The Republic of Turkey
Ukraine

The list of participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex I.

3. The Meeting of the Ministers and Signing Ceremony were chaired, on behalf of the host country, by H.E.Mr. Georgios ROMEOS, Minister of Public Order of the Hellenic Republic who addressed the participants with a welcoming speech.

4. Mr. Evgueni BORISSENKO, Deputy Secretary General, addressed the Meeting on behalf of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat. The text of his statement is attached as Annex II.

5. The draft agenda of the Ministerial Meeting was discussed and adopted. The agenda, as adopted by the Ministers, is attached as Annex III.

6. The Meeting of the Ministers was preceded by the Meeting of the Senior Officials on 1-2 October. The latter was chaired by Mr. Nikolaos TASIPOULOS, Police Colonel and Director of the International Police Cooperation Division at the Ministry of Public Order of the Hellenic Republic. The agenda, as adopted by the Senior Officials, is attached as Annex IV.

7. According to the "Article 6" of the Agreement, the Senior Officials submitted recommendations for the creation of the Working Group (WG) on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms, to the Meeting of the Ministers of Interior for approval and if necessary for a relative mandate to be issued.

8. The Senior Officials also supported the idea that the said WG shall convene periodically and at least once a year at a reasonable time prior to the Meeting of the Ministers of Interior.

9. The Ministers of Interior and Heads of Delegations endorsed the proposal of the Senior Officials to establish the Working Group (WG) on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms in order to examine the ways of implementation and promoting of cooperation on the basis of the Agreement and decided to submit the Terms of Reference of the above-mentioned WG to the Twelfth Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs (MMFA) to be held in Sofia on 22 October 1998 and to be preceded by the Senior Officials Meeting on 20-21 October. The text of the said Terms of Reference is attached as Annex V.

10. The Turkish Delegation proposed as a means of cooperation the idea of the establishment of the Black Sea Police Organization (BLACK SEA-POL) and a joint laboratory for identifying the origins and carrying out analysis of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Several delegations were, in principle, in favor of, and others were not, in principle, opposed to the idea of the establishment of the above-mentioned structures and stated that the said projects are not mature enough and need further study, in particular as to the legal, financial, organizational, etc., problems.

11. The Senior Officials welcomed the proposals of the Republic of Turkey to host the first Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms, in Antalya in May 1999.

GENERAL ASSESSMENT

12. During the discussions, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations made some proposals and took note of the following:

- With the view of enhancing the effectiveness of the Working Group, the Head of Delegation of the Russian Federation put forward a proposal to use the experience of the Task Force on Organized Crime in the Baltic Sea Region, in particular in the organization of joint operations on combating specific types of transnational crime.
- The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan presented a concrete proposal for the creation of mechanism of implementation and monitoring of the signed Agreement for submission to the first Meeting of the Working Group to be held in May 1999.
- The Head of the Georgian Delegation underlined that at the present time terrorism and other forms of crime becoming more transnational and have form of international syndicates. Taking into account the above-mentioned, he proposed, to include in the agenda of the first WG Meeting, that carry out the recommendations concerning this problem.
- The Minister of Interior of Romania stressed the necessity to put into practice the signed Agreement as soon as possible, because this represents a real support in combating against the organized crime.
- The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Turkey stated that considering the close relationship among the terrorist organizations, the formation of common and coordinated action mechanisms as well as enhancing international cooperation regarding all terror and organized crime types, especially illicit drug trafficking gained great importance.

SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION (BSEC) PARTICIPATING STATES ON COOPERATION IN COMBATING CRIME, IN PARTICULAR IN ITS ORGANIZED FORMS

13. The Ministers of Interior and Heads of Delegations of the BSEC Participating States unanimously endorsed the decision of signing the Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms, which was submitted to them by the Senior Officials for approval. The Agreement is attached as Annex VI.

14. The Ministers of Interior and Heads of Delegations decided to submit the full text of the said Agreement for consideration and final approval by the Twelfth Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs (MMFA) to be held in Sofia on 22 October 1998.

15. Following the Signing Ceremony, bilateral and multilateral negotiations took place between the interested delegations on the regional cooperation, taking into consideration the joint action for the fulfilment of the Agreement.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

16. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations agreed that the date and venue of the Fourth Meeting of the Ministers of Interior would be communicated to the Participating States through the BSEC Secretariat.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

17. The Ministers of Interior and the Heads of Related Agencies expressed their sincere thanks and gratitude to the Government of the Hellenic Republic, and in particular to the Ministry of Public Order for the warm hospitality and courtesies extended to them and for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting and Signing Ceremony.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

18. This report was adopted by the Ministers of Interior for the submission to the Twelfth MMFA.
