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**REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Bucharest, 1-2 March 2006

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection was held in Bucharest on 1-2 March 2006.
2. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mrs. Elena DUMITRU, Director General, Ministry of Environment and Water Management, Romania, and Mrs. Şule ÖZKAYA, Head of Department of Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Republic of Turkey.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Azerbaijan
 - Republic of Bulgaria
 - Georgia
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Republic of Moldova
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
4. The Meeting was attended by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) as BSEC Related Body.
5. The representatives of the State of Israel, the United States of America and the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution also participated in the Meeting in their capacity as BSEC Observers.
6. The representative of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) attended the Meeting as official Guest.
7. Mrs. Lucia Ana VARGA, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Water Management of Romania, addressed the participants of the Meeting with welcoming remarks.
8. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex I.

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF COOPERATION AMONG THE BSEC MEMBER STATES ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IMPROVEMENT IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

9. The delegations informed about environmental programs implemented by their countries individually or in cooperation with other BSEC Member States on bilateral and multilateral basis.

10. The necessity to enhance cooperation of BSEC and the BSEC Member States with relevant international and regional organizations such as the UN, UNECE, UNEP, UN FAO, UNCSD, EU, BSC, World Bank and others, as well as with the existing initiatives in the Mediterranean and the Baltic regions was emphasized.

11. The Participants also stressed the need of securing funds from all available sources for the regional action oriented environmental protection projects.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROJECTS PROPOSALS

12. The delegations submitted for discussion their proposals on elaboration of multilateral projects in the BSEC framework. The following presentations were made:

a) **“Improvement of the scientific background for assuring a sustainable development in the Black Sea coastal zone”** submitted by Romania;

13. The Working Group took note of the presentation, made by the delegation of Romania, and expressed its support for the promotion of the said project in the BSEC framework.

14. The Working Group invited the Member States to inform about their willingness to be involved in the implementation of this project, as well as with respect to their participation in the realization of the first stage of the project, namely the submission of the “Standard Application for Funding the BSEC Projects” prior to the next meeting of the Working Group.

b) **“Strengthening of the competent authority’s capacity and of the cooperation for the control of the transboundary waste transport in order to face illegal traffic”** submitted by Romania;

15. The Working Group took note of the presentation, made by the delegation of Romania, and expressed its support for the promotion of the said project in the BSEC framework. It also considered in a positive manner the intention of Romania to submit a “Standard Application for Funding the BSEC Projects”, and the willingness of Moldova and Turkey to explore the possibility to engage themselves in the said application.

c) **“Hydro-geophysical monitoring for environmental and geodynamical safety in the Caucasus and Turkey regions”** submitted by institutions of the Republic of Turkey, the Republic of Azerbaijan and Georgia;

16. The Working Group assessed the project “Hydro-geophysical monitoring for environmental and geodynamical safety in the Caucasus and Turkey regions”, and made technical amendments to it.

Furthermore, it agreed to submit the amended standard project application to the Committee of Senior Official for endorsement.

d) “The prefeasibility report on environmental impact for BSEC countries budget from the usage of a new class multi-purpose environmental fleet, based on operating experience a MARPOL 73/78 project-vessel ‘BSEC Marmara 1’ ” submitted by legal entities of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and by Prof. Igor Reshetnikov, Ukrainian citizen;

17. The delegations of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey assessed positively the implementation of the existing project of oil pollution mitigation by “BSEC Marmara 1” environmental vessel.

18. Considering the “Standard Application for Funding the BSEC Projects” the Working Group decided to defer the issue for its next meeting. At the same time it recommended the applicant partners of the “Prefeasibility report on environmental impact for BSEC countries budget from the usage of a new class multi-purpose environmental fleet, based on operating experience a MARPOL 73/78 project-vessel ‘BSEC Marmara 1’ ” to redraft and substantially improve the “Standard Application for Funding the BSEC Projects”. Among others the applicant partners shall comply with the requirements of the Manual of Operations as follows:

- only legal entities are eligible to have the capacity as PDF recipient (Article 9 of the Manual of Operations);
- the proposal shall be supported by the national authorities of all the applicant partners (Article 9 of the Manual of Operations);
- the application shall be signed by the duly authorized representatives of all applicants (Article 13 of the Manual of Operations).

19. The participants also pointed out that further elaboration of the application is needed so that all the BSEC project selection criteria are duly met (Part 4 of the Manual of Operations).

20. The representative of Ukraine made a statement that his Country can not support at this stage this particular project.

21. The delegation of the Hellenic Republic stated that it doesn’t support the said application in its present form.

22. The Working Group, taking into consideration the relevant concern expressed in the Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Organizational Matters (29-30 June 1999) and the letter from Prof. Reshetnikov to the Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS (31 January 2006), recommended BSEC PERMIS to inquire about the modalities of the usage of the BSEC official name both in the names of the project-vessel ‘BSEC Marmara 1’ and of the ‘BSEC Ekomorsphera Limited’ Co. Bearing in mind, that the BSEC name, flag and logo are registered with the WIPO and there was no information suggesting that particular permission by BSEC had been granted to the said Company and ship, the Working Group recommended that the findings of the said inquiry shall be reported to the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials.

e) **“Study of the capabilities/requirements of the operational monitoring of air pollution levels using new generation meteorological and photochemical models”** submitted by legal entities of the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania;

23. The Working Group assessed the project “Study of the capabilities/requirements of the operational monitoring of air pollution levels using new generation meteorological and photochemical models”, and amendments were made to it. Furthermore, it agreed to submit the amended standard project application to the Committee of Senior Officials for endorsement.

ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, INSTITUTIONS AND REGIONAL INITIATIVES IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

24. The Working Group took note of the presentation made by the Executive Director of the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution and underlined the necessity of closer cooperation between BSEC and the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution in the field of environmental protection.

DISCUSSION ON REGIONAL PROJECTS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DRAFT ‘PLATFORM OF COOPERATION BETWEEN BSEC AND THE EU’

25. The Working Group stressed the necessity for the harmonization of national legislation in the field of environmental protection with the relevant international legal framework and with the relevant EU *acquis communautaire*. It emphasized that the said process should be financially supported by available sources from the EU and other international donors.

26. The Working Group urged the Member States to communicate their proposals on priority regional projects to be included in the draft “Platform of Cooperation between BSEC and the EU”. With that respect, it welcomed the first two proposals made by Romania, namely “Improvement of the scientific background for assuring a sustainable development in the Black Sea coastal zone” and “Strengthening of the competent authority’s capacity and of the cooperation for the control of the transboundary waste transport in order to face illegal traffic”.

DRAFT “BSEC ACTION PLAN FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION”

27. The Working Group discussed and agreed upon the Draft “BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection” to be submitted to the Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Environmental Protection of the BSEC Member States for endorsement. The Final Draft “BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection” is attached as Annex II to the Report.

28. The Working Group took note in a positive manner of the intention of Romania to submit an application to be appointed as the next Country-Coordinator of the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection.

DRAFT JOINT DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

29. The Participants considered the Draft Joint Declaration to be adopted at the Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Environmental Protection of the BSEC Member States proposed by the Romanian Chairmanship. They agreed on the Final Draft of the said Joint Declaration and decided to submit it to the Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Environmental Protection of the BSEC Member States for adoption. The Final Draft is attached as Annex III to the Report.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

30. The Participants expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of Environment and Water Management of Romania for the hospitality extended to them during the Meeting.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

31. The exact date and venue of the next Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Environmental Protection will be communicated to the BSEC Member States through BSEC PERMIS in due course.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

32. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the Committee of Senior Officials and the Fourteenth Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to be held in Bucharest in April 2006.
