



**BS/CM/WG/R(96)1**

**REPORT  
OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNICATIONS**

**Burgas (Ravda), 17-22 June 1996**

1. The Meeting of the Working Group (WG) on Communications of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) was held at the level of Deputy Ministers of Telecommunications of the Participating States in Burgas (Ravda), Bulgaria on 17-22 June 1996.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Simeon TZENOV, Vice-President of the Committee of Posts and Telecommunications of the Republic of Bulgaria.
3. The Meeting was attended by the following Participating States of the BSEC:
  - Republic of Albania
  - Republic of Armenia
  - Republic of Bulgaria
  - Georgia
  - Hellenic Republic
  - Republic of Moldova
  - Romania
  - Russian Federation
  - Republic of Turkey
  - Ukraine
4. The representatives of Israel and the BSEC Business Council attended the Meeting as Observers.

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

5. Mr. Simeon TZENOV made an inaugural statement. The text of the statement is attached as Annex II.

6. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex III.

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK AND ITS INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY; STEPS TOWARDS IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATIONS IN THE BLACK SEA REGION**

7. Under agenda item 2 the delegations presented their progress reports on the development of the telecommunications facilities (present situation, short, medium and long-term planning) in their respective countries.

8. The delegations also informed each other of the reforms carried on in the field of telecommunications and in particular with regard to their liberalization and major investment programs.

9. Special attention was paid by the WG to the problems related to introducing the new telecommunication services in the Participating States in connection with developing regional links as well as with the projects and programs of multilateral character which are being realized in the BSEC region.

10. The WG confirmed the interest of the Participating States in exchanging the information on the development of national telecommunications networks within the BSEC region on a regular basis.

11. The WG agreed that the role of the private sector in the production field should be strengthened with the aim of improving the effectiveness of the telecommunications networks in the region.

12. The WG requested the Secretariat to prepare a study on the telecommunications networks and plans of their development in the BSEC region on the basis of relevant information provided for by the Participating States with the assistance of consultants.

**DEVELOPMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN BULGARIA BY 2010**

13. The delegates took note with interest of the information presented by the Bulgarian delegation with regard to development of the national telecommunications field by the year 2010 (Attached as Annex IV).

14. It was advised that the States interested to participate in the development of the Bulgarian telecom industries through the creation of joint ventures may directly contact the BTC.

**INFORMATION ON THE MEETING OF THE POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS MINISTERS OF THE BALKAN COUNTRIES (SOFIA, 25-26 APRIL 1996) AND PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A BALKAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS POOL**

15. Under this agenda item the WG was informed of the results of the Meeting of the Posts and Telecommunications Ministers of the Balkan countries, held in Sofia on 25-26 April 1996 (Resolution of the Meeting is attached as Annex V).

16. Having confirmed the importance of joint activities of the Balkan Region States in the field of posts and telecommunications for the successful establishment of highly developed communications networks and services to the benefit of the population of the region, the WG took note of the information on the Meeting of the Posts and Telecommunications Ministers of the Balkan countries and presentation of the Proposal for establishment of a Balkan Telecommunications Pool (BTP).

17. The delegates agreed on the desirability of extending in the future the joint activities of the Balkan States in the field of posts and telecommunications to the BSEC Region, with the consent of each Participating State, on the understanding that this will not overlap the other activities.

**CURRENT SITUATION AND PROSPECTS FOR DEVELOPMENT OR REALIZATION OF CONCRETE PROJECTS**

18. Under this agenda item a thorough exchange of views took place on the current situation and the prospects for development and realization of concrete projects in the BSEC region presented in the agreed document of the Meeting of the WG on Communications held in Thessaloniki (Annex IV to BS/CM/WG/R(95)1).

19. The WG took note of the information presented by the national experts on the state of implementation of the projects in the said sphere being executed in the BSEC region and in the light of the delay of the "Ready for Service Date" called upon the countries involved to take all additional actions needed for completing the said projects.

20. Some delegations presented for the consideration of the Working Group concrete proposals on further prospects of developing collaboration both within the region and with the neighboring countries.

21. The WG agreed upon the importance of facilitating the transit to the Landing Points of respective Fiber Optic Cable Systems (FOCS) for those countries which do not have direct access to the Black Sea.

22. Bearing in mind the importance of attracting the private sector in the development of the telecommunications field, the WG recommended to the Eighth MMFA to endorse a resolution, calling upon the appropriate authorities of the Participating States to undertake concrete actions with the view to facilitating the involvement of the business community in developing the said field, particularly in the areas of liberalization of telecommunications facilities and pertinent investment projects.

### **COLLABORATION IN UTILIZING THE SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES IN THE BSEC REGION**

23. Within the frame of this agenda item, the WG had a thorough exchange of views on the current stage and prospects of collaboration in utilizing the satellite communications facilities in the BSEC region.

24. Having expressed its thanks to the Turkish and Russian delegations for presenting information on the subject the WG found their proposals very useful and recommended that the Participating States interested in developing proposed projects would inform the BSEC Secretariat, preferably by 1 October 1996, of the opinions on that score so that the subject could be discussed at the next meeting.

25. The participants agreed that the study of the current situation in regional space communications and distinctions among international, regional, national and privately owned satellite systems should be further undertaken in the region.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

26. The delegations welcomed the initiative of the respective Israeli authorities to host on 1-4 July 1996 in Tel-Aviv the BSEC Telecommunications Workshop and expressed the hope that this event would specify some new directions and dimensions of cooperative links of states of the region in the said sphere.

27. The WG took note of the information presented by the Director of the BSEC Secretariat on the situation regarding the E-mail in the BSEC and supported the proposal of the PERMIS to hold by the end of August 1996 a meeting of technical experts at its Headquarters in Istanbul for the consideration of existing technical difficulties and finding proper solution for the establishment of the E-mail between the PERMIS and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Participating States.

### **EXPRESSION OF THANKS**

28. The delegations expressed their gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria for the warm hospitality extended to them and for the good arrangements made for the Meeting.

**DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

29. The WG agreed that the date and venue of its next meeting would be communicated to the Participating States through the Secretariat.

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

30. The WG adopted the present report for submission to the Eighth Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

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