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**REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL AND GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Istanbul, BSEC Headquarters, 19-20 October 2006

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Institutional Renewal and Good Governance was held in Istanbul, at the BSEC Headquarters, on 19-20 October 2006.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Panagiotis NTAIS, Director of Finance, Secretariat General of Public Administration and E-Government, Ministry of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization of the Hellenic Republic.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Bulgaria
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
4. The representative the International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) also participated in the Meeting.
5. The representatives of the Republic of Belarus and the Italian Republic attended the Meeting as Observers.

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

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

REVIEW AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON NATIONAL POLICIES AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE PROCESS OF REFORMING THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND OF STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNMENTS CAPACITIES IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

7. The delegations presented information, discussed and exchanged views on the progress achieved in the process of reforming the public institutions.
8. The priorities on institutional renewal and good governance, as well as the experience of some of the BSEC Member States in dealing with European integration were emphasized.
9. The delegations presented reports on the progress achieved so far and on the activities carried out by the countries with respect to the implementation of the goals set up by the BSEC Economic Agenda for the Future and of the provisions stipulated in the “Joint Declaration on Institutional Renewal and Good Governance of the Ministers in Charge of Public Administration and the Ministers of Justice of the BSEC Member States” (Athens, 21 February 2005).
10. The necessity of enhancing cooperation between BSEC and the relevant international and regional institutions and organizations, in particular OECD and the European Union, in the field of institutional renewal and good governance, as well as of continuing sharing experience especially in CAF (Common Assessment Framework) implementation, was emphasized.

PROGRESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE ACTIVITY OF THE WORKING GROUP ON INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL AND GOOD GOVERNANCE, SINCE ITS ADOPTION IN FEBRUARY 2006

11. The representative of the Hellenic Republic informed the participants on the most recent developments and measures undertaken by the Country-Coordinator for the implementation of the Action Plan of the Working Group on Institutional Renewal and Good Governance for 2005-2007.
12. The Working Group welcomed the outcome of the Workshop on Improvement of the Relationship between State and Society held in Athens on 5-9 June 2006. The Participants considered this event as being a success and a useful initiative undertaken by the Hellenic Republic in its capacity as Country-Coordinator of the Working Group and invited other Member States to examine the possibilities of organizing similar events in the nearest future.
13. The participants took note with interest of the presentations of the studies elaborated by the Ministry of Public Administration and Decentralization of the Hellenic Republic:
 - a) Modernizing public sector delivery system;
 - b) Public services’ performance measurement;
 - c) Ombudsman: identifying values for citizens’ protection;
 - d) Accessing public sector information.
14. Some delegations were of the opinion that the BSEC documents on institutional renewal and good governance should be prepared in most comprehensive way suitable for all BSEC Member States.

15. Furthermore, the Working Group took note of the “Guides on the Questionnaire-approaches on the Reorganization Study” prepared by the General Secretariat of the Public Administration and E-Government of the Hellenic Republic. It was emphasized that, in view of elaborating an integrated and comprehensive study of the administrative procedures in the BSEC Member States aiming at redesigning the entity responsible for administrative reform in the BSEC Member States, further information to be provided by the BSEC Member States according to the abovementioned questionnaire is needed.

16. The participants took note of the cooperation of the Country-Coordinator with the International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) in the evaluation of the questionnaires and the drafting of the Study on effective ways for the achievement of high-level horizontal and vertical coordination, on matters concerning the planning and implementation of institutional renewal and good governance process.

17. The Working Group called upon the Member States to forward their replies to the questionnaires and other relevant information to PERMIS by 1 December 2006. The Country-Coordinator requested the Member States to render their assistance in the preparation of the above mentioned study by nominating, as soon as possible, contact persons in charge with the communication of relevant information and questionnaires.

DISCUSSION ON THE GREEK PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NETWORK OF PUBLIC SERVICES FOR EXCHANGING EXPERIENCE AND BEST PRACTICES

18. The Working Group welcomed the proposal made by the Hellenic Republic regarding the establishment of a Network of Public Services for exchanging experience and best practices among the BSEC Member States on matters concerning the control of public administration. It agreed to invite the General Inspector of Public Administration of the Hellenic Republic to present the content and the timetable of the network’s actions at its next meeting.

19. The Working Group welcomed the proposal to have an Expert Meeting on issues related to institutional renewal and good governance, with the participation of experts of the European Commission and representatives of EU Member States. The date and venue of this meeting will be decided at a later stage.

PREPARATION OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES (TIME, CONTENT ETC.)

20. The participants took note of the proposals made by the Hellenic Republic in its capacity of the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group regarding the organization of the second Meeting of the Ministers in Charge of Public Administration in 2007, preceded by the Meeting of the Working Group on Institutional Renewal and Good Governance. The exact date and venue will be communicated to the Member States through BSEC PERMIS in due course.

21. The delegations took note of the proposed topics to be addressed during the above mentioned Meetings and agreed to communicate further suggestions and amendments as soon as possible. The topics are attached as Annex III.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

22. The Working Group took note of the presentation made by the representative of the Black Sea NGO Network regarding the establishment of “dialogue and partnership” relations between BSEC and BSNGON and advised it to apply formally, according to the BSEC statutory documents, so that the procedure provided for is started.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

23. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the Fifteenth Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States to be held in Moscow, on 1 November 2006.
