



BS/ST/WG/R(2006)2

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

*Kabardinka, Gelendjik Area, Krasnodar Region,
Russian Federation, 22-23 November 2006*

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology was held in Kabardinka, Gelendjik Area, Krasnodar Region, Russian Federation, on 22-23 November 2006.
2. The following BSEC Member States participated in the Meeting:

Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
3. The representative of the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) attended the Meeting as BSEC Related Body.
4. The Meeting was also attended by Dr. Daniel DESCOUTURES, the representative of the European Commission and by Ambassador Evgeniy KUTOVOY, Professor of Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation as Official Guests.

The list of participants of the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.
5. Mr. Valeriy GRITSAY, Head of Science and Innovation Division of the Krasnodar Region Administration welcomed the participants.
6. Ambassador Andrey URNOV, Deputy Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of BSEC made an opening statement, the text of which is attached as **Annex II**.

7. The Meeting was chaired by Academician Vladimir BABESHKO, President of Kuban State University, Vice-President of the Russian Chancellors Union and Member of the Presidium of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

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

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BSEC ACTION PLAN ON COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND OF THE WORKPROGRAMME. PRESENTATION OF THE ICBS AND MEMBER STATES PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

9. The participants made presentations on the steps they have undertaken or plan to undertake towards the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan with due consideration of the provisions of the Workprogramme and its attachments. They decided to intensify efforts to ensure the widest possible dissemination of these documents to the research communities and relevant authorities in the BSEC Member States, as well as to partner countries and organizations for the purpose of their wider participation in major projects of regional impact.

10. The representative of the Hellenic Republic informed that in order to strengthen joint activities in the priority topics designed by the Action Plan the relevant authorities intend to refocus their bilateral cooperation programmes by including these topics into the bilateral agreements with BSEC partner countries.

11. The representatives of the Russian Federation presented the Black Sea Interconnection Initiative of several BSEC Member States (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine) on the development of Regional Research and Education Network through the development of national networks, their interconnection within the BlackSea-Net and the inclusion of this Network into the Trans-European research and academic network infrastructure. The participants agreed to support the Initiative and to include relevant provision into the Plan of Action of the Working Group for 2006-2008.

12. The participants also supported the proposal of the Russian Federation to organize the centres of collective use of unique programmes and equipment on the basis of research centres of the BSEC Member States in various fields of science and welcomed the decision of the Russian Federation to establish such a centre in the field of seismology on the basis of the Kuban State University.

13. Furthermore, the participants exchanged views on the preparation of the Mid-term Meeting of the Ministers Responsible for Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States (Autumn 2007. Date and venue to be determined).

14. The participants took note that in pursuance of the Resolution of the 15th Meeting of the Council of BSEC Ministers of Foreign Affairs *“Follow up of the Bucharest Statement: a) Monitoring the implementation of the Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations approved by the BSEC Council of Foreign Ministers”* the Working Group will submit to the 16th Meeting of the BSEC Council an evaluation report on the implementation of the 14th Council Resolution on the BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology. The Working Group will also submit a report on the implementation of the 15th Council Resolution and the follow up of the Athens Declaration of the

Ministers in Charge of Science and Technology (29 September 2005) to the said Ministerial Mid-term Meeting.

15. They agreed to convene in March 2007 in the Headquarters of BSEC PERMIS an Ad Hoc Task Force of volunteers consisting of the representatives of the Country-Coordinator, other Member States and the ICBSS to begin the elaboration of the set of final documents of the Mid-term Ministerial Meeting, which may include the drafts of the updated Action Plan and Workprogramme and of the Joint Ministerial Declaration.

16. The Working Group warmly welcomed the participation in the Meeting of the representative of the European Commission, Dr. Daniel DESCOUTURES, and took note with interest of his presentation on the 7th European Community Framework Programme for Research.

17. The representative of the EC highlighted the increasing interest of the Commission to cooperate with BSEC, in particular in the field of science and technology. In this context, he recommended a more permanent and regular structured policy dialogue, which will also ensure the continuity with the previous activities.

18. To this end, the 7th FP among its enhanced possibilities for participation of researchers from the BSEC Member States includes also a specific type of projects (named INCO-Net) that are dedicated to policy dialogue. It would be the responsibility of the relevant Institutions in BSEC Countries to take advantage of such possibility and to submit an INCO-Net project, which will be evaluated on a purely competitive basis using pre-defined and published selection criteria among which excellence has a specific weight.

19. The participants emphasized the importance of further cooperation with the European Commission through 7th Framework Programme. They approached the EC representative with a request to study in Brussels the possibility of holding next year, in a place to be determined, a Meeting of BSEC researchers and scientists with an aim of informing them on the highlights of the 7th Framework Programme and enhancing their participation in the foreseen activities.

20. Information by the ICBSS on its initiative to submit a project proposal under the INCO-Net call (FP7)

The participants appreciated the information provided by the ICBSS on its intention to submit in cooperation with Institutions from the BSEC Member States an INCO-Net type project proposal in the context of the EU 7th Framework Programme.

This project would include several activities aiming at an enhanced policy dialogue and cooperation between BSEC and the EU in science and technology and at an increased participation of researchers from the BSEC Countries in the 7th FP. More specifically, the project could include: the support and strengthening of the work of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology, the contribution to the identification of research topics of mutual BSEC – EU interest, measures for a more successful participation of the researchers from BSEC Countries in the core activities of the 7th FP, support and networking of National Contact Point (NCP) structures, etc.

The participants agreed that the approval of such project proposal by the EC would enhance the mutually beneficial cooperation in science and technology among the BSEC Member States and

between BSEC and the EU, thus enabling the relevant administrations, institutions and research entities of the BSEC Member States to take full advantage of the opportunities in FP7.

To this end, the Working Group endorsed the aforementioned planned activity and supports the project proposal of the ICBSS. In addition, it recommends to the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to extend its support to the initiative of the ICBSS.

21. Organization of Workshops on the thematic priorities ‘Environment’, ‘Food, Agriculture, and Biotechnology’, and ‘Energy’ of the EU 7th Framework Programme

The Working Group has been informed in detail on the output of the Workshops on the thematic priorities ‘Environment’, ‘Food, Agriculture, and Biotechnology’, and ‘Energy’ of FP7, organized by the ICBSS and the Turkish Academy of Sciences within the framework of the EU co-funded project ‘Research Potential of the Black Sea Countries’ (BS-ResPot) as part of its follow-up activities.

The Working Group estimated that the conclusions of the Workshops, which include thematic research topics to be submitted to the European Commission for inclusion in the relevant EC FP7, are properly documented and will be instrumental for setting-up specific BSEC –EU activities under this Programme. Therefore the Working Group endorsed the reports and conclusions of the Workshops and recommended their submission by the ICBSS to the European Commission, at the highest possible level.

In addition, the Working Group decided to submit the aforementioned reports and conclusions to the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs for endorsement.

The reports and conclusions of the workshops are attached as **Annexes IV, V, VI** respectively.

22. Information by the ICBSS on the organization of the “Workshop on Policy Issues in S&T”

The Working Group took note of the information provided by the ICBSS on the latter’s plans to organize a “Workshop on Policy Issues in S&T” to be held in Athens, on 7-8 December 2006, as part of the follow-up activities of the EU co-funded project “Action Plan in Science and Technology for the Black Sea Region” (Action Plan-BS).

The Working Group recommended to the ICBSS to forward the report and conclusions of the said Workshop to the next BSEC Council for consideration.

DISCUSSION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION FOR 2006-2008

23. The Plan of Action of the Working Group for 2006-2008 presented by Romania in its capacity of the Country-Coordinator and BSEC PERMIS was considered and approved with amendments. The text of the Plan of Action is attached as **Annex VII**.

ASSESSMENT OF PDF STANDARD APPLICATIONS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

24. The Working Group considered four project proposals to be financed under the Project Development Fund and decided to submit one of them to the Committee of Senior Officials for endorsement, as follows:

a) Project proposal **“Study of Science and Technological Park Activities as a Black Sea Regional Pole of Development –TECHPARK”** submitted by institutions from Greece (Lead Partner), Romania and Russia.

The Working Group assessed the said project proposal and decided to forward it to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials for endorsement with the understanding that a more balanced distribution of tasks and funds will be agreed upon by the Consortium Partners.

The Working Group recommended to the project partners to take into account the existing pre-feasibility study on the possibilities of setting up a ‘Black Sea Innovation Centre’ that had been funded by the ICBSS.

b) Project proposal **“Development and the application of new technologies to purify polluted water, soil from petroleum products”** submitted by institutions from Azerbaijan, Russia and Ukraine (Lead Partner).

The Working Group considered the said Project and decided not to forward it to the Committee of Senior Officials since it does not address satisfactorily the PDF Project Selection Criteria. More specifically:

- The project is of very technical and narrow character and its outputs are weakly linked to the promotion of ‘the principles and objectives of BSEC’ in particular those of regionalism;
- The ‘possibility of the project to be implemented after the completion of the BSEC-financed component’ is not evident;
- The project does not ‘seek to increase synergies between BSEC and the EU’.

c) Project proposal **“Development of method and device for the analysis of common maintenance of chlorides in superficial waters”** submitted by institutions from Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (Lead Partner).

The Working Group considered the said Project and decided not to forward it to the Committee of Senior Officials since it does not address satisfactorily the PDF Project Selection Criteria. More specifically:

- The project is of very technical and narrow character and its outputs are weakly linked to the promotion of ‘the principles and objectives of BSEC’ in particular those of regionalism;
- The ‘possibility of the project to be implemented after the completion of the BSEC-financed component’ is not evident;
- The project does not ‘seek to increase synergies between BSEC and the EU’.

d) Project proposal **“Research and development of environmentally friendly Rolivsan high temperature thermosetting resins as new polyfunctional polymer, composite and nanocomposite materials for electrical engineering, electronic, plastics and printing industries”** submitted by institutions from Greece, Russia (Lead Partner) and Ukraine.

The Working Group considered the said Project and decided not to forward it to the Committee of Senior Officials since it does not address satisfactorily the PDF Project Selection Criteria. More specifically:

- The project is of very technical and narrow character and its outputs are weakly linked to the promotion of ‘the principles and objectives of BSEC’ in particular those of regionalism;
- The ‘possibility of the project to be implemented after the completion of the BSEC-financed component’ is not evident;
- The project does not ‘seek to increase synergies between BSEC and the EU’.

DISCUSSION OF THE DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

25. The participants considered the revised text of the Terms of Reference of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology, prepared by the Country-Coordinator and BSEC PERMIS and decided to submit the Final Draft for approval by the Committee of Senior Officials and the BSEC Council. The Final Draft of the Terms of Reference is attached as **Annex VIII**.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

26. No issues were raised under this agenda item.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

27. The Participants expressed their high appreciation to the Government of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, the Administration of the Krasnodar Region and the Kuban State University for the warm hospitality extended to them in Kabardinka and the excellent organization of the Meeting.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

28. The date and venue of the next Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology will be decided, after consultations, by the Country-Coordinator and communicated to the BSEC Member States through BSEC PERMIS.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

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