



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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**REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON COOPERATION IN TOURISM**

Yalta, Ukraine, 28 February 2013

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (WGCT) was held in Yalta, Ukraine, on 28 February 2013.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mrs. Valentyna HORDIENKO, Deputy Head of the State Agency of Ukraine for Tourism and Resorts.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Georgia
Republic of Moldova
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC (PABSEC) participated in the Meeting as the BSEC Related Body.
5. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present Report.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed, amended and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex II**.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF TOURISM OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

7. The BSEC PERMIS representative informed on ways and dynamics of the implementation of the Resolution of the 15th BSEC Council (Moscow, 1 November 2006), since the last BSEC Council Meeting (Istanbul, December 2012) with reference to the activities of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism.

8. The participants acknowledged information on the issue provided by the BSEC PERMIS and expressed willingness to proceed actively in securing the necessary dynamics of the implementation of the Council Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations, as well as the Ministerial Declaration.

THE “WAY FORWARD FOR AN ACTION PLAN ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “ECONOMIC AGENDA TOWARDS AN ENHANCED BSEC PARTNERSHIP”

9. The BSEC PERMIS representative recalled that the Working Group at the last meeting started the discussion on the measures to implement Goal 8 of the Priority Areas of the “BSEC Economic Agenda” entitled “Development of Tourism and Protection of Cultural Heritage”. He informed that the Council has approved the Action Plan on the Implementation of the “Economic Agenda” which was based on the results of the “Medium-Term (2013-2015) Orientation Survey” according to which the Working Group should focus its activities on “further strengthening cooperation of the Member States in the field of tourism, including enhancing dialogue on facilitation of visa procedures.” He also explained that the Working Group has to confirm or modify the theme(s) identified through the results of the Medium-Term (2013-2015) Orientation Survey conducted in 2012 (not more than three themes for each Goal) and is also expected to consider, in accordance with its Terms of Reference, the timeline for the finalization and further implementation (measures and deliverables) of the Action Plan during the period 2013-2015.

10. The Working Group took note of information presented by the BSEC PERMIS representative and decided to consider the priorities for its work in conjunction with the Draft Plan of Action of the Group (2013-2014).

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BSEC PUBLIC COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

a) Concrete action to be taken by the Working Group in the implementation of the Strategy and increasing the visibility of its activities

11. The BSEC PERMIS representative recalled that the Working Group at its last meeting started the discussion on the ways and means to implement the BSEC Public Communication Strategy and that it decided that the process of developing key messages regarding its activities and achievements in accordance with Part VI of the Strategy should be based on the results of the “Medium-Term (2013-2015) Orientation Survey”. He informed that the Council adopted the Decision inviting the Member States, the BSEC Working Groups and the BSEC PERMIS to take into consideration the list of proposals which were expressed during the Coordination Meeting of the Communication Officers of the BSEC Member States for the Implementation of the BSEC Public Communication Strategy (BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul, 15 October 2012) in order to increase the visibility of BSEC. The Council also recommended to the BSEC Subsidiary Organs to elaborate their contribution to the

implementation of the Strategy (in line with Part III/4 of the Strategy related to project communication and Part VI of the Strategy regarding the definition of key messages by the subsidiary organs).

12. The Working Group took note of information presented by the BSEC PERMIS representative and decided to elaborate its contribution to the Public Communication Strategy in conjunction with the consideration of the Draft Plan of Action of the Group (2013-2014).

b) Ukrainian presentation of the web-portal «Black Sea News» as an information resource of BSEC

13. The delegation of Ukraine made a presentation on web-portal «BlackSeaNews» (www.blackseanews.net) which is offered to the BSEC Member States as a source on current information on economic, cultural and other areas in the Black Sea Region. It was recalled that this issue was presented as one of the priorities of the Ukrainian Chairmanship-in-Office of the BSEC at the Coordination Meeting on 24 January 2013 in Istanbul.

14. The Working Group took note of the presentation and suggested that this proposal should be discussed during the upcoming Coordination Meeting of the Communication Officers of the BSEC Member States to be held in Istanbul, at the BSEC Headquarters, on 5 March 2013.

CONSIDERATION REGARDING THE DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION OF THE WORKING GROUP (2013-2014)

15. The Participants took note of the readiness expressed by the delegation of Ukraine to become the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (1 January 2013 – 31 December 2014) which will be officially confirmed shortly. As soon as procedure of appointment of new Country-Coordinator is completed, Ukraine will elaborate Draft Plan of Action to be submitted for the consideration of the BSEC Member States.

16. The Working Group took note of the proposal of Ukraine to hold a Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Tourism in Kyiv in the second half of 2013 and suggested that the organization of this event be coordinated with the incoming Armenian Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC.

CULTURAL TOURISM / CULTURAL ROUTES PROJECTS. CONSIDERATION OF THE MULTICULTURAL CHARACTER OF THE BLACK SEA REGION AS A TOURISM RESOURCE

17. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS representative on the outcome of the consideration of the issues of Cultural Tourism / Cultural Routes at the Joint Meeting of the Working Groups on Cooperation in Tourism and on Culture (Istanbul, 9 October 2012).

18. The Working Group, while reiterated the suggestions made at the Joint Meeting, emphasized that combined efforts by the Member States are encouraged to further promote and implement the joint projects.

19. The delegation of Ukraine presented its proposal on “Multicultural Character of the Black Sea Region as a Tourism Resource” which should be developed as a new concept of tourism cooperation among the BSEC Member States.

20. The Working Group decided to continue consideration of this issue at its next Meeting.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE FRAMEWORKS OF BSEC TOURISM COOPERATION

21. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS representative concerning institutional structure frameworks on tourism cooperation which were discussed during the past several years.

22. The Working Group took note of information provided by the delegation of Georgia on the proposal of creation of “A Common BSEC Tourism Marketing Council”. The Working Group invited Georgia to submit a working paper on the issue which will be circulated to the Member States for their comments and observations.

23. The Working Group decided to defer the issue of “A Branding of the Black Sea Region” to its next Meeting.

TOURISM COOPERATION AREAS:

24. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS representative on tourism cooperation areas.

a) Maritime and Nautical Tourism Cooperation

b) Balneology, Wellness and Spa Tourism

c) Creative Tourism

25. The Working Group decided to defer consideration of these issues to its next Meeting.

d) University Environment Integration for Specialist Training in Tourism Sphere of the Black Sea Region

26. The delegation of the Russian Federation informed on the state of affairs with regard to University Environment Integration for Specialist Training in Tourism Sphere of the Black Sea Region and submitted the draft Memorandum on the International Research and Education Consortium of Universities in the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation in Tourism, attached as **Annex III**.

27. The delegation of the Russian Federation informed on the following proposals within the framework of the said agreement and invited interested BSEC Member States to join the project:

- to organize a workshop with the participation of the Universities of the BSEC Member States to develop specific joint educational programs on the Black Sea region (Crimea, Bakhchisaray Region, September 2013);

- to organize an International Student Summer School of the BSEC Member States' Universities (Crimea, Bakhchisaray Region, 2014);

- The Summer School and Workshop projects to be financed by the BSEC Project Development Fund (PDF).

28. The Working Group agreed with the proposal of the Republic of Moldova to include the issue of “Wine Tourism” as a new sub-item e) for the future consideration.

NATIONAL POLICIES AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

29. The participants reiterated the importance of the issue of sustainable tourism development in the BSEC Member States.

30. The Working Group called upon the Member States to regularly exchange statistical data on tourism through the BSEC PERMIS.

PARTICIPATION IN TOURIST EVENTS AND FAIRS HELD IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

31. The Working Group took note of information of the delegation of Ukraine on the 2nd International Black Sea Tourism Forum and 22nd International Tourism Fair “Crimea. Resorts. Tourism” (Yalta, 27 February – 1 March 2013) and of the Memorandum on “Multiculturalism of the Black Sea cities as an effective tourism resource” approved by the participants of the Forum, offering to the BSEC to increase the support of the projects towards co-creation and promotion of common tourist products, based on the use of resources of the Black Sea macro-region’s multiculturalism in the international tourism market.

32. The representative of the Republic of Moldova invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the International Tourism Fair specialized on “Tourism, Leisure, Hotels”, to be held in Chisinau, on 11-14 April 2013.

33. The representative of Georgia invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the Tourism Exhibition “Caucasus Tourism Fair” to be held in Tbilisi, in April 2013, and in the International Tourism and Hotel Equipment Exhibition to be held in Batumi, on 3-5 May 2013.

34. The representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan invited the BSEC Member States to participate in 12th Azerbaijan International Travel and Tourism Fair, to be held in Baky, on 4-6 April 2013.

35. The representative of the Russian Federation invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the International Tourism Fair “INTOURMARKET” to be held in Moscow, on 16-19 March 2013.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF): PROJECT APPLICATIONS IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM

36. The Working Group agreed on the following priority project areas for the PDF in the field of tourism:

- new tourist products and routes;
- research;
- education and training;

- marketing and promotion.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

37. There was no issue raised under this Agenda item.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

38. The Working Group expressed its sincere gratitude to the Government of Ukraine for the excellent organization of the Meeting in Yalta and for the hospitality extended to the participants.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

39. The Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism adopted the present Report and submitted it for consideration to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.