



**Istanbul, 18 October 2006**

**BS/CT/WG/R(2006)2**

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

**Istanbul, 17-18 October 2006**

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism was held in Istanbul, at the BSEC Headquarters, on 17-18 October 2006.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Alexander TOLPAROV, Vice-Consul, Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Istanbul.
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
  - Romania
  - Russian Federation
  - Republic of Serbia
  - Republic of Turkey
  - Ukraine
4. The Meeting was attended by the representative of the State of Israel as Observer.
5. The representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) and the BSEC Business Council also participated in the Meeting.

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

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

## **PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN FOR BSEC TOURISM COOPERATION SINCE ITS ADOPTION IN MARCH 2005**

### **a) General overview**

7. The participants exchanged views on the broader aspects of the Action Plan with emphasis on the development of sustainable tourism, educational and training programs. The Hellenic delegation in its capacity as Country-Coordinator of the WG informed on the European Commission major activities and recent initiatives aimed at establishing quality indicators in compliance with the Guidelines of the EU Agenda 21 Directives for tourism.

8. The Hellenic delegation informed of the Second International tourism Forum “Competitiveness through the Sustainable Tourism – Opportunities and Challenges for the Mediterranean Tourist Destinations” to be held in Rhodes on 10-12 November 2006.

### **b) Ongoing activities related to the establishment of the Standing Secretariat on Cooperation in Tourism in Greece**

9. The Country-Coordinator informed about the recent developments concerning the issue and took commitment to provide for the follow up on the matter and inform the Member States on the progress through PERMIS.

### **c) Maritime tourism and cooperation among Member States**

10. The Country-Coordinator proposed to deliberate on the issue at the next Meeting of the WG with particular emphasis on the existing legislation regulating the issues of construction and operation of tourist ports. It also offered to provide the Member States with the respective legislative documentation on the issue.

11. The Working Group invited other Member States to present information on their respective legislation at the next Meeting.

### **d) “Argo” ship reconstruction**

12. The Country-Coordinator informed on the recent launching of the “Argo” ship in September 2006. It also stated that, according to the details of the project, the ship may reach Istanbul right before the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of BSEC.

## **REVIEW AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON NATIONAL POLICIES AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN BSEC COUNTRIES**

13. The Member States informed on their national policies, best practices and recent developments in the field of sustainable tourism.

14. It was decided to further elaborate on the ways and means of mutually beneficial interaction aimed at enhancing regional cooperation in this field. Concrete proposals on the issue inter alia regarding the exchange of information on legislation, quality standards, training programs, international conferences and fairs will be communicated through PERMIS before the next Meeting.

15. The delegation of Azerbaijan informed about its intention to organize on 18-20 April 2007 in Baky the “Azerbaijan International Tourism Fair”. The program of the event will be communicated through PERMIS in due course.

**PRESENTATION AND CONSIDERATION OF IDEAS AND PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM AMONG BSEC MEMBER STATES; FOLLOW-UP OF ELABORATION OF THE PROPOSALS OF NATIONAL DELEGATIONS AS AGREED AT THE MEETING OF WG ON COOPERATION IN TOURISM IN BUCHAREST IN APRIL 2006**

16. The Member States discussed the ideas and projects presented at the previous meetings and expressed their readiness to define priorities for future work. It was underlined that already existing projects should be implemented in due course.

17. The participants stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation with other international organizations and promoting BSEC tourist potential on international markets. In this regard the Ukrainian delegation proposed to explore the possibilities of developing common tourist logo for the whole BSEC region.

18. The delegation of Georgia proposed the creation of the Common Marketing Council within BSEC, which could work to promote the Black Sea as an entire tourist destination, provided that there is no overlapping with the activities of the to-be-established in Greece Standing Secretariat on Cooperation in Tourism. The Georgian Department of Tourism and Resorts invited the representatives of tourism authorities of BSEC Member States to a Meeting in Batumi, Georgia, in September 2007 aimed to discuss the organizational and legal aspects of this proposal.

19. The WG agreed to further develop cooperation between government authorities and private sector thus attracting the attention of national tour operators to possibilities of cooperation within BSEC framework. PERMIS was instructed to monitor these activities.

20. The participants agreed on the need to create on the BSEC website links to the official websites of the national tourism authorities with the aim to eventually elaborate a common e-presentation on the tourism potential of the BSEC region.

21. The Working Group evaluated the project application “Agrotourism Certification System in the BSEC Area” (acronym “ACES”) submitted by institutions from Greece (Lead Partner), Georgia, Romania and Turkey, and decided to forward it to the Committee of Senior Officials for endorsement.

**ACTIVITIES RELATIVE TO THE ESTABLISHING OF CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL AUTHORITIES OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRIES AND PROFESSIONAL AGENCIES**

22. The participants agreed on the need to provide active engagement of private organizations working in the field of tourism in the Black Sea region and to secure their participation in the meetings of the WG.

**ACTIVITIES OF TOURISM OFFICES OF BSEC MEMBER STATES IN TURKEY (PRESENTATION)**

23. Several Member States informed on the activities of their tourism offices in Turkey.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

24. The Member States fully supported the request of the Hellenic Republic to prolong its mandate as Country-Coordinator of the WG for another two-year term as of 1 November 2006.

25. The Member States agreed that the Country-Coordinator prepares a two-year Action Plan to be eventually adopted at the next Meeting. They suggested it should provide for the follow-up of the current one and include concrete proposals for the future activities and recommended to concentrate on practical issues of cooperation.

26. The Working Group took note of the information provided by PERMIS regarding the conference entitled “Black Sea Tourism Infrastructure – Spa and Maritime Tourism”, held in Gelendjik, Russia, on 14-16 September 2006. The representative of Russia informed the participants on the intention of the organizers to hold the above mentioned conference regularly once a year.

27. The Working Group also took note of the information provided by PERMIS regarding the preparatory expert meeting entitled “Kyiv Initiative: Cultural Tourism and Vine Routes Initiative” to be held in Thessaloniki, Greece, on 1-5 November 2006, under the auspices of the Council of Europe. The Hellenic delegation expressed its support to the possible participation of PERMIS in this Meeting.

28. The Romanian delegation proposed to commemorate the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of BSEC by issuing, in cooperation with other Member States, of a special brochure on regional tourism.

29. The WG agreed that Romania in cooperation with Country-Coordinator will prepare and circulate to the Member States by the end of November 2006 a questionnaire in order to define the layout, content and financial implications of the brochure. The Member States agreed to communicate the relevant information by the end of December 2006.

30. The delegation of Serbia expressed its readiness to host the next Meeting of the WG in Belgrade, in April 2007. The date and venue will be communicated to the Member States through

PERMIS in due course. It also informed that the International Tourism Fair will be held in Belgrade on 26-29 April 2007.

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING**

31. The Working Group adopted the present Report and submitted it for consideration to the Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials to be held in Moscow, on 30-31 October 2006.

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