



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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REPORT OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUPS ON TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ON CUSTOMS MATTERS

(BSEC Headquarters, 26 September 2014)

1. The Joint Meeting of the BSEC Working Groups (WGs) on Trade and Economic Development and on Customs Matters was held at the BSEC Headquarters, on 26 September 2014.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Ms. Kalyto CHRISTODOULOU, Customs Officer, Unit B Customs Affairs, International Financial Relations Directorate, General Secretariat of Public Revenue, Ministry of Finance of the Hellenic Republic.
3. The following Member States of BSEC attended the Meeting:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The following BSEC Sectoral Dialogue Partner attended the Meeting:

Union of Road Transport Associations in the BSEC Region (BSEC-URTA).
5. The following Guest attended the Meeting:

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I**.

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

CONCEPT PAPER ON TRADE FACILITATION PRESENTED BY THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

7. The participants exchanged views on Trade Facilitation issues in the BSEC Region and on the Concept Paper on Trade Facilitation presented by the Republic of Turkey, which was on the Agenda of the Working Group on Trade and Economic Development since 2012.

8. The Republic of Turkey, as a proponent of the proposal, is requested to revise, in collaboration with experts from UNECE, the Concept Paper on Trade Facilitation in the format of a draft regional strategy, in light of the discussions that took place during the Joint UNECE-BSEC Regional Seminar held at the BSEC Headquarters on 25 September 2014 and during the present Joint Meeting, and submit it to the BSEC PERMIS by 1 December 2014.

9. The Member States are invited to send their comments and views on the revised Concept Paper until 15 February 2015, with the view of its finalization at the next Joint Meeting of the Working Groups on Trade and Economic Development and on Customs Matters.

DISCUSSION OF FURTHER COLLABORATION AMONG BSEC MEMBER STATES ON TRADE FACILITATION IN THE BSEC REGION:

- i) Establishment of Regional Committee on Trade Facilitation;**
- ii) Elaboration of Regional Strategy on Trade Facilitation and Action Plan for its Implementation;**
- iii) Financial issues.**

10. The representative of Ukraine made a statement on trade facilitation issues the content of which is attached as **Annex III**.

11. The relevant presentation by the representative of the UNECE Secretariat on “The Role of Trade Facilitation in Economic Development. UNECE Instruments. WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement” is also attached as **Annex IV**.

12. The participants agreed that the issues of i) Establishing a Regional Committee on Trade Facilitation and ii) Elaborating a Regional Strategy on Trade Facilitation will be dealt with by the aforementioned revised Concept Paper. After the Draft Regional Strategy is elaborated and approved international financial institutions and other potential donors should be approached.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON A DRAFT ACTION PLAN OF THE WORKING GROUP ON CUSTOMS MATTERS

13. The participants took note of the Draft Action Plan of the Working Group on Customs Matters, presented by the Republic of Azerbaijan, as a Country-Coordinator of the Working Group, to be discussed and adopted at its next meeting. The Member States were invited to send their comments and proposals regarding the content of the Action Plan to the BSEC PERMIS not later than 20th October 2014.

DISCUSSIONS ON THE POSSIBLE TOPICS OF A MEETING OF WORKING GROUP ON CUSTOMS MATTERS AND A MEETING OF THE HEADS OF CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES – NOVEMBER 2014, BAKU (PROPOSAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN)

14. The participants exchanged views on this issue and agreed that the relevant suggestions and proposals by the interested Member States, BSEC Related Bodies, Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners be sent to the BSEC PERMIS well ahead of the meetings.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15. The participants of the Meeting expressed their common view that the active participation of the BSEC Related Bodies would be appreciated, in particular in the light of future endeavours.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

16. The Joint Meeting adopted the present Report for its submission to the Committee of Senior Officials and the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs for their consideration.
