



JOINT DECLARATION
**On the Connection of the Black Sea Transport Network with the Trans-European
Transport Network within the framework of the Euro-Asian Transport Links**
(Thessaloniki, 28 January 2005)

The Participants at the Meeting of the Ministers of Transport of the BSEC Member States held in Thessaloniki on 28 January 2005

Affirming their intention to work closely towards the development of an integrated and interoperable transport system among the countries of the Black Sea and Caspian Sea region;

Bearing in mind that BSEC region has a major economic significance in connecting and integrating European and Asian transport systems

Taking into account the changes that have occurred in European and Asian transport systems during the past years, in particular the consequences of the enlargement of the European Union;

Noting that these changes have accentuated the need for an integrated and coordinated approach for the development of transport systems as well as a review of the interconnections between the Trans - European transport network and the networks of the neighboring countries;

Bearing in mind the priority axes, corridors and projects identified by relevant international organizations including UNECE, UNESCAP as well as those adopted by the relevant EU Decision on the new Community Guidelines for the Trans - European Transport Network (TEN-T);

Conscious of the fact that the development of technically and administratively interoperable transport connections between the countries of the Black Sea Region and the EU is an issue of utmost importance for economic growth, facilitation of trade and connecting people;

Acknowledging the significance of activities implemented by the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Black Sea Pan-European Transport Area, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia (UNESCAP), European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), Organization for Railways Cooperation (OSZhD), Intergovernmental Commission TRACECA (TRACECA IGC), Coordination Transport Meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CTM CIS), and other regional cooperation initiatives involved in the development of the transport network of the Black Sea and Caspian Sea Region and its integration into the European and Asian transport networks.

Desiring to promote the establishment of an integrated, interoperable and well functioning major transport axes between the Black Sea Infrastructure Transport Network and the TEN-T priority axes and projects as well as to extend those towards Asia; Euro-Asian Transport system

Aiming at contributing to the work of the High Level Group for the extension of the major Trans - European axes to the neighboring countries and regions;

AGREE:

- That the development of transport axes connecting the Trans - European Transport Network with the Black Sea infrastructure transport network should:

- a. be based on the Euro-Asian transport corridors and on the major routes adopted in the framework of the UNECE-UNESCAP Euro-Asian Transport Links Project as well as other international agreements and initiatives;
- b. take into consideration the technical standards, recommendations and norms approved by international organizations and the EU, including the relevant UNECE AGR, AGC, AGTC, TEM and TER and UNESCAP AH and TAR infrastructure standards, technical parameters and recommendations
- c. incorporate the new concept of Motorways of the Sea
- d. include the development of inland waterways and maritime transport on the routes connecting Asia and Europe through the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea and the Mediterranean
- e. make transport flows more efficient especially through intermodality, interoperability and other technical or administrative measures
- f. aim at facilitating all border crossing procedures and transport operations as well as reducing other non-technical barriers
- g. strengthen regional cooperation between the BSEC countries and facilitate exchanges between the BSEC countries and Europe and Asia in general
- h. create synergies for practical realization of the strategic targets of BSEC in the transport sector, as identified in the BSEC Economic Agenda for the Future
- i. involve, to the fullest possible extent cooperation with the private sector and its representative organizations and all other interested stakeholders as well as promote all aspects of public-private partnership

- That the selection of projects on the major transport axes should:

- a. apply appropriate criteria and methodology
- b. take into account those projects which have been evaluated and prioritized in the context of the UNECE TEM and TER Master Plans as well as the results of the UNECE-UNESCAP Euro-Asian Transport Links Project;

- To encourage the High Level Group, established by Directorate General of Transport and Energy of the European Commission, to develop a focused dialogue and close collaboration with the governments, international organizations, financial institutions and others that can contribute to the identification and realization of these projects.

Romania is the Country -Coordinator to the WG on Transport for the term of office May 2005 - April 2007.