



## **DECLARATION OF THE 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY SUMMIT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

**(Istanbul, 22 May 2017)**

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), met in Istanbul on 22 May 2017 to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of BSEC,

Reaffirming our adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, the Paris Charter for a New Europe, as well as the generally recognized principles and rules of international law,

Confirming our commitment to the principles and objectives of BSEC, as well as to the previous Summit Declarations,

Underlining our desire to turn the Black Sea region into a zone of peace, stability and prosperity,

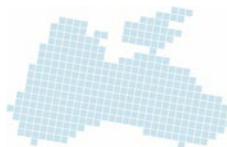
Acknowledging that, during the past 25 years BSEC has proven itself as a mature, inclusive and institutionalized organization which contributes to the promotion of regional cooperation and economic development,

Being aware of the fact that, BSEC needs to be more responsive to the economic challenges of the evolving regional and international environment of today's globalized world,

Expressing our determination to increase BSEC's importance on the regional and global scale for economic cooperation,

Do hereby declare as follows:

1. We note that the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summit of BSEC serves as a milestone of our firm common desire to reinvigorate the quarter-century of cooperation among





the BSEC Member States and provides the opportunity to exchange views at the highest level on further developing our cooperation to the benefit and prosperity of our peoples over the next decades.

2. We underscore that, during the 25 years of its existence BSEC has contributed to developing economic relations among its Member States with the aim to enhance peace, stability, dialogue and mutual understanding in the Black Sea region.

3. We reaffirm our resolve to act in a spirit of friendship and good neighborliness and enhance mutual respect and confidence, dialogue and cooperation among the Member States.

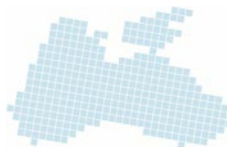
4. We share the common view that, in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of BSEC and to achieve a stronger future for the Organization, the Member States should continue and finalize in the nearest future the reform process on the basis of consensus and strive for an inclusive, balanced and professional representation in the BSEC PERMIS.

5. We stress that the economic cooperation among the BSEC Member States shall be conducted in accordance with international law.

6. We appreciate that the BSEC Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership which was endorsed at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summit of BSEC in 2012, has constituted a concrete framework for enhancing our cooperation.

7. We support greater involvement of the private sector in BSEC cooperation and enhanced synergy between the public and the private sectors to improve the business environment in the region for our entrepreneurs. Towards this goal, we welcome the efforts for revitalizing the BSEC Business Council which is the competent Related Body of our Organization.

8. At the same time, we appreciate the valuable roles and contributions of the other BSEC Related Bodies, namely the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC (PABSEC), the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) as well as the





International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) in promoting regional cooperation and encourage them to increase mutual coordination and complementarity for the development of the region.

9. We share a common vision to develop our cooperation with a more project and result-oriented approach in the fields of agriculture and agro-industry, banking and finance, combating organized crime, customs matters, education, emergency assistance, energy, environmental protection, healthcare and pharmaceuticals, information and communication technologies, institutional renewal and good governance, science and technology, SMEs, tourism, culture, trade and economic development and transport.

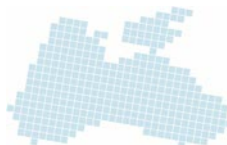
10. In this regard, we emphasize the importance of streamlining the activities of the BSEC Working Groups which are the driving forces of our Organization, including by enhancing the participation of experts.

11. Noting that shipping is indispensable for trade, economic cooperation and tourism in the Black Sea region, we encourage efforts to provide additional, safe and secure maritime transport options to the existing and future flows between the BSEC Member States, Europe and Asia, and to facilitate participation of national economies of BSEC Member States in the global economy.

We attach high importance to the safety and security of navigation in the Black Sea region in accordance with relevant international rules and regulations.

12. We believe that, effective implementation of concrete joint transport infrastructure projects such as the Black Sea Ring Highway and the Motorways of the Sea in the BSEC Region, will contribute to increasing intra-BSEC trade, tourism and transport investments, as well as to the success of BSEC.

13. We recognize that well-developed information and communications network infrastructures, such as the Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway, act as one of the main technological enablers of digital opportunities.





14. We welcome the steps aimed at strengthening the project-oriented dimension of BSEC and we recognize the need to further develop BSEC project capacity through Project Development Fund, Project Management Unit and Project Promotion Facility.

15. We note that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations, including the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provides a universal and ambitious framework for global development efforts.

We recall that the interest of BSEC in contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has already been recognized in the UN General Assembly Resolution No: 71/18, dated 21 November 2016, entitled “*Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization*”.

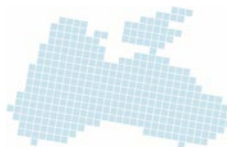
Since this issue will be an important agenda item during the next decade, we share a common goal to make BSEC an important partner in achieving the SDGs at the regional scale.

16. We are committed to promoting the engagement in the economy of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), family farmers, women, youth, persons with disabilities, refugees and internally displaced persons in order to contribute to unleashing the untapped potential in the region which is vital for sustainable economic development in all BSEC Member States.

17. We appreciate the important role of young entrepreneurs as one of the main drivers of creativity and innovation in our economies.

18. We welcome the Joint Declarations adopted at the Fourth Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Economy of the BSEC Member States, held on 11 May 2017 and at the Second Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of the BSEC Member States, held on 17 May 2017, in Istanbul.

19. We note that the magnitude of the current migration and refugee crisis as defined by UN has been unprecedented since the Second World War. We are





committed to display a shared sense of solidarity and cooperation in addressing the needs and problems of internally displaced persons, migrants and refugees in the BSEC region and beyond. We stress the urgent need to address the root causes of these large flows of people.

20. We stand against all forms and manifestations of terrorism whatever its source, motivation or purpose. We will continue to do our part in the international solidarity and fight against terrorism.

21. We reiterate our willingness to develop and further enhance fruitful cooperation with other international and regional organizations, institutions and initiatives on the basis of mutual interest and complementarity.

22. We attach importance to enhancing BSEC-EU interaction and reaffirm our commitment to foster a pragmatic, project-oriented and mutually beneficial cooperation.

23. We underline the valuable contributions of the BSEC Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners to the activities of BSEC and reaffirm our willingness to continue exploring new concrete areas of collaboration with them.

24. Noting that the relocation of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat to its new premises coincides with the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of BSEC, we express our gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey for providing the BSEC Secretariat with a new modern working environment, in its capacity as the Host Country of the BSEC Headquarters.

25. We express our appreciation to the Government and the people of the Republic of Turkey for the warm hospitality and successful organization of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summit of BSEC in Istanbul, the birthplace of our Organization.

