



**PRESS RELEASE ON
THE 10th WORLD CONGRESS ON HIGH SPEED RAIL AND TRADE EXHIBITION**

(Ankara, 8-11 May 2018)

The “10th World Congress on High Speed Rail and Trade Exhibition”, organized by the *International Union of Railways* (UIC) and the *Turkish State Railways* (TCDD), was held in Ankara on 8-11 May 2018.

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, was invited to act in this prestigious congress as the Co-Moderator of one of the three high-level Round Tables, under the title: “*How Can High Speed Rail (Re)shape Local and Regional Development?*”

Distinguished participants from various countries, presented their concrete and comprehensive views on the evolution of *High Speed Rail* (HSR), its impact on the economy and on society in general.

The common denominator from the interventions of all participants was that the development of HSR, if well-researched and well-prepared, could offer many advantages to the economy of a state, in many and diverse sectors, like speed of transport, trade, industry, tourism, science and technology, etc.

Ambassador Christides underlined, among other, that a fast, safe and reliable rail connection between cities, even in different countries, is of paramount importance if we wish to de-congest our routes and highways from trucks and private cars. He added that the Republic of Turkey is a bright example for the advantages gained by the introduction and development of HSR. He expressed his hope that, for the faster promotion of regional integration and cooperation, other BSEC Member States will follow Turkey’s example because the region covered by the territories of the BSEC Member States straddles three continents (Europe-Asia-Africa) and is already a very important transport and energy hub.

Ambassador Chirstides further stated tha the HSR changes positively the **pace** and, to a certain extent, also the **essense** of our lives: it attracts investments, it creates employment, it facilitates trade and promotes industry, it enhances tourism flows, it supports science and technology, etc. Consequently, HSR does re-shape and shape local and regional development, in fact, it helps to the establishment of a completely new development ecosystem.