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PRESS RELEASE ON
THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BSEC PERMIS SECRETARY GENERAL
TO THE TBILISI SILK ROAD FORUM

BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES participated in the 1st “Tbilisi Silk Road Forum”, which took place on 15-16 October 2015, in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Envoys, academics and businessmen from over 32 countries and representatives from a score of international financial and other institutions had the chance to discuss and exchange views on the progress achieved on the project of establishing the modern-day version of the “Silk Road”, connecting East to West, and the remaining work to be tackled, both in terms of infrastructure as well as awareness-raising among citizens in countries wishing to be involved in the project.

During the Forum, the Prime Minister of Georgia H.E. Mr. Irakli GARIBASHVILI underscored the pivotal role that his country is ready to play towards the realization of this new transport linkage between Europe and Asia. A Joint Declaration for the establishment of an annual “Tbilisi Silk Road Forum” was made public.

BSEC PERMIS Secretary General had the opportunity to intervene during the Panel discussions, in order to familiarize participants with the substantial ground that some of the BSEC Working Groups have already covered on issues directly connected to the central themes of the Forum – namely, transport, trade, energy, connectivity – thus, presenting BSEC as the natural and logical partner when implementing projects that are deemed necessary for the establishment of the “Silk Road” linkage.

Secretary General CHRISTIDES underlined that the wider Black Sea region covered by the BSEC Member States straddles the two continents, Asia and Europe, and that therefore, whatever route of the “Silk Road” one may choose, i.e. the Northern, Central or Southern Route, it will traverse “BSEC territory”. Secretary General CHRISTIDES highlighted that this means that infrastructure projects promoted by BSEC for the benefit of its Member States, such as the “Black Sea Ring Highway”, the “Motorways of the Sea”, the promotion of trans-modal transports, the harmonization of customs matters, trans-border land transport permits, among others, are all helping in setting up the necessary conditions called-for by the promoters of the “Silk Road” concept.