



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

PRESS RELEASE ON THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BSEC PERMIS SECRETARY GENERAL AT THE “4TH WORLD FORUM ON INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE” (Baku, 5-6 May 2017)

1. Upon the invitation of the organizers, the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES participated at the “4th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue” which took place in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, on 4-6 May, 2017. In the framework of the above event the PERMIS Secretary General had the opportunity to participate in the second session of the “1st High Level meeting of the Heads of International Organizations”, under the title “Building Synergies for Intercultural Dialogue between Economic, Financial Institutions and Development Agencies towards Agenda 2030: Challenges and Opportunities”.

In his statement Ambassador CHRISTIDES informed participants on the activity of the BSEC Organization in promoting a culture of peace, understanding and respect among all people, irrespective of color, race or creed. He pointed out the main priorities of cooperation in the field of Culture and Tourism and mentioned some of the ongoing projects promoted by the Organization, which undoubtedly helped establish a pattern of dialogue and understanding among its Member States and beyond.

Ambassador CHRISTIDES followed also the “World Forum Ministerial Meeting” organized by UNESCO, UNWTO and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

2. On the sidelines of the event the SG of PERMIS had the opportunity to meet and discuss issues of relevance for BSEC with a number of high level participants. Among them, the most important were:

a) The UNWTO Secretary General H.E. Mr. Taleb RIFAI, with whom he reviewed all chapters of the multifaceted synergy between the two Organizations, most importantly of the jointly planned International Conference on Cruise Tourism in the Black Sea, to be held in Istanbul in November 2017.

b) The UNESCO Secretary General H.E. Mrs. Irina BOKOVA, with whom he exchanged views on how to move the procedure for signing a comprehensive MoU on the main structure of possible cooperation between BSEC and UNESCO.

c) The Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey H.E. Mr. Nabi AVCI, during a trilateral meeting with the presence of the UNWTO Secretary General H.E. Mr. Taleb RIFAI. Ambassador CHRISTIDES informed Minister Mr. AVCI in detail on the above project of the International Conference on Cruise Tourism and, together with Mr. RIFAI, invited the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey to participate actively in the preparatory works for the event. Minister AVCI responded positively, assuring about Turkey’s support and its involvement in the project.

Secretary General CHRISTIDES also informed H.E. Mr. AVCI on two other anniversary events promoted by the BSEC PERMIS, namely “the 25th BSEC Anniversary Motorcycle Rally” through Turkey and Georgia (8-23 July 2017), as well as on the 4-Country Tour (Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania) with classic cars, which is planned to take place – from 28 August to 5 September 2017.

d) The Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E. Dr. Nazim SAMADOV, with whom he exchanged views on how to further invigorate cooperation in the field of Culture and Tourism among BSEC Member States. Ambassador CHRISTIDES informed his interlocutor on the latest activities concerning the above sectors, while the latter asked to be, if possible, directly informed on similar developments.