



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

PRESS RELEASE ON THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BSEC PERMIS SECRETARY GENERAL AT THE “VARNA FORUM”

(Varna, 13 May 2017)

The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, addressed as a keynote speaker the second edition of the “Varna Forum – Thinking Together” conference, titled “The Black Sea: Confrontation or Cooperation?”, which was held in Varna, on Saturday, 13 May 2017.

Participants offered proposals for the most effective enhancement of regional cooperation and had the opportunity to exchange views on the prevailing trends of the emerging new global framework, the effective promotion of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the role and influence of the European Union and international initiatives affecting the region, such as the “One Belt - One Road” initiative.

In this context, a particular emphasis was given to the discussion on the merits and the overall prospects for the potential elaboration, by the European Union, of a Macro-Regional Strategy focusing on the Black Sea region, based on the previous examples and accumulated experience of the Baltic Sea, the Danube, the Adriatic and Ionian and the Alpine Regions.

In his intervention, Ambassador CHRISTIDES noted the role of the BSEC Organization as a consistent and effective vehicle of interaction in many sectors for the past 25 years, helping to promote a valuable culture of dialogue among its Member States, as well as the establishment of many networks of sectorial cooperation. The Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS underlined that the BSEC Organization will continue to provide its own specific contribution to regional cooperation in the wider Black Sea region and would be ready to examine all future initiatives of the European Union, which, if well and meticulously prepared, could provide additional opportunities for BSEC-EU interaction, in the framework of the general positive cooperation between the two organizations.