



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

PRESS RELEASE ON THE 36th MEETING OF THE BSEC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Istanbul, 29 June 2017)

The 36th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) was held in Istanbul, on 29 June 2017. H.E. Mr. Ahmet YILDIZ, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey chaired the meeting.

In addition to Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the BSEC Member States, the representatives of the BSEC Related Bodies, Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners also participated in the Council Meeting.

The Ministers referred to the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Organization in 2017, expressed their solid commitment to the aims and objectives of the Organization and made statements on issues regarding the latest developments in the region and the activities of their respective countries' within BSEC. They also highlighted the importance of further enhancing regional economic cooperation in the wider Black Sea area and agreed on the need to proceed and finalize the reforming process of the functioning of BSEC on the basis of consensus, with the view to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization. The Ministers reiterated their wish to see BSEC consolidate its project management capacity and increase its human and financial resources and expressed their continued support for the promotion of the BSEC flagship transport projects, such as the "Black Sea Ring Highway" and the "Motorways of the Sea".

The Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat H.E. Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES expressed his thankfulness for the political commitment of the Member States to the objectives of the Organization and presented his Progress Report to the Council, referring to the operations and activities of the Secretariat during the first semester of 2017.

At the closing session, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs adopted Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations on various issues, including, financial matters; the renewal of Observer status of the Republic of Belarus, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Italian Republic, the Republic of Tunisia and the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, the renewal of the Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status of the Black Sea Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum; the BSEC-EU interaction; the state of cooperation among the Member States; the appointment of Country-Coordinators to some of BSEC Working Groups; the activities of BSEC and its Related Bodies; as well as appointments to several positions at the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization.

At the conclusion of the meeting, a ceremony took place whereby the Republic of Turkey handed over the Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC to Ukraine. Ukraine assumed the Chairmanship for a period of six months, from 1st July to 31 December 2017.

On the sidelines of the Council Meeting, Ministers held important bilateral talks which influence positively the overall atmosphere in the wider Black Sea region and favor the enhancement of more effective and productive cooperation among the BSEC Member States. In this regard, BSEC confirmed its added value as an already functioning vehicle for understanding, dialogue and cooperation.