



## ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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### PRESS RELEASE ON THE 2<sup>nd</sup> BALKANS AND BLACK SEA COOPERATION FORUM (Athens, 30 May - 1 June 2018)

The 2<sup>nd</sup> “*Balkans and Black Sea Cooperation Forum*” was held in Athens on 30 May - 1 June 2018. The Forum is an independent, non-governmental, non-partisan economic platform, powered by private and public institutions and supported by a number of international organizations, aiming at identifying, strengthening and promoting economic relations, business opportunities, cross-border cooperation and sustainable development across the Balkans, the Black Sea region and beyond.

During this year’s event more than 50 distinguished speakers and high-level representatives from the public, business and the diplomatic world came together and exchanged views, focusing mainly on cross-border cooperation, capacity building and best practices’ transfer.

The BSEC PERMIS was represented by its Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, who participated in the last day’s Session, under the title: “*Maritime, Transports, Infrastructures: Rail, Road, Rivers Connectivity*”.

Ambassador CHRISTIDES underlined in his intervention that the BSEC Organization has achieved a lot during its 26-years of activity in what concerns the facilitation of Transports and Trade in the region and beyond; yet, he added, there is still a lot to be done, if the overall Transports situation in the geostrategic region of the Black Sea is to reach the levels of other developed regions in the world.

He stressed that it is time to concentrate more on deeds than on words, even more so, because the basic legal framework and the necessary mechanisms already exist – the BSEC Organization being one of the latter.