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ForMin Baconschi: Romania wishes livelier ties between BSEC and EU

Revitalising the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) organisation and establishing livelier ties between BSEC and the European Union are the main priorities of Romania for the time it holds the BSEC chairmanship-in-office, January 1 – June 30, 2011 – Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Baconschi told on Friday.

‘It is clear that Romania wants livelier ties between the BSEC and the EU, and it is not because the EU could finance projects via the BSEC, but because that would increase the BSEC visibility and relevance. It depends on the political will of the member states whether or not they want the BSEC to be a genuine platform for regional cooperation and development, an instrument that will close the economic deficit between the member states, particularly now that some BSEC countries are also EU member, candidate or potential candidate states,’ said Baconschi.

He added that the Black Sea Bank for Commerce and Development, the BSEC financial instrument, needs better capitalisation. Baconschi mentioned that Romania will try, for the time it holds the chairmanship-in-office, to draw a balance sheet and come up with solutions to increase the relevance of this organisation, along with a raft of instruments to revitalise the BSEC. Baconschi headed Romania’s delegation at the 23rd meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers held on Friday in Thessalonica.

At the meeting, Romania took over the BSEC chairmanship-in-office for January 1 – June 31, 2011. ‘In taking over the chairmanship from Greece, we underscored our wish to recover the organisation, given the incoming 20th anniversary of the BSEC. I believe we should pour more political will and money into the BSEC budget so that the BSEC relevance may further grow in the next decade.

This is probably the best regional cooperation instrument for the Black Sea area and it could be coupled with other initiatives promoted by the EU in the same region – be it the Black Sea Synergy or the Eastern Partnership,’ said Baconschi.

He added that some relevant results came out from the ministerial meeting in Thessalonica, for instance a common ministerial declaration on the fight against climate change in the enlarged Black Sea region and a memorandum of understanding between the BSEC and the US Government concerning cooperation in science and technology, which will allow BSEC project funding base to be enlarged.