

# Black Sea NEWS

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FROM THE BSEC PERMANENT  
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT (PERMIS)

## MEETING OF BSEC ENERGY MINISTERS HELD

The Meeting of the Ministers of Energy of the BSEC Member States was held in Sofia on 28 January 2010. The main objective of the meeting was to identify the steps to be taken towards the gradual establishment of an integrated Black Sea energy market.

During the meeting which was chaired by H.E. Mr. Traycho TRAYKOV, Minister of Economy, Energy and Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria, the BSEC Plan of Action in Energy for the period 2010-2011 and the elaboration of a BSEC Strategy on Energy until 2020 were discussed. Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Traian CHEBELEU represented the BSEC PERMIS at the meeting.

The participating delegations shared their national priorities regarding energy market development. An integrated Black Sea energy market approach and further harmonization of regulatory and legal rules necessary for the operation of the gas and electricity markets were also among the issues discussed.

At the conclusion of the meeting, a joint declaration was adopted. The declaration focused on conducting a study on the possibility of approximating the national legislations of the BSEC Member States in the energy sector; identifying measures for the creation of a regulatory framework in establishing an integrated energy market; enhancing BSEC's cooperation with the EU and other relevant international institutions for developing energy infrastructure in the region; and supporting projects for sustainable energy development and activities for improving energy security in the region.

## MINISTERS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CONVENE IN SOFIA

The Ministers responsible for Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States met in Sofia on 9 April 2010.

During the meeting which was chaired by Ms. Petya EFTIMOVA, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Ministers assessed the cooperation in the fields of scientific research and technological development conducted in line with the First BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology, covering the 2005-2009 period. Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Aliosha NEDELICHEV represented the BSEC PERMIS at the meeting.

To chart the way forward, the Ministers adopted the Second BSEC Action Plan for the 2010-2014 period. The new Action Plan, in addition to reconfirming broader policy orientations, covers a number of more specific initiatives and tools such as exploring the possibility of preparing Memoranda of Understanding to promote cooperation in specific fields of S&T, developing sectoral partnerships, making optimal use of the BSEC Project Development Fund, maximizing synergies among multilateral horizontal projects, promoting bilateral cooperation programmes, organizing thematic workshops and brokerage events and improving science communication.

At the conclusion of the meeting, a joint Declaration on cooperation in science and technology was adopted. In the adopted policy document, the Ministers declared their commitment to initiate joint actions directed toward better utilization of existing resources through improved access to knowledge, training activities and research programmes, enhanced transnational mobility of scientists and regular exchange of information and publications, networking, fellowships and joint scientific events.

The Ministers also agreed to seek innovative ways for combining allocated public expenditure on research and development with private investment for funding projects involving transnational cooperation, as well as to promote dialogue among stakeholders in the science and technology community for converting scientific discoveries into innovative, commercially viable products and processes. The Ministers also expressed their commitment to develop joint research and training programmes among the scientific institutions and universities of the BSEC Member States.

For follow-up, the Ministers agreed to convene a mid-term meeting to review progress in the implementation of the approved Second Action Plan and to plan the way forward.

As is known, science and technology is one of the priority areas of cooperation for BSEC. Promoting cooperation among academic communities, scholars and scientists of the Member States is a constitutional duty vested upon BSEC by its Charter. Since its establishment in 1994, the BSEC Working Group on Science and Technology has held 17 meetings, while 3 meetings were convened at the level of the BSEC Ministers responsible for Science and Technology. Since 2003, 10 projects within the BSEC Project Development Fund have been endorsed by the Working Group on Science and Technology and 6 have been implemented.



Family photo at the Meeting of the BSEC Ministers of Science and Technology, held in Sofia on 9 April 2010.



Time flies faster than the sea waves. More than five months already have flowed since Bulgaria took the Chairmanship of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization.

Having been born in Varna, on the Black Sea coast, and having worked with other prestigious organizations, such as the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, I was extremely honored to be appointed to the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul as Special Representative of the Bulgarian Chairmanship. I took the challenge with commitment and ambition. Our calendar of events is very rich and intensive. We are trying to mobilize the attention, the resources and the efforts of the Member States in order to promote the effectiveness, to raise the visibility and make BSEC stronger. The experience of these months showed that there is a vast potential to increase the capability of the organization to produce results and realize projects.

We were working very hard to develop one of the priorities of the Bulgarian Chairmanship to increase the BSEC-EU interaction. Many events were held in this respect like the meeting of the BSEC Troika in open format with the COEST working party of the European Commission in December 2009 and the meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group for BSEC-EU Interaction held in February 2010 in Athens.

The launching of the Black Sea Synergy Partnership in the field of Environment in March in Brussels is a positive development which starts a process of stronger involvement of the European Union in the cooperation in the wider Black Sea Area and enhances the image of BSEC as a real partner to the EU as the most institutionalized and representative international organization in the region. More partnerships in the areas of Transport and Energy will follow. Yes, there are voices demanding more active EU involvement and commitment to the region. However, BSEC is also expected to further improve its effectiveness by producing more results and implementing bigger and vaster projects.

Concerning the next priority of our Chairmanship a lot of efforts were dedicated to improve the efficiency of the organization. A progress is on the way to fully implement the Council resolution concerning the move towards a two-per-year Chairmanship sequence and other related organizational aspects.

A one-year BSEC PERMIT pilot project by seven BSEC Member States is being implemented - the first case within the framework of the Fast Track Cooperation.

The Third "Japan-Black Sea Area Dialogue", held in Tokyo in January 2010, showed the great interest from all over the world to the latest developments and the growing strategic importance of the Black Sea region. The applications for granting or renewal of their Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status by Japan and six other countries and international organizations are a clear proof of the increased interest and desire for closer cooperation in the Black Sea area. Furthermore we welcome and encourage the interest shown recently by states enjoying Observer status - Germany, USA and Austria - which contribute to the organization and financially support different events within BSEC region.

An interesting event was my visit together with Mr. Svilen KRAYCHEV, member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) and Mr. Alexander FURMAN, Deputy Secretary General of the PABSEC International Secretariat, to the Secretariat General of the Benelux Union in Brussels during which we addressed the Benelux Parliament during its plenary session in the Hall of the Belgium Senate. The presentation about BSEC was met with an enhanced interest since many questions and statements were made by the Deputies. They expressed readiness to explore the possibilities of cooperation between Benelux and BSEC, including sharing good practices and organizing joint projects. A letter followed, showing a demand on behalf of the Secretary General of the Benelux Union for concrete exchange of information regarding police co-operation.

I am happy to share with you that a proposal of my own was realized - the Joint Meeting between the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, the PABSEC Bureau and the BSEC PERMIS. A fruitful discussion took place, information was exchanged and concrete measures were designed for the implementation of the Modalities for enhancing coordination and cooperation between BSEC and PABSEC. Another joint meeting was held between BSEC's Committee of Senior Officials and the Board of Directors of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank.

The vast scope of activities in the calendar of events of the Bulgarian Chairmanship could be underlined by pointing out the important Ministerial Meetings which took place (on Information and Communication Technologies in Baku, on Energy, Science and Technology and Transport in Sofia) and the planned one - the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The palette of events is complemented by the seminar entitled "Bulgaria - Four Seasons, Balneology, Wellness and Spa Tourism", the wine Festival "VINARIA 2010" and many others.

In conclusion, based on the work which has been done and having in mind that sometimes heated, but open and frank discussions on some sensible issues have been going on, I express my sincere optimism for the future of our Organization and its ability to promote peace, stability, co-operation and prosperity in the wider Black Sea region in the spirit of understanding and common will.

**Ambassador Ivan PETKOV**  
Special Representative of the  
BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office of  
the Republic of Bulgaria

## editorial



Dear Readers,

When Bulgaria took over the Chairmanship of BSEC in November 2009, it announced that one of its priorities would be to promote the Organization's relations with the European Union. As is known, in 2007, the European Commission was granted Observer status within BSEC. Right after that, in 2008, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the EU and of the countries of the wider Black Sea area had come together in Kyiv, during which the Black Sea Synergy was launched. Since 2009, a new period of enhanced relations between BSEC and the EU was underway, focusing mainly on the areas of environment, transport and energy.

In the context of the importance attached by BSEC to revitalizing the Black Sea Synergy and to achieving concrete results from of its cooperation with the EU, I am pleased to inform you that the Partnership on Environment within the Black Sea Synergy has been just launched on 16 March 2010. This also translates into the fulfillment of one of the objectives of the Bulgarian Chairmanship-in-Office.

BSEC is highly active in the area of environmental protection. The gradual degradation of the environment in the Black Sea region over the last decades is a source of grave concern. This degradation has brought about the need to undertake measures to rehabilitate, protect and preserve the environment for future generations. The reasons of degradation show that regional and international cooperation is indispensable for this. Therefore, we believe that the recently launched Partnership on Environment is an excellent starting point for concrete meaningful cooperation between BSEC and the EU.

While we jointly elaborate the details of this new Partnership, surely, work will simultaneously continue on laying the grounds for Partnerships on Transport and Energy - two other promising spheres of cooperation within the Black Sea Synergy.

In addition to promoting BSEC-EU interaction, the Chairmanship-in-Office has been very active in organizing high-level events in various spheres of cooperation. The meetings of the Ministers responsible for Energy, Science and Technology and Transport have provided valuable opportunities to consolidate BSEC cooperation in the respective fields.

The recent months have also been marked by enhanced interaction with the BSEC Related Bodies. In this context, a Joint Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and BSEC Related Bodies with the Board of Directors of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) was held in Thessaloniki, on 26 February 2010, followed by the Joint Meeting between the BSEC CSO, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Bureau and International Secretariat in Istanbul, on 29 March 2010. This joint working approach with the BSEC Related Bodies has enabled the creation of more coordinated and consolidated policies towards the achievement of common goals, through exchange of views and experiences. We hope to have such joint meetings on a regular basis, which can create valuable synergies for enhancing regional cooperation.

Another development which I wish to highlight pertains to the facilitation of the road transport of goods in our region. As it will be recalled, the Memorandum of Understanding on the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region, which went into force in 2006, was a concrete step taken by the BSEC countries to facilitate regional trade. I am pleased to note that recently, an important additional step has been taken in the sphere of road transport facilitation. Within this framework, a pilot project on the establishment of a BSEC PERMIT system for the road transit of goods has been launched on 16 February 2010, with the participation of seven BSEC Member States. This pilot PERMIT system is expected to facilitate the work of the road transporters and to contribute to trade relations among the participating countries. With this project, BSEC has become the first regional organization to issue such transit documents.

In our next issue, I look forward to sharing with you new developments and projects to the benefit of our region.

**Ambassador Leonidas CHRYSANTHOPOULOS**  
Secretary General of the Organization of the  
Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)  
Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS)

### TRANSPORT MINISTERS OF BSEC COUNTRIES HOLD MEETING



H.E. Mr. Aleksandar TSVETKOV, Minister of Transport, Information Technology and Communications of the Republic of Bulgaria, chaired the Meeting of the BSEC Ministers of Transport.

The BSEC Ministers of Transport met in Sofia on 15 April 2010.

During the meeting which was chaired by H.E. Mr. Aleksandar TSVETKOV, the Minister of Transport, Information Technology and Communications of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations discussed the current developments and prospects in the sphere of transport in the Black Sea region.

At the conclusion of the meeting, a joint declaration was adopted. In the adopted document, the Ministers agreed to focus on facilitated procedures for the use of the transport networks in the BSEC Member States to further reinforce trade flows among them as well as to facilitate transit of goods between Europe and Asia.

They also decided to explore the opportunities to improve and develop road, maritime, aviation and railway infrastructure to contribute to the smooth flow of passengers and goods among the Member States. Another important element of the joint declaration was the decision of the Ministers to consider developing co-operation in the civil aviation sector and to consult with their competent national authorities to also explore the possibility of elaborating an Integrated Maritime Policy.

The Ministers agreed to make use of innovative transport solutions and intelligent transport systems for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of international transport in the region.

While taking note of the commitment of the seven interested Member States to develop the effectiveness of the BSEC PERMIT Pilot Project within the framework of facilitating the road transport of goods in the region, some delegations expressed their positions regarding the said project.

As is known, transport is one of the priority areas of cooperation for BSEC. The Organization has two flagship projects in this sphere: the Black Sea Ring Highway project and the project on the development of the Motorways of the Sea in the BSEC region. The Black Sea Ring Highway project envisages a four-lane ring highway system, approximately 7100 km long, to connect the BSEC Member States with each other. The project on the development of the Motorways of the Sea in the BSEC region, on the other hand, is about strengthening the maritime links among the ports of the BSEC Member States. Both projects are expected to foster intra-BSEC trade, as well as tourism, infrastructure and transport investments, and economic prosperity among the countries of the Black Sea.



Meeting of the BSEC Ministers of Transport, held in Sofia on 15 April 2010.

### PILOT TRANSIT PERMIT SYSTEM LAUNCHED

A pilot project on the establishment of a BSEC PERMIT system for the road transit of goods has been launched. The implementation of the project officially started on 16 February 2010,

with the participation of seven BSEC Member States - namely, Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Turkey. The new pilot PERMIT system, similar in nature to the ECMT license, is expected to facilitate the work of the road transporters and contribute to trade relations among the participating countries. The new BSEC PERMIT will be used for a single round trip only. The empty or loaded trucks holding the PERMIT will be allowed during this single round trip to transit through the territories of all participating Member States without having to present any other bilateral transit permits.

As it will be recalled, the Memorandum of Understanding on the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region, which went into force in 2006, was another step taken by the BSEC countries to facilitate road transport and regional trade.



The pilot project on the establishment of a BSEC PERMIT system for the road transit of goods was launched on 16 February 2010, with the participation of seven BSEC Member States.

## BSEC WORKING GROUP ON TOURISM MEETS IN SOFIA

The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism was held in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 15-16 December 2009, followed by a seminar titled "Bulgaria - four seasons, balneology, wellness and spa tourism" on 16 December.

The Working Group Meeting was chaired by Mr. Ivo MARINOV, Deputy Minister of Economy, Energy and Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria. The meeting focused, among other topics, on the organization of the planned Second Forum on Cooperation of the Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies of the BSEC Member States, as well as various joint project proposals related to the field of tourism. Also, views were exchanged on maritime and nautical tourism.

During the seminar, a detailed presentation on balneology, wellness and spa tourism in Bulgaria was made, followed by an exchange of views on the organizational and practical aspects of this field.



BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism met in Sofia on 15-16 December 2009.

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGIES IN CUSTOMS MATTERS HELD IN BAKU



1st International Scientific Conference on Information Systems and Technologies in Customs Matters, held in Baku on 21-22 December 2009.

The 1st International Scientific Conference on Information Systems and Technologies in Customs Matters was held on 21-22 December 2009 in Baku, Azerbaijan. It was organized by the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Federal Customs Service of the Russian Federation. Representatives of Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the BSEC PERMIS and UNECE participated in the Conference.

The aim of the Conference was to consider the application of information systems and technologies in the customs field and to identify the perspectives of integration of information technologies in customs activities. The participants considered issues related to the development and implementation of information and communication technologies in governmental institutions, technical and electronic control systems in customs services, risk control management, protection of information and exchange of customs information.

The BSEC PERMIS presented the activities carried out in BSEC related to the establishment of a mechanism of exchange of preliminary information among the customs administrations of its Member States.

## STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE BLACK SEA RING HIGHWAY ELABORATES MAIN ROUTE FOR HIGHWAY

The Steering Committee of the Black Sea Ring Highway (BSRH), which convened at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul on 8-9 December 2009, elaborated the main route and connections of the highway. The Steering Committee also adopted the Action Plan of the BSRH and decided to upload the BSRH website on the Internet.

During the meeting, the representative of the International Road Federation informed

about the possibilities of providing expertise for the projects in the development of the BSRH.

As is known, the Black Sea Ring Highway project is one of the flagship projects of BSEC in the sphere of transport. The project envisages a four-lane ring highway system, approximately 7100 km long, to connect the BSEC Member States with each other.

## TRAINING SEMINAR ON EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN SOCHI

A training seminar titled "Arrangement of the BSEC Response in Emergencies" was held in Krasnaya Polyana, Sochi, on 1-2 March 2010. The event was organized by the Ministry of Civil Protection, Emergencies and Disaster Relief of the Russian Federation (EMERCOM of Russia) in its capacity as the Country-Coordinator of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance.

The seminar's core objective was strengthening national search and rescue services at the institutional and technical levels. During the seminar, information was presented on the results of the search and rescue operation of the EMERCOM of Russia in Haiti.

A visit was organized to the construction sites for the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games where information on safety and security measures undertaken by the authorities of the Russian Federation for the Olympic Games was shared.

Within the framework of the seminar, also a demonstration was made on the training of rescuers in different search and rescue operations.

The seminar participants attended the celebration event for the 15th Anniversary of the South Regional Search and Rescue Service.

## AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS ON BSEC-EU INTERACTION MEETS IN ATHENS

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies hosted the Fifth Meeting of the Ad hoc Group of Experts on BSEC-EU Interaction on 5 February 2010, in Athens. Representatives of the Czech Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Poland and the European Commission participated in the meeting in their capacity as Observers and the Republic of Hungary, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Montenegro in their capacity as Sectoral Dialogue Partners in the BSEC.

The participants considered the developments regarding BSEC-EU interaction as well as the implications of the Lisbon Treaty on BSEC-EU relations.

The Ad hoc Working Group resumed discussions on the revised working document "Black Sea Regional Strategy (2010-2013): Promoting a Region-wide Interaction between the BSEC and the EU" and agreed to continue elaborating the document for finalizing it.

In line with the Report of its Fourth Meeting in Athens on 2 October 2009, the Ad hoc Group of Experts forwarded the non-binding paper "A Model for Black Sea Sectoral Partnerships" to the Committee of Senior Officials for consideration.

## JOINT BSEC-BSTDB MEETING HELD IN THESSALONIKI

The Second Joint Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and BSEC Related Bodies with the Board of Directors of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) was held in Thessaloniki, on 26 February 2010. The representatives of the BSEC Parliamentary Assembly and the BSEC Business Council also attended the meeting.

The Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS informed the participants on new developments and the activities of BSEC, in particular, on the progress of the implementation of the Black Sea Ring Highway and the Motorways of the Sea projects as well as other transport related issues.

The participants took note of the constructive role of the Bank in assessing the repercussions of the global financial crisis in the region and welcomed the readiness of the Bank to discuss the financing possibilities of any specific bankable project coming in line with the Bank's mandate.

The priorities of BSEC and the BSTDB were assessed for identifying possible areas to further enhance cooperation. The Bank was invited to consider supporting and co-financing various projects.

The Secretary General of BSTDB, Mr. George KOTTAS informed the participants about the developing relations of BSTDB with the European Investment Bank and other partner financial institutions. He also proposed that the document "Modalities for BSEC-BSTDB Interaction" be reviewed and updated in line with the enhanced level of institutional development of the two organizations and the new realities in the Black Sea region.

As it will be recalled, the Modalities for BSEC-BSTDB Interaction were adopted in 1999 to create a greater synergy between the work of BSEC and the BSTDB. In 2007, a new period of enhanced relations between BSEC and the Bank was inaugurated with a joint meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials and the Board of Directors of the BSTDB. During the joint meeting, common priorities were identified and practical ways to enhance interaction in a systematic way were decided on. Within the framework of the enhanced relations between BSEC and the BSTDB, an increased involvement of the BSTDB in various BSEC Working Groups has contributed to bring forward common initiatives, thus strengthening the performance of the Working Groups with the Bank's expertise.

## SECOND JOINT MEETING ORGANIZED WITH PABSEC

The Second Joint Meeting between the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) Bureau and International Secretariat was held on 29 March 2010 at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul.

In addition to the exchange of views on current issues, the participants discussed the background paper "Enhancing PABSEC-BSEC Interaction: work in progress" and assessed the implementation of the "Modalities for Enhancing Coordination and Cooperation between BSEC and PABSEC."

The two sides agreed to more closely coordinate the Agendas of BSEC and PABSEC and to enhance their interaction on BSEC-EU relations. The participation of staff of both Secretariats to PABSEC and BSEC meetings, the possibility of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of BSEC Member States to attend PABSEC General Assembly meetings in their capacities as BSEC Chairmen-in-Office and the upgrading of BSEC's position in the plenary sessions of the PABSEC General Assembly were also among the issues agreed upon.

As it will be recalled, the First Joint Meeting between the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials and the Bureau and International Secretariat of PABSEC was held on 27 February 2008 at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul. As a follow-up to that meeting, a paper on the modalities of enhancing coordination and cooperation with PABSEC was agreed upon and adopted by the two sides. This new joint working approach has enabled the creation of more coordinated and consolidated policies towards the achievement of common goals, through exchange of views and experiences.



The Second Joint Meeting between the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, the PABSEC Bureau and International Secretariat at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul.

## MEETING WITH THE COEST WORKING PARTY OF THE EU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HELD IN BRUSSELS

A meeting of BSEC with the Working Party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia (COEST) of the Council of Ministers of the European Union was held in Brussels on 14 December 2009, in an open format.

The European Commission announced the launching dates of the Partnerships on Environment and Transport within the Black Sea Synergy, while the date of the official launching of the Partnership on Energy will be determined at a later stage. The Partnership on Environment was launched on 16 March 2010. The Transport Partnership's launching date, on the other hand, is envisaged as 25 June 2010.

The EU Presidency (Sweden) stressed the importance that it attributes to BSEC, underlining that BSEC is the only regional organization that meets jointly with the COEST Working Party. The incoming Spanish Presidency of the EU agreed to convene another meeting of COEST during its term.

The Bulgarian Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC outlined its priorities in enhancing relations between BSEC and the EU through the Black Sea Synergy. Some BSEC Member States

mentioned the need to involve the private sector and the BSEC Business Council in projects of the Synergy, while others emphasized the parliamentary dimension referring to the role of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. All representatives of the BSEC Member States stressed the need to avoid overlapping between the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership (EP). During the meeting, the Russian Federation proposed the elaboration of a road map between BSEC and the EU that would allow the two sides to reach a strategic partnership. The Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS Ambassador Leonidas CHRYSANTHOPOULOS expressed readiness to host workshops, conferences and other events that might be organized within the context of the Black Sea Synergy at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul.

As is known, the EU Commission became an Observer within BSEC in 2007 and the Black Sea Synergy was launched soon after that on 14 February 2008, in Kyiv, where the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Union and of the countries of the wider Black Sea area met for the first time. The objective of the Synergy is to promote the development of cooperation within the Black Sea region and also between the region as a whole and the EU.

## MOLDOVA ORGANIZES SEMINAR ON BSEC SOURCES FOR PROJECT FINANCING

A seminar on BSEC sources of project financing was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova on 22 February 2010, in Chisinau.

The objective of the seminar was to provide information to Moldovan institutions on the current activities of and project financing opportunities from the Project Development Fund (PDF) and the BSEC-Hellenic Development Fund (BSEC-HDF).



Seminar on BSEC sources of project financing organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova in Chisinau.



Ambassador Sumru NOYAN, First Deputy Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS, informing the Cambridge International Studies Association members of BSEC activities.

## CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION DELEGATION VISITS BSEC HEADQUARTERS

A delegation of the Cambridge International Studies Association (CISA), consisting of researchers and fellows of the University of Cambridge, visited the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul on 24 March 2010.

The delegation was received by Ambassador Sumru NOYAN, First Deputy Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS, who informed the CISA members of the activities and projects of BSEC and developments related to the region, after which an interactive discussion was held.

CISA is an officially registered society in the University of Cambridge which was established to foster social and intellectual links between those who share a common interest in international affairs and to raise the profile of research into international relations in the University and beyond.

## CONFERENCE ON PROMOTING ENERGY SECURITY AND INVESTMENT TO BE HELD IN ODESSA

A Joint BSEC-Energy Charter Conference on "Promoting Energy Security and Investment in the Black Sea Area: The Role of Multilateral Cooperation," will be organized in Odessa in June 2010, with the support of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. The Conference will address the current challenges for energy security in the wider Black Sea area, the financial and economic situation after the global crisis, as well as the role of international organizations in the region.

Some of the key questions to be examined at the conference are:

- What does energy security mean for the Black Sea area?
- How can the region's key role in the transit of energy be secured?
- What are the prospects for the Black Sea to emerge as an energy producer region and what will be the main sources of locally produced energy?
- Where are the priorities, challenges and opportunities for investment in the energy sector?

The event is expected to bring together key international experts, politicians and business representatives.

As is known, in the recent years, the Black Sea has emerged as a vital region within the context of energy relations between Europe and Eurasia. This reflects not only the significance of the Black Sea area for regional energy markets, but also its place within the global energy sector.

## BSEC PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF)

The PDF Steering Committee met in Istanbul on 31 March 2010 and approved the final deliverables of five PDF projects that have been successfully completed. The said projects are:

- 1) "Market potential for Hydrogen production from Hydrogen Sulphide in Black Sea and industrial waters"
- 2) "Revitalization of urban ecosystems through vascular plants: assessment of technogenic pollution impact - Garden City"
- 3) "Study of the capabilities and requirements of the operational monitoring of air pollution levels"
- 4) "A Feasibility Study for Variable Rate Irrigation in the Black Sea region: Economical and Environmental Benefits"
- 5) "New cardiovascular planning and diagnostic tool for coronary arteries in BSEC countries using computational simulation".

More information on the PDF is available at [www.bsecprojects.com](http://www.bsecprojects.com).



## BSEC-HELLENIC DEVELOPMENT FUND (BSEC-HDF)

### CALL FOR PROPOSALS IN RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY MADE BY BSEC-HDF

Following the meeting of the BSEC-Hellenic Development Fund (HDF) Committee, a Call for Proposals was announced on 15 February 2010 inviting projects in renewable energy sources, including eligible applications in energy efficiency. The total amount granted to renewable energy sources projects will be 400,000 Euros.

"Renewable energy sources and energy efficiency contribute to sustainable development and environmental protection and thus help mitigate the effects of climate change. In addition, they are considered cost-effective ways to fulfill the major energy-related challenges of increased energy security and reduced energy production costs" said Konstantinos ZAIMIS, BSEC-HDF Manager.

BSEC-HDF projects are required to be innovative, using environment-friendly energy solutions and good practices that are able to enhance the scientific, technical and administrative competencies and capacities of institutions in the BSEC Member States.

More information on the BSEC-HDF is available at [www.bsecprojects.com](http://www.bsecprojects.com).



## BLACK SEA TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BANK (BSTDB)

### GREEK DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS THE BLACK SEA TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BANK IN THESSALONIKI

H.E. Mr. Spyros KOUVELIS, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, met with Mr. Hayrettin KAPLAN, President of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) at the Bank's premises in Thessaloniki on 12 November 2009.

BSTDB President KAPLAN informed the Deputy Minister on the Bank's latest developments and its activities in Greece. The parties discussed the ongoing cooperation of the Bank with the Greek authorities and perspectives for its development.

### BSTDB FINANCES GREEN ENERGY PROJECT IN BULGARIA

In its first green energy project, BSTDB made available EUR 11 million loan to Eolica Bulgaria EAD for the construction and operation of a 60MW wind farm located in the municipality of Suvorovo in north-eastern Bulgaria.

Suvorovo Wind Farm project represents a total investment of EUR 103 million, jointly provided by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and BSTDB (A-loans), as well as commercial banks (B-loans).

The operation has high developmental impact as it is not only expected to facilitate renewable energy development and generate carbonfree electricity in Bulgaria, but also to create new employment opportunities in the region. It further facilitates the mobilization of funding outside the Black Sea region and exploits co-financing opportunities between BSTDB, EBRD and international commercial banks.

"Green energy is a key issue for the economic development of the Black Sea region, we are very much pleased that BSTDB is involved in a project fostering environmentally sustainable growth" stated BSTDB's Vice-President Banking Andrey KONDAKOV, signing the loan agreement.



Visit of H.E. Mr. Spyros KOUVELIS, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the BSTDB premises in November 2009.

## SME SECTOR IN AZERBAIJAN SUPPORTED BY BSTDB

BSTDB is providing a USD 4 million SME loan facility to Azer-Turk Bank with 5 years tenor.

The loan facility will be used by Azer-Turk Bank to finance local small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly for the purposes of development, modernization, expansion and diversification of industrial, agricultural or service-related facilities. The facility will also cover working capital requirements for production or service related facilities, export and pre-export financing of industrial or agricultural enterprises.

Signing the agreement, BSTDB's President Hayrettin KAPLAN stressed that the loan is an important step towards strengthening the non-oil sector in Azerbaijan and developing the financial services in the country. "Supporting operations involving more than one Member State is a priority for BSTDB" added President KAPLAN.

## BSTDB CONCLUDES A USD 20 MILLION LOAN FROM GENIKI BANK

BSTDB announced that a USD 20 million revolving facility was signed in Thessaloniki with Geniki Bank - Societe Generale Group. The tenor of the facility is 18 months and BSTDB will use the proceeds to finance its operations in the Black Sea region.

This transaction builds upon previous successful cooperation between BSTDB and Geniki Bank.

"As a regional development bank, we place great emphasis on attracting additional sources of financing for our operations and we are happy not only to increase financing resources for the region, but also to cooperate with one of the leading Greek banks" said BSTDB President Hayrettin KAPLAN, signing the agreement.

## CONSTRUCTION OF A MODERN WAREHOUSE COMPLEX IN SOUTHERN RUSSIA FINANCED BY BSTDB

BSTDB made available Euro 9.82 million to finance the construction and operation of an international standard (Class A) warehouse complex in Stavropol Region, Southern Russia.

The loan was provided to Kulon - Yugros, a project Company established for the purpose of construction and operation of the warehouse and office facilities.

The operation of Kulon-Yugros, the first international warehouse park in the region of Southern Russia, will have high economic development impact and offer new employment opportunities. It will also address the issue of undersupply of quality warehousing facilities in Stavropol region, highly needed to meet the market demand.

The project is financed jointly with the International Finance Corporation (IFC).



## PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION (PABSEC)

### 34th PLENARY SESSION OF THE PABSEC GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADDRESSES INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT CORRIDORS AND ENERGY SECURITY

The 34th Plenary Session of the PABSEC General Assembly was held in Moscow on 23-25 November 2009. The meeting was opened by Mr. Boris GRYZLOV, PABSEC President, Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, who delivered the message of H.E. Mr. Dmitry MEDVEDEV, President of the Russian Federation.

The General Assembly was attended by the national delegations of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine. The BSEC and its Related Bodies were represented by the First Deputy Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat, the President and the Secretary General of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank and the Secretary General of the BSEC Business Council. Among observers and guests were representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus, the Senate and the National Assembly of the French Republic, the Knesset of the State of Israel, the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the European Security and Defence Assembly/Assembly of the Western European Union (AWEU), the Central European Initiative - Parliamentary Dimension (CEI PD), the European Parliament (EP), the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Eurasian Economic Community (IPA EurAsEC), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus-Russia (PAUBR), and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE PA), the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC), the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (IAO), the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC), the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) and the Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation.

The topic of the general debate was "The development of international transport corridors and ensuring energy security of the BSEC countries and Europe." The participants underlined the importance of efficient use of the geopolitical location

of the Black Sea region. It was stressed that current developments in the region are to a great extent shaped in accordance with the diversification of former transport routes and the strengthening of the energy factor in politics. It was underlined that the development of international transport corridors as well as the implementation of priority projects regarding transport corridors in the BSEC region serve the economic interests of both the BSEC states and the international community. The speakers also noted the importance of the integration of transport systems and the necessity to continue realizing projects that connect the transport systems of the countries of the EU, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Middle East. It was highlighted that transport communications will pave the way towards deepening mutually beneficial cooperation in the Black Sea region and thus, towards strengthening mutual understanding in political issues.

Within the framework of the 34th Plenary Session of the PABSEC General Assembly, the PABSEC members conducted debates on the Reports and Recommendations drafted by the PABSEC specialized Committees on "Water resources management in the Black Sea region," "Rational Management of Natural Resources in the Black Sea Region: Enhancement of Legislative Framework" and "Shaping ecological awareness and behaviour in the BSEC Member States." The Assembly adopted Recommendations on these topics, addressed to the Parliaments and Governments of the Member Countries and to BSEC.

The Assembly also discussed the activities carried out by BSEC and elected Mr. Vassilios GERANIDIS, Head of the Hellenic PABSEC Delegation, as Vice-President on Financial Matters.

Following the end of the 34th Plenary Session, on 25 November 2009, H.E. Prof. Dr. Slavica Djukic-DEJANOVIC, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, assumed the six-month term Presidency of PABSEC.

### PABSEC COMMITTEES FOCUS ON FOOD SECURITY, CIVIL AVIATION AND PROTECTING WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE

In their 2010 spring meetings, the three PABSEC Committees debated and drafted recommendations on topics of major importance for the countries of the region.

The 34th Meeting of the Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee took place in Chisinau, on 17-18 March 2010. Mr. Svilen KRAICHEV, Member of the Committee (Bulgaria), presented a Draft Report on "Food security in the BSEC Member-States", while the Draft Recommendation on the same subject was presented by Mr. Gagik MINASYAN, Chairman of the Committee (Armenia).

On the other hand, the Legal and Political Affairs Committee held its 34th Meeting in Tirana, on 21-22 April 2010. The main item on the agenda was "The Legal Framework

for Regulation of Civil Aviation in the BSEC Member-States" and the Rapporteur was Mr. Kemalettin GOKTAS, Member of the Committee (Turkey). Mr. Michael YEMELIANOV, Chairman of the Committee (Russia), presented the Draft Recommendation on this subject.

The Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee also convened in spring. Its 33rd Meeting was organized in Moscow on 7-8 April 2010. The members of the Committee discussed the Draft Report and the Draft Recommendation on "Protecting women against violence in the BSEC Member-States," presented by Ms. Rusudan KERVALISHVILI, Member of the Committee (Georgia) and Mr. Alexandros DERMENTZOPOULOS, Chairman of the Committee (Greece), respectively.

### PABSEC PRESIDENT VISITS PABSEC INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

Prof. Dr. Slavica DJUKIC-DEJANOVIC, PABSEC President, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, paid a working visit to the PABSEC International Secretariat on 15 March 2010. During the visit, issues related to the organization of the 35th PABSEC General Assembly to be held in Belgrade on 1-3 June 2010, as well as general aspects regarding PABSEC activities were discussed.

### EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S VICE-PRESIDENT VISITS PABSEC

Mr. Libor ROUCEK, Vice-President of the European Parliament (EP), paid a working visit to the PABSEC International Secretariat on 29 March 2010. The two sides discussed issues related to PABSEC-EP cooperation. Mr. ROUCEK also participated in the Joint Meeting of the PABSEC Extended Bureau and the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials at the BSEC Headquarters.

## 35th PLENARY SESSION OF THE PABSEC GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ADDRESS ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN STRENGTHENING PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

PABSEC will hold the 35th Session of its General Assembly on 1-3 June 2010 in Belgrade. The General Debate will provide an opportunity for the speakers and heads of national delegations to address the role of parliaments in strengthening the principles of international law.

The members of the Assembly will debate on the Reports and Recommendations drafted by the PABSEC specialized Committees during their spring meetings and then adopt Recommendations addressed to the Parliaments and Governments of the Member

Countries and to BSEC.

Furthermore, the General Assembly will consider the results of the 22nd Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to be held on 28 May 2010 in Sofia, as well as the sectoral Ministerial Meetings organized during the Bulgarian Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC.

PABSEC members will also consider the Progress Report of the Parliamentary Assembly.

## WORKING VISIT ORGANIZED TO BENELUX PARLIAMENT

At the invitation of the Benelux General Secretariat and the Benelux Parliament, a delegation consisting of Ambassador Ivan PETKOV, Special Representative of the Bulgarian Chairmanship-in-Office, Mr. Svilen KRAYCHEV, Head of the Bulgarian PABSEC Delegation, and Mr. Alexander FURMAN, PABSEC Deputy Secretary General, paid a working visit to Brussels on 19-20 March 2010. During the visit, the delegation presented information on BSEC and PABSEC activities, including the priorities of the Bulgarian Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC and discussed possibilities for establishing dialogue and cooperation with the Benelux Union and its parliamentary dimension.

The delegation had a meeting in the Benelux General Secretariat with Dr. Jan P.R.M. van LAARHOVEN, Secretary General, and Mr. Luc WILLEMS, Deputy Secretary General. The parties exchanged information about their respective organizations and views on a number of issues, in particular, on possible areas of mutual interest for BSEC and the Benelux.

The delegation also had a meeting in the Directorate General of External Relations of the European Commission. The representatives of the European Commission informed the delegation about the steps taken by the EU to enhance cooperation with the Black Sea region within the framework of various programmes and policies.

The delegation attended the plenary sitting of the Benelux Parliament in the Hall of the Belgian Senate. Addressing the participants, Head of the Bulgarian PABSEC Delegation Mr. Svilen KRAYCHEV stated that Bulgaria sees the Black Sea dimension as an essential part of EU's foreign policy and an important indicator for the adoption of pragmatic approaches directed towards cooperation with the region. "This cooperation offers various opportunities. Among the most important areas are energy, transport, the development and modernization of communication infrastructure, border security, environmental protection, trade and investment, trans-border cooperation and tourism" said Mr. KRAYCHEV.

"Upholding the view that, within the context of the Black Sea Synergy, the high-level political dialogue between BSEC and the EU should be significantly strengthened, the PABSEC members consider that the relations between the PABSEC and the European Parliament should reach similar intensity" added Mr. KRAYCHEV.

Following the plenary session, the delegation met with Mr. Bart TOMMELEIN, President of the Benelux Parliament, informing him about the activities of PABSEC and the forthcoming General Assembly in Belgrade.



PABSEC delegation's working visit to the Benelux Parliament in March 2010.



## BSEC BUSINESS COUNCIL (BSEC BC)

### NON-TARIFF BARRIERS REPORT SYSTEM ACTIVATED IN THE BSEC BC WEBSITE

The non-tariff barriers report system has been activated in the BSEC Business Council website. The system constitutes part of a joint project of the Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade of Turkey and the BSEC BC titled "Towards a Black Sea Regional Market: Tackling Barriers to Trade." The said project was agreed to within the context of the BSEC Working Group on Trade and Economic Development for promoting trade facilitation. The Black Sea Information Gateway web-site ([www.bsec-business.org](http://www.bsec-business.org)) now has a section dedicated to non-tariff barriers in the BSEC region and an automatic system open to any businessman to report.

The project concentrates, on a priority basis, on first identifying non-tariff (administrative) barriers to trade and then making a plan for their systematic elimination. The BSEC BC is expected to compile the relevant data and report to the BSEC Working Group on Trade and Economic Development

### BSEC BC ORGANIZES INFORMATION PAVILION IN VINARIA 2010

An information pavilion was organized within the framework of the VINARIA 2010 International Exhibition of Vine-Growing and Wine Producing and Wine Festival, held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, on 14-17 March 2010.

The pavilion was established with the initiative of the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) and in cooperation with the BSEC BC International Secretariat. A joint press conference was made on 15 March with the participation of the President of BCCI and current Chairman of the BSEC BC Board of Directors Mr. Tsvetan SIMEONOV, BSEC BC Secretary General Ms. BACOPOULOU and the representatives from PABSEC and the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs who made presentations.

### BUSINESS COUNCIL SECRETARY GENERAL HOLDS CONTACTS IN BRUSSELS

The Secretary General of the BSEC Business Council Ms. Eftychia BACOPOULOU had preliminary contacts with officials of the European Commission in Brussels on 14-15 December 2009 for promoting the objectives of the Business Council and exploring possible cooperation with EU institutions.

BACOPOULOU conveyed the message that the BSEC BC is ready to actively support initiatives for the private sector's development which fall within EU regional policies, mainly Black Sea Synergy partnerships.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF A PARLIAMENT OF ENTREPRENEURS PROPOSED BY BSEC BUSINESS COUNCIL

BSEC Business Council Secretary General Ms. Eftychia BACOPOULOU, who attended the 34th Plenary Session of the General Assembly of the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC (PABSEC) in Moscow on 23-25 November 2009, presented a proposal on the establishment of the "Parliament of Entrepreneurs of BSEC," following the successful organization of the "European Parliament of Entrepreneurs" back in October 2008.

The proposal focuses on the organization of an assembly of business people from all sizes and sectors of business in the 12 BSEC Member States to debate just for one day on some of the most crucial topics pertaining to the economic development of the region, face to face with the Members of the National Parliaments of the BSEC Member States, representatives of governments, guests from international organizations and the EU.

The Business Council's proposal which can strengthen the voice of the business people in the region will be further examined and elaborated in cooperation with PABSEC.



Joint press conference organized within the framework of the VINARIA 2010 International Exhibition of Vine-Growing and Wine Producing and Wine Festival, held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.



## INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR BLACK SEA STUDIES (ICBSS)

### 3RD INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA SYMPOSIUM PREPARATIONS WELL UNDER WAY



Building on two years of success, the International Black Sea Symposium (IBSS) project continues to develop with the next edition planned for 29 June - 4 July 2010. The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) will host the 3rd IBSS on "The Black Sea Region in Flux" on the island of Aegina, Greece.

The intensive course of expert-led sessions and workshops on conflict resolution methodology is targeted at young professionals with proficiency in English and a demonstrated interest in the region. More information on the project and the application process is available at [www.icbss.org](http://www.icbss.org).

The ICBSS launched the IBSS project in 2008 in order to contribute to understanding and cooperation in the Black Sea region and beyond. The project is implemented in cooperation with numerous partners and sponsors.

### COMMISSION ON THE BLACK SEA PUBLISHES POLICY REPORTS



The Commission on the Black Sea is constantly gaining momentum as work progresses. Experts met at roundtable events in Istanbul and Moscow last fall, while two editorial meetings took place in Berlin in November 2009 and January 2010, the latter being combined with a high-level International Conference on the Future of the Black Sea Region at the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Commission has now published two out of the four envisaged policy reports. Mr. Panayotis GAVRAS, co-Head of the Policy and Strategy Department of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank, authored the first report on "The Current State of Economic Development in the Black Sea Region." In his report, GAVRAS examines the transformation of the economies of the Black Sea countries, specifies the implications of the global crisis for the region and formulates policy recommendations against the background of the current challenges.

Mr. Mitat CELIKPALA, Associate Professor of International Relations at TOBB Economy and Technology University in Ankara, argues in his paper on "Security in the Black Sea Region" that the region is politically, historically and geographically divided. According to CELIKPALA, the lack of cooperation has created a "security vacuum" exacerbating global and regional rivalries.

As is known, the Commission on the Black Sea is a joint project of the ICBSS, the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation - a project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States (Romania), Bertelsmann Stiftung (Germany), and TEPAV - the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey. For more information, readers may visit [www.blackseacom.eu](http://www.blackseacom.eu).

### JOINT WORKSHOP ON REGIONAL IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS ORGANIZED BY BSEC RELATED BODIES



Joint Workshop on "The Regional Impact of the Global Economic Crisis: Looking into the Black Sea Economies" in Thessaloniki.

A joint workshop on "The Regional Impact of the Global Economic Crisis: Looking into the Black Sea Economies" was co-organized by the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank, the ICBSS, the BSEC Business Council and the UNDP Black Sea Trade and Investment Promotion Programme in Thessaloniki, on 4 December 2009.



Representatives of international financial institutions, officials from the central banks of several Black Sea countries as well as researchers and other experts attended the workshop.

Participants considered aspects such as the impact of the crisis on regional trade and investment flows. They also debated on the ways to mitigate the crisis. In this context, they focused on the role and responses of key actors such as governments, the private sector, international financial institutions and multilateral and regional organizations.

### ICBSS HOSTS LECTURE ON TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP

The Minister of State and Chief Negotiator of the Republic of Turkey H.E. Mr. Egemen BAGIS delivered a lecture on "Turkish Membership and a Stronger EU" hosted by the ICBSS. The event, attracting considerable media coverage, took place in Athens, on 5 November 2009. English and Greek language webcasts of the lecture are available on [www.icbss.org](http://www.icbss.org).



H.E. Mr. Egemen BAGIS, the Minister of State and Chief Negotiator of the Republic of Turkey, speaking in Athens on 5 November 2009.

### Selected Publications

The ICBSS continues to produce important publications on issues related to the region. The latest ICBSS publications include:

- Xenophon Paper No. 8 - November 2009, **The Policies of the European Union and Russia towards Central Asia**, by Fraser Cameron.
- Policy Brief No.20, January 2010, **The EU's Ambivalent Relationship with the BSEC: Reflecting on the Past, Mapping out the Future**, by T. Japaridze, P. Manoli, D. Triantaphyllou and Y. Tsantoulis.

The said publications are available for free download from [www.icbss.org](http://www.icbss.org).