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PRESS RELEASE ON
THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BSEC PERMIS SECRETARY GENERAL TO
THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM "CITY PORTS FROM THE AEGEAN TO THE
BLACK SEA. MEDIEVAL - MODERN NETWORKS"
(22-28 August 2015)

The Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES participated at the International Symposium "City Ports from the Aegean to the Black Sea. Medieval - Modern Networks", which was held on 22-28 August 2015, on board a cruise ship.

The symposium was organized in the framework of the project "Limen", initiated by various institutions¹ from a number of BSEC Member States and co-funded by the European Union and national resources. The objective of the project is the promotion and valorisation of the rich cultural heritage of the countries in the wider Black Sea area.

A large number of experts, archaeologists, academics, as well as representatives of city-councils and tourism experts from the BSEC Member States contributed to a lively exchange of information and views on how to better promote sustainable tourism to positively affect the local communities of the regions concerned and to support the preservation of their rich cultural heritage.

The culmination of the symposium's works was the discussion on the establishment of a new institution in the region, namely, the "Cultural Port of the Black Sea", which is expected to contribute dynamically to the relations of friendship and cooperation in the Black Sea area, while increasing the tourism potential of all countries involved. The initiators of the project underlined the great importance they attach to the support of international organizations, especially regional, like BSEC.

¹ The European Centre of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments (Greece), Istanbul University (Turkey), the Municipality of Kavala (Greece), the Museum of History and Archaeology of Constanta (Romania), the City Council of Odessa (Ukraine), the "G. Chubinashvili National Research Centre for Georgian Art, History and Heritage Preservation" (Georgia), the Municipality of Varna (Bulgaria) and Koç University (Turkey).

BSEC PERMIS Secretary General Ambassador CHRISTIDES reaffirmed the keen interest of BSEC not only to support the establishment of this new institution, but also to get involved, from the beginning, in the efforts to define its main characteristics. He briefed participants on the sizeable work already accomplished by the two BSEC Working Groups on Culture and Cooperation in Tourism and invited a representative of the "Limen" Steering Committee to participate at the forthcoming joint meeting of the two above-mentioned Working Groups, scheduled to take place on 21 October 2015, at the BSEC headquarters. Secretary General CHRISTIDES stated that this would allow the competent experts of the two BSEC Working Groups to be thoroughly briefed on the latest developments concerning the establishment of the envisaged institution, raise any questions they might have and confirm their support to this new initiative.