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PRESS RELEASE

ON

**THE 6th MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE ON FACILITATION OF ROAD
TRANSPORT OF GOODS IN THE BSEC REGION**

The 6th Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region was held in Rostov-on-Don, the Russian Federation, on 28 September 2011.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Damir LEDENCAN, Head of the International Road Transport Department of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy of the Republic of Serbia. The representatives and experts of the BSEC Member States attended the meeting.

With regard to the progressive liberalization of the international road transport of goods, participants expressed that attention should be paid to the elimination administrative, technical and legal barriers which hamper the international transport of goods.

As far as the pilot project on the issuing of the BSEC Transit Permit for Trucks is concerned, 6 participating Member States, namely Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Turkey, expressed their interest to extend the validity of the project until the beginning of 2013. The pilot project was launched in February 2010 for a one-year period, after which its term was extended for an additional year in November 2010.

The Delegation of the Republic of Turkey informed that a positive decision has been taken by the Republic of Turkey concerning the usage of 200 BSEC Permits only for transit by Armenian hauliers until 31 January 2012 within the framework of the pilot project.

Issues related to the accession to international agreements, harmonization of maximum permissible weights and dimensions, charging policies, facilitation of visa procedures for professional drivers and X-ray controls of transport at borders were also discussed. The Steering Committee decided to organize a Meeting of Experts for the elaboration of concrete measures for starting the implementation of the International Vehicle Weight Certificate. The Steering Committee decided to also hold a joint BSEC-IRU meeting of experts on taxation in order to start reassessing the

charging policies during the Serbian Chairmanship-in-Office which will cover the first half of 2012.

As is known, BSEC was launched on 25 June 1992 at the Istanbul Summit, at a time when regional cooperation was most needed in the transformation process that the countries of the region were undergoing. The idea that stronger economic cooperation among the Black Sea countries would enhance peace and stability in the region was the underlying philosophy behind BSEC. Today, BSEC serves as a forum for cooperation in a wide range of areas and a platform for political dialogue for its 12 Member States¹.

Transport is one of the priority areas of cooperation for BSEC. BSEC has a Working Group on Transport which meets regularly to foster regional cooperation in this sphere.

The Memorandum of Understanding on the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region, which went into force in 2006, was an important step taken by the BSEC countries to facilitate road transport and regional trade. The Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region was established in compliance with the said Memorandum of Understanding.

BSEC has two flagship projects in the area of transport cooperation. These are 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 7700 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. Most importantly, they are intended to make a concrete difference in the lives of the people of the region and bring them closer together.

¹ The 12 BSEC Member States are comprised of Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine.