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PRESS RELEASE

ON

THE 6th MEETING OF THE BSEC STEERING COMMITTEE
ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BLACK SEA RING HIGHWAY

The 6th Meeting of the Steering Committee on the Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway was held in Rostov-on-Don, the Russian Federation, on 27 September 2011.

The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Stefan POPOV, Chief Expert of the National Transport Policy Directorate of the Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications of the Republic of Bulgaria. The meeting was attended by the representatives and experts of the BSEC Member States who discussed the main Black Sea Ring Highway route passing through their territories. The participants agreed on most of the points of alignment of the Black Sea Ring Highway. It was decided that the final version of the main route would be considered as adopted upon receiving the notifications from the relevant Member States that they accept the proposals.

The Steering Committee decided to include the issue of creating the Model Highway along the Black Sea Ring Highway sections into the future project of the Master-Plan and to cooperate with the International Road Transport Union in preparing the Feasibility Study on the Model Highway Initiative project.

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.

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

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 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. 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.