

**DECLARATION OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION  
OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

**Belgrade, 19 April 2007**

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States: the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine, met in Belgrade on 19 April 2007, and

**Recognizing** the need for promoting and strengthening all forms of regional cooperation in an age of dynamic development in international political and economic affairs;

**Reaffirming** their commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of the OSCE, to the values promoted by the Council of Europe and to international law;

**Being convinced** of the growing importance of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation on the current international stage;

**Renewing** their resolve to further strengthen cooperation within BSEC for the benefit of all its Member States and their peoples, based on the objectives and provisions of the BSEC Charter, the BSEC Summits Declarations and the BSEC Economic Agenda for the Future;

**Emphasizing** the need to achieve concrete results as the best motivation for promoting further cooperation and for encouraging other countries, primarily observer states and international organizations to participate in and contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Organization;

**Reiterating** the significance of further transformation of the BSEC Region into an area of stability and security, well-being and prosperity, respect for national, religious and cultural diversity, with a view to building a region of equal opportunities for all citizens;

**Stressing** the importance of effective cooperation against the transnational risks posed by terrorism and organized crime and commending the considerable progress achieved by BSEC in this respect;

**Being determined** to continue and deepen cooperation with other international organizations and structures, in particular the European Union, which now expanded to the Black Sea shores;

**Commending** the significant progress achieved during the Serbian Chairmanship-in-Office in reforming and restructuring the Organization and its interaction with the EU, as well as in the activities of the Working Groups and BSEC Related Bodies;

**Stressing** the importance of the BSEC 15th anniversary Summit in Istanbul on 25 June 2007 which should assess the development of the Organization, identify priorities and set guidelines for future activities with a view to making it a milestone for the Organization, as well as the participation at the highest level in the Summit,

1. **Emphasize** that their common objective should be to further build up BSEC as a project-oriented Organization, fully representative of the wider Black Sea area, and the economic interests of its countries, and to encourage closer cooperation for joint development in a regional format;
2. **Underline** that there has been substantial progress in the process of reform envisaged in the Bucharest Statement, aiming at increasing the effectiveness of the Organization of BSEC, and reaffirm the necessity to continue the steps taken in this direction. The reform process, once completed, will have a considerable impact on the strengthening and deepening of cooperation among the Member States;
3. **Emphasize** that the objective of institutionalization of BSEC interaction with the European Union and the identification of possible areas of future BSEC-EU relations could yield concrete results and be mutually beneficial. In this regard, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs welcome the Communication of the European Commission on the “Black Sea Synergy – A New Regional Cooperation Initiative” of 11 April 2007 and express their hope that it could be the first step in order to enhance relations between BSEC and the EU, as well as to strengthen the BSEC role within this process; Furthermore, they call for a joint BSEC-EU declaration that could be adopted on the occasion of the BSEC Summit of 25 June 2007;
4. **Agree** that there is great potential for cooperation between BSEC and the EU in the fields of transport, energy, environmental protection, fight against organized crime, joint action in education and culture and call on those countries that are members of both organizations (Bulgaria, Greece and Romania) and on the EU Member States having Observer status with BSEC to enhance their concerted efforts to strengthen and further promote BSEC-EU interaction;
5. **Underline** the significance of cooperation among the Diplomatic Academies of the BSEC Member States following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation among Academies and Institutes of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and consider that the training of young diplomats will contribute to better communication and successful cooperation among the Member States;
6. **Highlight** the importance of further developing integrated land and maritime transportation networks of the BSEC Member States with a view to further promoting economic and trade relations in the BSEC Region;
7. **Welcome** the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Coordinated Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea in the BSEC Region and stress the importance of the implementation of these documents for the enhancement of regional cooperation and the achievement of BSEC goals;
8. **Welcome** the launching today of the Black Sea Ring Highway Caravan 2007 aiming to promote the economic benefits of that major project for the peoples of the BSEC Member States;
9. **Call upon** the Member States and BSEC executive, subsidiary and related bodies to concentrate their efforts and their international outreach on opening new prospects for enhanced cooperation as a foundation of stability, security and prosperity in the wider Black Sea area.

The Ministers of the Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States expressed their gratitude to the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the people of the Republic of Serbia for the warm hospitality extended to the participants during the Meeting and for the excellent organization provided for the Belgrade Meeting of the BSEC Council.