



**BS/CT/WG/R(99)1**

**REPORT  
OF THE MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP  
ON COOPERATION IN TOURISM**

**Istanbul, 30 June-2 July 1999**

1. The Meeting of the Working Group (WG) on Cooperation in Tourism was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 30 June-2 July 1999.
2. The Meeting was inaugurated by H.E. Erkan MUMCU, Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Turkey.
3. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Mustafa SİYAHHAN, General Director at the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Turkey.
4. The Meeting was attended by the following Member States of the BSEC:
  - Republic of Albania
  - Republic of Bulgaria
  - Georgia
  - Hellenic Republic
  - Republic of Moldova
  - Romania
  - Russian Federation
  - Republic of Turkey
  - Ukraine
5. The representatives of Egypt, France, Poland and the BSEC Business Council were present at the Meeting as Observers.

The BSEC Coordination Center for the Exchange of Statistical Data and Economic Information and PABSEC International Secretariat attended the Meeting.
6. The representatives of the Black Sea Tourism Cooperation (BSTC), the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the Turkish Tourism Investors Association (TYD) attended the Meeting as Guests.
7. The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

8. Minister MUMCU delivered the inaugural address; Mr. SİYAHHAN welcomed the participating delegations. Thereafter statements were made by Ms. Leila RIHAWI from the World Tourism Organization (WTO); and Mr. Talha ÇAMAŞ, as Chairman of the Black Sea Tourism Cooperation (BSTC) Working Committee and Ambassador Nurver NUREŞ, First Deputy Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat.

The texts of the inaugural address and the statement by Mr. NUREŞ are attached as Annex II.

9. The draft agenda of the Meeting which was adopted is attached as Annex III. The work progressed as follows:

DISCUSSION AND ADOPTION OF THE “TOURISM ACTION PLAN FOR THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION” PRESENTED BY TURKEY AS COUNTRY-COORDINATOR

10. The Tourism Action Plan for the Black Sea Economic Cooperation was presented by the Turkish delegation. It was considered under the sub-headings of Tourism Training, Cooperation Areas on the Required Qualifications of Tourism Investment and Establishment, Promotion and Marketing, and Black Sea Coastline Tourism Infrastructure Project. The following decisions were taken:

- Member States will communicate by way of the BSEC Secretariat their views and reactions on the Action Plan in general and the issue of training in particular. Thereafter the Plan will take its final shape;
- Turkish Ministry of Tourism will consult and coordinate with other Turkish educational and training institutions with a view to concluding the program which should also cover the important issues of joint marketing and investments in tourism;
- A suggestion was made to include in the Plan exchange of training specialists in tourism and students for purposes of training;
- Since the present tourism sector in CITs has not developed to the extent which would allow cooperation in areas on the required qualifications of tourism investments and establishments, the Seminar suggested in this context will be replaced by a similar activity centered on “promotion and attraction of investments in tourism” with a view to expanding investments, in particular to the BSEC region from abroad. This Seminar, for which funding needs to be secured, will be scheduled for sometime in 2000, its terms of reference to be prepared by the Turkish Tourism Investors Association (TYD) in consultation with the Turkish Ministry of Tourism and in cooperation with the Secretariat;
- Promotion and marketing in tourism will be investigated in depth by BSTC and their findings will be studied at the intergovernmental level together with BSTC;
- The Black Sea Coastline Tourism Infrastructure Project is a major and long-term initiative but essential to tourism and development in and around the

Black Sea itself. It needs to be elaborated to clearly define its contents. The implementation process should be divided in different stages with the initial ones aiming to yield in short term improvements so that the coastal areas can be operational for marketing of tourist products. The Turkish Ministry of Tourism will be responsible of it at the initial stage and will undertake all the necessary preparatory contacts with the EU Commission already executing a comparable venture (i.e. TACIS/PHARE 1995 project within the Black Sea Environmental Program - BSEP); assess the team of experts required for implementation as well as the estimate of the entire project; consult Black Sea coastal States to ascertain their interest to it and undertake initial soundings in search for possible funding.

The Turkish Ministry will communicate the results of these contacts to the Member States by way of the International Secretariat so that the project can be thoroughly reviewed by them.

#### REVIEW AND ELABORATION OF MEASURES AND POSSIBLE FORMULATIONS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE TOURISM MOVEMENT WITHIN THE BLACK SEA REGION

11. A notable number of participating delegations took the floor under this item and pointed out innumerable obstacles in all the BSEC States, without exception, which impede development of mass tourism within the BSEC region. Underlining the significance of such movement, the WG asked the BSTC to prepare, before the next Meeting of the WG, a short report, where possible with solutions, on the major problem areas which hinder regional mass tourism. The report will be reviewed by the subsidiary organs of the BSEC and submitted to the Council of Ministers for guidance and action.

#### REPORT BY THE BSEC COORDINATION CENTER FOR THE EXCHANGE OF STATISTICAL DATA AND ECONOMIC INFORMATION

12. It was noted that only Azerbaijan and Georgia returned the Questionnaire on the Creation of a Data Bank on Tourism Statistics of the BSEC Countries. The Center appealed Member States to follow the format of the Questionnaire and submit the necessary information in the English language in order to draw compatible findings. The participants decided that those who have not yet returned the Questionnaire, should do so by the end of September before the next Meeting of the Council of Ministers. It is expected that the Center will thereafter compile the data and make it available to the use of the Member States.

#### PRESENTATION BY THE PARTICIPATING DELEGATIONS REGARDING THE PRINCIPLE NORMATIVE ACTS IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES

13. It was agreed that the exchange of the principle normative acts in the field of tourism is a useful exercise and will continue to be a permanent item in the ensuing

meetings of the WG on Cooperation in Tourism. In the course of the active discussions in this frame, a number of delegations made presentations updating the state of their respective tourism sectors, covering the most recent measures and formative acts aiming to strengthen tourism. Written acts and other documents presented on this score were distributed to the participants. It was also suggested that normative acts could be exchanged directly among the Member States interested in their original language or by way of the PERMIS, which then would be required to be in the English language.

#### DETAILED EXCHANGE ON TOURISM EDUCATION/TRAINING INSTITUTIONS/FACILITIES IN THE BSEC COUNTRIES

14. Greece informed the WG on the training programs in general, including supply of scholarships, which she has been conducting in recent years for most of the BSEC countries. These covered all the costs including the international travel expenses. It was added that the Greek authorities are willing to go on with such programs.

15. In accordance with the Tourism Action Plan proposed by Turkey, the Latter will finalize and circulate through the PERMIS its training program in tourism foreseen to start implementation in May 2000. Those Member States, who are interested in the said program, will give their reaction to it, also indicating their pressing requirements in training together with their candidates in accordance with the conditions specified.

#### MECHANISMS/MEASURES DIRECTED TO ATTRACTING FOREIGN INVESTMENTS AND ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF INTERNATIONAL TOURISM FAIRS TOWARDS THIS END

16. It was generally accepted that organizing fairs to introduce tourism prospects in the BSEC region to the world of tourism outside is highly useful. However, it is important that the objective of such activities is well defined; i.e. as tourism investment fair and/or tourism trade fair, which obviously target different circles. The participants observed that organizing such fairs in the Black Sea region is on the rise, which is a welcome development. The Member States are invited to communicate to the Secretariat the date of such activities organized by them so that those initiatives do not coincide and in consequence the Secretariat alerts timely the Member States of the coming events for possible participation. The delegations were asked to note that an important lead to attracting foreign investments is opening national economies to the outside world with necessary liberal economic measures.

#### COOPERATION IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN GENERAL AND IN SPECIFIC FIELDS IN PARTICULAR BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS IN CONFORMITY WITH THE YALTA DECLARATION

17. The introduction of the principal private sector organizations called the Black Sea Tourism Cooperation (BSTC) to the WG, endorsed by the Council of Ministers in Sofia, was further advanced in the present Meeting by the delivery of a forward-looking Progress Report, distributed to and discussed by the participating delegations. The WG

welcomed the Report; noted that after completion of its legal identity based on a statute the BSTC will apply the BSEC for the observer status. The WG was pleased to see that BSTC is already involved with project-oriented initiatives, the “Black Sea Tourism Exchange” comprising project proposals and the “Black Sea Art Festival” emerging, among others, as the two major projects. The promotion of the “Black Sea – Destination 2000” was also endorsed as an equally promising initiative at the turn of the century and should be studied in detail in order to market it as a new and appealing regional tourism product.

At the present initial stage of its activities aiming to encompass the whole BSEC region, the BSTC has distributed a questionnaire on the institutional structure of the tourism sector in the Member States, which is expected to be replied as soon as possible and not later than the end of next September.

#### DEVELOPING COMMON MARKETING/PROMOTION STRATEGIES CULTIVATING JOINT TOURISM PRODUCTS OF THE BLACK SEA REGION

18. The WG concluded that the present level of tourism cooperation within the BSEC did not yet allow to establish an ad hoc Group of Experts composed of intergovernmental and private sector representatives in order to develop a comprehensive market strategy of the BSEC. The WG agreed to refer this item to BSTC as mentioned earlier in this report. Pending its consideration of the matter, Bulgaria proposed to postpone the convening of such a Group to a later date.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19. A participant underlined the growing importance of sustainable tourism development which requires the existence of tourism and environmental planning to be developed in coordination. In line with this, the Secretariat will be provided with the statute of European Environmental Education Foundation linked with EU, which is concerned with the environmental aspects of tourism. The said statute, to which a number of the Member States are parties, will be transmitted via the Secretariat to them for consideration and possible accession. Moreover, sustainable tourism development will be placed on the agenda of the next Meeting of the WG and a representative from the above-mentioned Foundation will be invited to brief the Member States on its implementation and progress.

#### DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

20. The Greek delegation invited the WG to hold its next meeting in Greece and suggested May 2000 as the tentative timeframe for the event. The Secretariat will duly communicate the exact date and venue to the Member States.

#### ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

21. The WG adopted the present Report for submission to the Fourteenth MMFA.

## EXPRESSION OF THANKS

22. The participants expressed their sincere gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey, and in particular to the Ministry of Tourism for all the arrangements made and hospitality extended.

23. The WG also thanked to the Observers and guests of the Meeting for their participation and contribution.