



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

**Permanent International Secretariat**

Sakıp Sabancı Cad., Müşir Fuad Paşa Yalısı, Eski Tersane, 34460 İstinye – İstanbul/Turkey

Tel: ++90 212 2296330-35 Fax: ++90 212 2296336

E-mail: [bsec@tnn.net](mailto:bsec@tnn.net) / [bsec1@tnn.net](mailto:bsec1@tnn.net) / [info@bsec-organization.org](mailto:info@bsec-organization.org)

[www.bsec-organization.org](http://www.bsec-organization.org)

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**REPORT OF THE  
MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP  
ON AGRICULTURE AND AGRO-INDUSTRY**

**Istanbul, BSEC Headquarters, 29-30 March 2011**

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry was held in Istanbul, at the BSEC Headquarters, on 29-30 March 2011.
2. The following BSEC Member States participated in the Meeting:  
  
Republic of Armenia  
Republic of Azerbaijan  
Hellenic Republic  
Republic of Moldova  
Romania  
Russian Federation  
Republic of Serbia  
Republic of Turkey
3. The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC (PABSEC) attended the Meeting as the BSEC Related Body.
4. The representative of the Czech Republic attended the Meeting as the BSEC Observer.
5. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex I.
6. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Mikhail VARDANIAN, Acting Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the Organization of BSEC.
7. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex II.

## **STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS RELATED TO AGRICULTURE AND AGRO-INDUSTRY**

8. The Working Group discussed the ways and means of implementation of the Decisions of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the BSEC Council related to agriculture and agro-industry sectors.

9. The Working Group acknowledged that the Action Plan is being implemented in general terms under the guidance of the Country-Coordinator and that the issue of food safety is being considered within the framework of the Working Group in cooperation with FAO.

## **COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF FOOD SAFETY AMONG CENTRAL COMPETENT AUTHORITIES AND NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORIES OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

10. The Working Group continued the consideration of the issue of food safety in conformity with the Decision of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the BSEC Council.

11. The representative of the Republic of Armenia made a presentation on the situation in Armenia concerning the food safety and the national food safety strategy in the Republic of Armenia. He mentioned the efforts of national authorities towards building a food safety system based on the European requirements. The Armenian representative also informed on the implementation of national legislation through the safety assurance systems, such as GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices), GHP (Good Hygiene Practices) and HACCP (Hazards Analysis and Critical Control Points).

12. The Working Group requested the Member States which did not present the information on food safety issues at the present and previous meetings to submit to PERMIS, till 30 May 2011, the relevant information in the field of food safety concerning the activities of the central competent authorities and national reference laboratories of the BSEC Member States. The BSEC Related Bodies and the BSEC Observers are also invited to share the information.

13. The representative of the Hellenic Republic made an observation concerning the application of harmonizing the national food safety standards in detriment of facilitation of trade in agricultural products.

14. The representatives of the Republic of Turkey, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Serbia briefed the Meeting on the activities of national competent agencies in the field of food safety as well as on the experience of their national companies dealing with the import/export of agricultural products in the BSEC Member States.

15. The Working Group discussed the possibility of developing mechanisms being used by the Member States for identifying and preventing the food products from deterioration. The participants agreed to further consider this issue at the next Meeting of the Working Group.

## **DISCUSSION ON THE PROPOSED BSEC-FAO PILOT PROJECT ON PROMOTING RISK ASSESSMENT OF FOOD HAZARDS AT COUNTRY LEVEL AND STRENGTHENING THE ANALYTICAL CAPACITY OF NATIONAL LABORATORIES IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

16. BSEC PERMIS informed the participants on the contacts with FAO Regional Office in Budapest and on the willingness of FAO to participate in the joint BSEC-FAO pilot project on promoting risk assessment of food hazards at country level and strengthening the analytical capacity of national laboratories in the BSEC Member States.

17. The Working Group requested PERMIS to draft, in cooperation with FAO, the concept of the pilot project, including its financial implications, and present it to the Meeting of the Working Group for further consideration.

18. The representative of the Hellenic Republic expressed the view that the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) could be one of the implementing agencies of the joint BSEC-FAO pilot project.

### **CONSULTATION ON ELABORATION OF HARMONIZING THE LABELING STANDARDS FOR FOOD PRODUCTS AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY**

19. The participants continued consultations on the elaboration of harmonizing labeling standards for food products.

20. The Working Group stressed that the proper labeling of food products is part of the food safety and quality standards and constitutes an important tool in facilitating the trade of agricultural products in the Member States.

21. The Working Group agreed to initiate the procedures for the mutual recognition of Protected Geographical Indications, Traditional Speciality Guaranteed, Protected Designation of Origin in the Member States.

22. In order to proceed with this task the Member States, Related Bodies and Observers were requested to submit to PERMIS the relevant information which would serve as a basis for the future legal framework to be considered at the next Meeting of the Working Group.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

23. The Working Group took note and made comments on the Report “GMO (genetically modified organisms) application in the BSEC countries: economic and environmental aspects” which was adopted at the 36<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the PABSEC Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee held in Moscow on 16-17 March 2011.

24. The representative of the Russian Federation informed of the annual agricultural exhibition on “Golden Autumn 2011” to be held in Moscow in October 2011, as well as on the intention of the Russian Federation, as an incoming BSEC Chairman-in-Office, to organize on the margins of the mentioned exhibition a Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of the BSEC Member States.

25. The Working Group suggested that the participation of representatives of the European Commission, in its capacity as the BSEC Observer, in the Meeting of the Working Group would be beneficial in terms of exchanging information on the EU legislation and experience in the field of food safety and labeling.

26. With this respect the Working Group agreed to include the BSEC-EU Interaction as an agenda item of the Working Group on a permanent basis.

### **DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

27. The date and venue of the next Meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry will be communicated to the BSEC Member States through BSEC PERMIS.

### **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

28. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of the Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.

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