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**REPORT
OF THE MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON COOPERATION IN COMBATING CRIME, IN PARTICULAR IN ITS
ORGANIZED FORMS, WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE
LIAISON OFFICERS ON COMBATING CRIME**

Istanbul, 17 September 2007

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms, with the participation of the Liaison Officers on Combating Crime was held in Istanbul, on 17 September 2007.
2. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Fırat SUNEL, Head of Section, Department of Security Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and Mrs. Otilia FILIP, Deputy Director, Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reforms of Romania.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Azerbaijan
 - Republic of Bulgaria
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
4. The representative of the Republic of Austria attended the Meeting as Observer.
5. The representatives of the International Organization for Migration and of the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime attended the Meeting as guests.

The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

6. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed, amended and adopted. The agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex II.

STATE OF AFFAIRS WITH RESPECT TO:

A) THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE AGREEMENT AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE BSEC PARTICIPATING STATES ON COOPERATION IN COMBATING CRIME, IN PARTICULAR IN ITS ORGANIZED FORMS, ESTABLISHING THE NETWORK OF LIAISON OFFICERS AND THE NOMINATION OF THE LIAISON OFFICERS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL

7. PERMIS informed about the state of affairs regarding the Additional Protocol to the BSEC Agreement establishing the Network of Liaison Officers and the nomination of the Liaison Officers. All BSEC Member States-signatories to the Additional Protocol have become parties to it.

8. Furthermore, nine Member States, which have ratified the Additional Protocol namely, the Republic of Bulgaria, Romania, the Republic of Turkey, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, the Hellenic Republic, Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia, have nominated their Liaison Officers.

9. Since the last Meeting of the Working Group (Istanbul, 19-20 February 2007), the Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia appointed Liaison Officers to the Network. The updated List of the Liaison Officers appointed in compliance with the Additional Protocol is attached herewith as Annex III.

B) THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL ON COMBATING TERRORISM TO THE AGREEMENT AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE BSEC PARTICIPATING STATES ON COOPERATION IN COMBATING CRIME, IN PARTICULAR IN ITS ORGANIZED FORMS

10. PERMIS informed about the state of affairs regarding the Additional Protocol on Combating Terrorism to the Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms. So far, seven out of twelve Member States-signatories to the Additional Protocol, namely the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Turkey, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Azerbaijan have become parties to it. Since the last Meeting of the Working Group on Combating Crime (Istanbul, 19-20 February 2007), the Additional Protocol was accepted by the Russian Federation and ratified by the Republic of Azerbaijan and entered into force with respect to these BSEC Member States on 26 April 2007 and 18 August 2007, respectively. The Working Group also took note of the fact that although the Republic of Albania ratified the said Additional Protocol, it would enter into force with respect to it at the same day the Republic of Albania becomes a party to the Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms. Armenia informed that the internal procedures in view of ratification reached the final stage and that it expects to be finalized by the end of the year.

11. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the Russian Federation with respect to the competent authority through which direct communication within the said Additional Protocol is ensured and invited the Member States to communicate relevant information according to para 1, Article 3 of the Additional Protocol on Combating Terrorism.

12. The Working Group called upon the Member States, which have not yet done so, to speed up their national procedures for the ratification/approval of the Additional Protocol.

13. Furthermore, the Working Group called upon the Member States to start cooperation according to the provisions of the said Additional Protocol.

DISCUSSION AND ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT ACTION PLAN TO BE SUBMITTED BY ROMANIA IN ITS CAPACITY OF THE COUNTRY-COORDINATOR OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON COOPERATION IN COMBATING CRIME, IN PARTICULAR IN ITS ORGANIZED FORMS (MAY 2007 – APRIL 2009)

14. The Working Group discussed on the Draft Action Plan for 2007-2009 submitted by Romania as the Country-Coordinator.

15. Following the discussion, the Draft Action Plan was amended and agreed by the Working Group, and recommended for implementation within the framework of the Romanian Coordinatorship. The Action Plan, as agreed by the Working Group, is attached as Annex IV of the present Report. On the basis of the Action Plan the BSEC Member States may present further proposals.

PROGRESS OF THE COOPERATION AMONG THE BSEC MEMBER STATES IN COMBATING CRIME AND TERRORISM

a) TRAINING COURSE “COUNTERING ORGANIZED CRIME INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES” (ANKARA, 2-6 JULY 2007)

16. The Working Group took note of the “Summary proceedings” of the training Course “Countering organized crime investigative techniques” (Ankara, 2-6 July 2007), welcoming the initiative undertaken by the Turkish Chairmanship. Furthermore, the participants appreciated the contribution of the said training course to strengthening regional cooperation in this important field and recommended to the Member States to organize more similar events, in cooperation with international organizations, in the future.

b) TRAINING PROGRAM FOR COMBATING TERRORISM (ANKARA-ISTANBUL, 3-14 SEPTEMBER 2007)

17. The Working Group took note with regret of the postponement of the training Program for Combating Terrorism, due to the lack of confirmation of participation on behalf of the Member States and expressed interest for the participation in such an event in the future.

18. The Turkish Delegation expressed the intention to reschedule the training program on a date to be communicated through BSEC PERMIS in due time.

c) REGIONAL SEMINAR ON TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS (ISTANBUL, 23-24 AUGUST 2007)

19. The Working Group took note with appreciation of the “Summary proceedings” of the Seminar on Trafficking in Human Beings (Istanbul, 23-24 August 2007).

20. Furthermore, it took note of the recommendations made by the experts with respect to the gradual establishment of a regional data information system on THB and respectively to the possibility of the establishment of national contact points for combating THB and agreed to consider these issues at its next Meeting.

ACTIVITIES OF THE NETWORK OF THE LIAISON OFFICERS ON COMBATING CRIME

21. PERMIS presented information on the progress achieved so far with the operationalization of the Network of Liaison Officers on Combating Crime and reminded the BSEC Council’s decision (Belgrade, 19 April 2007), which “instructed the Network to start its practical work as soon as possible”.

22. Within the discussion which followed, the Working Group took note of the fact that the Network did not start its practical work yet. Opinions were expressed that some Member States use preferably bilateral agreements for practical cooperation in this regard; another reason could be the fact that the communication of sensitive and confidential data needs a secured communication channel.

23. The Working Group, while instructing the Network to start its activity, agreed to continue guiding it and following developments and to consider the issue at its next Meeting.

DISCUSSION ON THE ELABORATION OF AN ANNUAL REVIEW WITH AN AIM OF ASSESSMENT OF THE TRENDS OF TRANS-NATIONAL CRIME IN THE BSEC REGION

24. The Working Group appreciated the draft “Guidelines” proposed by the Country Coordinator, in view of elaboration of an annual review with an aim of assessment of the trends of trans-national crime in the BSEC region and agreed to defer the deliberation to its next Meeting. The Romanian draft proposal is attached as Annex V.

25. Furthermore, the Working Group called upon the Member States to communicate their comments, amendments and proposals on the Draft by the end of November 2007. It also instructed PERMIS to draft and disseminate by the end of December 2007 an amended version based on the contribution of the Member States, to be discussed at its next Meeting.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS:

a) JOINT BSEC – UNODC PROJECT ON STRENGTHENING THE CRIMINAL-JUSTICE RESPONSE TO TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

26. PERMIS informed about the state of affairs with respect to the implementation of the Joint BSEC-UNODC Project on Strengthening the Criminal Justice Response to Trafficking in Persons in the Black Sea Region. So far, only seven BSEC Member States (Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania and Turkey) appointed national project coordinators responsible for the implementation of the joint project. It reminded the obligation of the Member States regarding the implementation of the “Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations” adopted by the BSEC Council and stressed the fact that the existing situation may be reflected in the next Progress Report of the Secretary General to be submitted to the Council.

27. The Working Group called upon the Member States, which have not yet done so, to communicate by the end of September the names of the appointed national project coordinators.

28. Furthermore, the Working Group took note of the information provided by the Country-Coordinator, UNODC and PERMIS with respect to the implementation launch, financing and the preparation work done in view of the organization of the Experts Meeting and of the Regional Conference and updated the Implementation Plan accordingly. The updated Implementation Plan is attached as Annex VI.

b) “BLACK SEA CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON MIGRATION MANAGEMENT”

29. The Working Group deliberated on the “Black Sea Consultative Process on Migration Management”, expressed its support to it and recommended it to the Committee of Senior Officials for approval. The Draft Project Proposal is attached as Annex VII.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

30. The Romanian Delegation made a statement, which is attached as Annex VIII.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

31. The date and venue of the next Meeting will be communicated in due time through BSEC PERMIS, after consultations with the Chairman-in-Office and the Country-Coordinator.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

32. The present Report was adopted for submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials and the Seventeenth Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.