



**BS/C/WG/R(2007)1**

**REPORT OF THE  
MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON  
CULTURE**

**Sounion, 2-3 July 2007**

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Culture was held in Sounion, Athens, on 2-3 July 2007.

2. The Meeting was co-chaired by Dr. Vivi VASSILOPOULOU, Director General of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage, Mr. Loucas IAKOVAKIS, Director General of Modern Culture and Dr. Alkistis SOULOGIANNI, Director of International Relations, Ministry of Culture of the Hellenic Republic, in their capacity as representatives of the Country-Coordinator.

3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Armenia  
Republic of Azerbaijan  
Republic of Bulgaria  
Georgia  
Hellenic Republic  
Republic of Moldova  
Romania  
Russian Federation  
Republic of Serbia  
Republic of Turkey  
Ukraine

4. The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) and the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) also participated in the Meeting.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

5. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex I.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE TERMS REFERENCE**

6. The Representative of BSEC PERMIS presented introductory information with reference to the background of the establishment of the Working Group, pointing out that the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Moscow, 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 1 November 2006) adopted a resolution approving the establishment of the Working Group, the Terms of Reference for the Working Group, and nominated the Hellenic Republic as the Country-Coordinator.

7. The BSEC PERMIS Representative elaborated on substance of the Terms of Reference and observed that the Working Group is expected to be guided by them as a major tool for promoting and developing the cooperation among the BSEC Member States.

8. The participants took note of the Information provided by the Representative of the BSEC PERMIS, as a follow-up of the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Moscow, 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 1 November 2006). They acknowledged the necessity to provide the Country Coordinator, at least 35 days before the Council Meeting, with information on the proceedings in regard to the commitments they have taken between two Meetings of the Working Group with the aim to facilitate the task of the Country-Coordinator to prepare the progress report and present it to the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

## **PRESENTATIONS FOLLOWED BY INTERVENTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ON AXES FOR CULTURAL COOPERATION IN THE WIDER BLACK SEA AREA, SUCH AS:**

- a. NETWORKS OF CO-OPERATION IN THE FIELD OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE**
- b. CULTURAL ITINERARIES**
- c. INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE**

9. The Member States representatives elaborated on the sub-item issue of “Networks of co-operation in the wider Black Sea area”, and concluded to proceed step by step with the aim to establish networks enhancing cultural cooperation.

10. The participants decided to gather additional information on ways and means to implement this task. The Country-Coordinator, after receiving the said information, will provide a final built-up for the implementation.

11. Cultural Itineraries is a relatively long standing issue in culture that was considered on many occasions at international and regional meetings in the field of culture. The participants made presentations and exchanged views on the issue. They concluded to continue with drafting concrete ways and proposals for the implementation of the following projects:

- a) The Routes of the Olive Tree;
- b) The Vine Routes;
- c) Intercultural Encounters on Maritime, River and Lake Routes.

12. The project proposals of Greece “Black Sea Coins – Coin Routes”, of Azerbaijan “The Myths of two Seas”, and of Serbia “Route of the Roman Emperors” were presented and it was suggested that they be included in the Action Plan.

13. Intercultural dialogue is the core of any discussion on culture, therefore the Member States agreed to entrust the Country-Coordinator with the task of investigating practical means for the BSEC Member States to become partners to the 2008 EU Year of Intercultural Dialogue with eventual reference to a separate regional round table.

14. The participants decided to include topics such as cultural tourism, cultural heritage, marketing of destinations, cultural corridors in the Southeast Europe, especially the Danube Cultural Corridor, in the Action Plan and further elaborate on them at the next meeting of the Working Group.

15. The participants exchanged views on cultural events in the Member States, activities concerning the restoration of monuments, joint engagement with UNESCO to protect intangible cultural heritage and publications on various issues in the domain of culture, and decided to attach particular importance to those issues in the framework of the activities of the Working Group.

#### **EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON CULTURAL CO-OPERATION AMONG BSEC MEMBER STATES AND ON A WIDER SCOPE**

16. The participants took note of the information on the Workshop “Wine, Culture, Tourism Exchange”, organized by the Council of Europe within the framework of the Kyiv Initiative Regional Program, on 28-30 June 2007, in Kusadasi, Turkey.

#### **ELABORATION OF THE DRAFT SOUNION STATEMENT OF THE MINISTERS FOR CULTURE OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

17. The participants deliberated on the Draft Sounion Statement of the Ministers for Culture of the BSEC Member States and decided to submit it for adoption at the First Meeting of the Ministers for Culture of the BSEC Member States (Sounion, 4 July 2007). The Draft Statement is attached as Annex II.

#### **ELABORATION ON THE DRAFT ACTION PLAN 2006-2008**

18. The Country Coordinator presented to the Working Group the Draft two-year Action Plan (2006-2008).

19. The Draft Action Plan was discussed by the participants and it was decided that its approval be postponed. The participants agreed to a time span for the Member States to communicate their suggestions and amendments for the Draft Action Plan through PERMIS for the Country-Coordinator to present with a consolidated, revised Draft Action Plan.

20. The participants agreed that the Member States should submit their comments on the Draft Action Plan by 10 August 2007.

21. The Draft Action Plan once revised by the Country-Coordinator is to be transmitted to the Member States through PERMIS, not later than 6 September 2007.

22. The consolidated revised Draft Action Plan, should there be no comments, will be adopted at the level of the Working Group through Silence procedure, by 28 September 2007.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

23. The Country-Coordinator of the Working Group informed the participants on its Focal Point for the Chairman-in-Office and the Member States: Dr. Alkistis SOULOGIANNI (Mrs.), Director of International Relations, Hellenic Ministry of Culture (Tel: +30 210 8201956, fax: +30 210 8201779, e-mail: dds@culture.gr) and Ms. Vassiliki PAPAKOSTOPOULOU, Senior Officer, Section of International Organizations, Directorate of International Relations, Hellenic Ministry of Culture (Tel: +30 210 8201782, fax: +30 210 8201779, e-mail: vassopap@gmail.com).

24. The Representative of Ukraine informed the participants that Ukraine, as the next Chairman-in-Office, decided to include in the Calendar of Events of its Chairmanship-in-Office a Meeting of the Working Group on Culture and a Ministerial Meeting. The date and venue of the Meeting will be communicated to the Member States through PERMIS.

### **EXPRESSION OF THANKS**

25. The Participants expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of Culture of the Hellenic Republic for the warm hospitality extended to them and for the excellent organization of the Meeting.

### **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING**

26. The Working Group adopted the present Report and submitted it for consideration to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials of BSEC Member States.