



Annex V to BS/EPM/R(2006)1

**JOINT DECLARATION
ADOPTED AT THE MEETING
OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

(Bucharest, 3 March 2006)

The Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection and Heads of Delegations of the BSEC Member States met in Bucharest, Romania, on 3 March 2006.

Fully aware that in the 21st century environmental protection is considered an integral part of human welfare and well-being,

Noting the gradual degradation of the environment in the Black Sea region in the last decades and the need to undertake appropriate measures in order to rehabilitate and preserve it for the present and future generations,

Acknowledging that only through regional cooperation and substantial support from the international community can a clean and healthy environment be assured,

Confirming their commitment to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the protection of the environment in the Black Sea region,

Stressing the need to fully comply with the provisions of the BSEC Charter, the BSEC Summit Declarations, the BSEC Economic Agenda for the Future and the Document adopted by the Ministers in charge of Environmental Protection of the BSEC Member States in Thessaloniki on 23 September 1999,

Taking into account the Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution (1992) and the other relevant international conventions and agreements,

Determined to act in the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on Environment and Development (Rio Declaration) and Agenda 21 and, in consistency with the framework, the priorities and the targets set by the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as with the relevant rules of international law, with a view to achieve progress in the protection of their environment,

Emphasizing that strengthening relations with the European Union and interested international and regional organizations, in particular in the environmental field, would create an additional impetus for the BSEC Member States towards increased cooperation in the region and would contribute to the close interaction with other regional organizations,

The Ministers in Charge of Environmental Protection and Heads of Delegations of the BSEC Member States:

1. *Endorse* the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection as a means of achieving the goals set forth in this Declaration and as a practical instrument expressing our commitment to address the environmental challenges arising in the Black Sea region and to provide long term prosperity in this area.
2. *Reiterate* our strong commitment to further develop co-operation between the countries of the Black Sea region in the field of environment, with the aim to achieve sustainable development.
3. *Welcome* the incorporation of environmentally important approaches in the economic and social development of the BSEC countries with particular attention paid to the promotion of innovative, environmentally friendly and resource saving technologies.
4. *Underline* the importance of an enhanced cooperation among the BSEC Member States focused, *inter alia*, on joint scientific-technical research and programs, elaboration and execution of cooperation projects, exchange of scientific and technical information, exchange of experts, researchers and representatives of non-governmental organizations, organizing training programs, meetings, conferences and symposia.
5. *Reaffirm* the importance of the development in the BSEC Member States of harmonized legislation on environmental protection based on the best practice and experience in the Pan-European region, taking into account the EU legal framework. Recall, in this context, the need for a harmonized legislation concerning the protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment.
6. *Emphasize* that BSEC, as a regional economic organization, may offer new opportunities for a fruitful cooperation in the field of environmental protection with the European Union, whose frontiers will soon border the Black Sea. The cooperation with the EU, as well as with other regional organizations, such as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Central European Initiative (CEI) and the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), should be action-oriented and focused on concrete projects in this field.
7. *Undertake* to further enhance the co-operation between BSEC and the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, as well as with other regional initiatives meant to enforce solidarity in the field of environmental protection. Special attention should be paid also to the development of co-operative relations with international organizations, such as the UN, UNECE, UNCSD, UNEP, UNDP, UN FAO, UNESCO and the World Bank in order to secure funds from all available sources for the regional oriented projects of mutual interest.
8. *Express* our gratitude to the Government and the People of Romania for the warm hospitality extended to us during the Meeting.