



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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BS/CT/WG/R(2012)1

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

Belgrade, the Republic of Serbia, 23 February 2012

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (WGCT) was held in Belgrade, the Republic of Serbia, on 23 February 2012.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Ambassador Milisav PAIC, National Coordinator of the Serbian Chairmanship-in-Office of the BSEC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
4. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present Report.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

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

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF TOURISM OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

6. The representative of the BSEC PERMIS informed on ways and dynamics of the implementation of the Resolution of the 15th BSEC Council (Moscow, 1 November 2006), since the last BSEC Council Meeting (Moscow, December 2011) with reference to the activities of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism.

7. The participants acknowledged information on the issue provided by the BSEC PERMIS and expressed willingness to proceed actively in securing the necessary dynamics of the implementation of the Council Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations, as well as the Ministerial Declaration.

CULTURAL TOURISM PROJECTS IMPLEMENTATION

8. The BSEC PERMIS representative recalled the background of the consideration of the issue of cultural tourism projects implementation in the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism and Working Group on Culture. Upon the suggestion of the PERMIS, the Working Group agreed that a Joint meeting of the two Working Groups be organized in Istanbul, in September 2012, in order to consider the cultural tourism/cultural routes projects.

9. The representatives of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Serbia informed that the Memorandum of Understanding on the project on “Cultural Route of the Roman Emperors”, proposed by the Republic of Serbia and supported by the Republic of Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia (the BSEC Observer), will be signed in Sremski Karlovci/Republic of Serbia, on 24 February 2012.

10. The representative of the Republic of Turkey informed on the preparation for the Conference on Silk Road, to be held in Istanbul in September 2012, following the Meeting of the Joint BSEC Working Groups on Cooperation in Tourism and on Culture.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE FRAMEWORKS OF BSEC TOURISM COOPERATION

11. The BSEC PERMIS representative recalled that a number of proposals concerning institutional structure frameworks on tourism cooperation were discussed during the past several years with no final conclusion. He invited the Member States to make their comments and observations on the following items:

- a) “The International Standing Secretariat on BSEC Cooperation in Tourism” (proposed by the Hellenic Republic);
- b) “Forum on Cooperation of the Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies of the BSEC Member States” (proposed by the Hellenic Republic);
- c) “A Common BSEC Tourism Marketing Council” (proposed by Georgia);
- d) “A Branding of the Black Sea Region” (proposed by the Republic of Bulgaria).

12. Upon the request of the representative of the Hellenic Republic, the Working Group decided to defer sub-items 11a) and 11b) for the future consideration.

13. The Working Group decided to come back to the discussion on the sub-item 11c) at its next meetings.

14. Upon the request of the representative of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Working Group decided to defer sub-item 11d) for future consideration.

TOURISM COOPERATION AREAS:

a) Maritime and Nautical Tourism Cooperation

15. The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General underlined that the high-cost of porting fees were hampering the implementation of the Motorways of the Sea project and suggested that this problem be addressed by the relevant authorities of the BSEC Member States.

16. He also informed about the outcome of the Sea Trade Winter Cruising Forum, held in Istanbul, in December 2011.

17. The Working Group decided to continue discussions on the issue at the next WGCT Meeting.

b) Balneology, Wellness and Spa Tourism

18. The Working Group decided to continue discussions at its next Meeting for further promoting Balneology, Wellness and Spa Tourism.

c) Creative Tourism

19. Upon the request of the representative of Romania, the Working Group decided to postpone the consideration of this item to its next Meeting.

d) University Environment Integration for Specialist Training in Tourism Sphere of the Black Sea Region

20. The representative of the State University of Saint-Petersburg of the Russian Federation informed on the state of affairs with regard to University Environment Integration for Specialist Training in Tourism Sphere of the Black Sea Region.

21. He has also informed that a meeting of the university representatives from the BSEC Member States would be organized in Saint-Petersburg, in June 2012.

22. The BSEC PERMIS representative informed that, in the meantime, the Republic of Moldova, the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey announced their support to the initiative.

NATIONAL POLICIES AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

23. The participants underlined the importance of the issue of sustainable tourism development in the BSEC Member States.

24. The representatives of the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Serbia welcomed the International Conference on Sustainable Rural Tourism (Belgrade, 22-24 February 2012) and its contribution to the tourism development in the BSEC region.

25. The Working Group called upon the Member States to regularly exchange available statistical data on tourism through the BSEC PERMIS.

PARTICIPATION IN TOURIST EVENTS AND FAIRS HELD IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

26. The Working Group took note of information that the International Tourism Fair was inaugurated in Belgrade on 23 February 2012.

27. The representative of the Republic of Turkey invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the International Tourism Fair "Travel Turkey", to be held in Izmir in December 2012, and in the Eastern-Mediterranean International Travel and Tourism Fair (EMITT), to be organized in Istanbul in February 2013.

28. The representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan informed that the International Tourism Fair with the support of UNWTO and the Workshop on the Silk Road project, would be held in Baku on 12-14 April 2012, and invited the BSEC Member States to participate in these events.

29. The representative of Romania informed that the Romanian Tourism Fair – TTR edition 2011 would take place in Bucharest on 15-18 March 2012, and the International Fair for the Development of Danube Macro-region would be held in Bucharest from 28 June till 1 July 2012.

30. The representative of the Republic of Bulgaria stressed the importance of Joint Promotional and Marketing Campaign of the BSEC Member States in the field of tourism with regard to third countries.

31. The Working Group invited the Member States to inform the BSEC PERMIS before the end of current year on the tourism events they are planning to organize in the following year.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF): PROJECT APPLICATIONS IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM

32. The Working Group took note of the information, provided by the representative of the BSEC PERMIS on new Manual of Operations of the BSEC PDF. The Working Group invited the Member States to submit to the BSEC PERMIS their proposals on the priority project areas for the PDF funding in the field of tourism by the end of April 2012.

33. The Working Group requested the BSEC PERMIS to prepare a list of priorities for PDF funding on the basis of the BSEC Member States contributions.

34. The representative of the Republic of Bulgaria suggested to study the possibility of developing a common monitoring system for exchange of statistical information in the field of tourism as a possible priority.

35. The representative of the Russian Federation suggested to organize a joint educational and research program on tourism and to include it as a possible priority area.

36. Due to limited financial resources that BSEC have at its disposal, the Member States were invited to make their voluntary contributions to the BSEC Project Development Fund.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

37. The representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan informed of the state of affairs with regard to the initiative of launching a web-site on tourism of the BSEC Member States in the future.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

38. The participants expressed their sincere gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the excellent organization of the Meeting in Belgrade and for the hospitality extended to the participants.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

39. The Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism adopted the present Report and submitted it for consideration to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.