



BS/CT/WG/R(2009)1

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

Istanbul, BSEC Headquarters, 9-10 March 2009

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism was held in Istanbul, at the BSEC Headquarters, on 9-10 March 2009.
2. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Armen VOSKANYAN, Counselor of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia to BSEC, and Mr. Beka JAKELI, Acting Head of the Department of Tourism and Resorts, Ministry of Economic Development of Georgia.
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
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Serbia
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
4. The representative of the BSEC Business Council also participated in the Meeting as the BSEC Related Body.
5. The representative of the Council of Europe also participated as Guest. The list of participants of the Meeting 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**.

ADOPTION OF THE TWO YEARS ACTION PLAN OF THE WGCT

7. The participants discussed, amended and adopted the Action Plan, which is attached as **Annex III**.

PRESENTATION AND CONSIDERATION OF IDEAS AND PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM AMONG BSEC MEMBER STATES (Follow-up of elaboration of the proposals of national delegations agreed at the Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism held in Istanbul, March 2008)

a) State of affairs with regard to creating a web-site on Tourism in the BSEC Member States;

8. The representatives of the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Serbia and Ukraine were invited to provide their respective tourism web-sites to be linked to BSEC PERMIS and the BSEC Business Council official web-site.

9. The representative of Romania informed that Romania is preparing a brochure on the BSEC Tourism that would be communicated to the Member States for consideration and joining in. Details on the issue will be transmitted to the Member States through PERMIS in due course.

b) Assessment on possibilities for providing Visa Facilitation for Tourism among BSEC Member States;

10. The participants stressed the importance of visa facilitation for tourism activities in the BSEC Member States and decided to continue to explore ways for cooperation in this field.

c) Exchange of views on participation at Tourist Events and Fairs held in BSEC Member States;

11. The representative of the Russian Federation informed about the Exhibition "INTOURMARKET 2009" (Moscow, March 2009) and of the additional relevant information available on web-site: www.itmexpo.ru. The said information was communicated to the Member States by BSEC PERMIS Note No: BS/INFO.2009.0068 dated 27 January 2009.

DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE ATHENS 'FORUM ON COOPERATION OF THE ASSOCIATIONS OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM AGENCIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

12. The representative of the Hellenic Republic briefed on the two days "Forum on Cooperation of the Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation" held in Athens on November 2008, as well as informed that the next Forum will be organized in Athens in autumn 2009.

13. The representative of the Hellenic Republic expressed readiness to communicate to BSEC Member States a Note inviting them to designate representative(s) of their relevant national Associations of Travel and Tourism Agencies.

COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM PROMOTION OF THE BSEC REGION:

a) General overview;

14. There was no discussion on the issue.

b) Exchange of views and preliminary discussion on creating a common branding of the Black Sea region as tourist destination;

15. The representative of the Republic of Bulgaria invited the participants to consider the issue of creating a branding of the Black Sea region.

16. The representative of the Republic Bulgaria requested BSEC PERMIS to communicate to the Member States a Note inviting them to send comments and suggestions on the Bulgarian conceptualization of the BSEC brand.

REVIEW AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON NATIONAL POLICIES AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN BSEC COUNTRIES:

a) Exchange of views on national policies and best practice that could be of interest to each and every Member State, such as information concerning incentives for tourist investments provided by BSEC national legislations;

17. The participants decided in principle to exchange National law on Tourism through BSEC PERMIS in due course.

b) Exchange of views and conceiving best application of European experience in tourism field with retrospective view on project “Action for Sustainable European Tourism”;

18. There was no discussion under this sub-item of the Agenda.

COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN TOURISM

19. The representative of the Russian Federation informed on annually held events in Russia with respect to education and training in tourism, such as:

- Conference on education in the field of tourism within the framework of international Tourism Fair “INTOURMARKET”;
- Round Table on Education in the field of tourism within the framework of the Annual Conference in Gelendzhik.

20. The Russian Side invited the BSEC Member States to take part in the above mentioned events.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TOURISM OF THE MEMBER STATES (IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION OF THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TOURISM OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES - RHODES DECLARATION, 31 MARCH 2005)

21. The representative of BSEC PERMIS informed the participants on ways and dynamism of the implementation of the Resolution of the 15th Council (Moscow, 1 November 2006) with reference to the activities of the Working Group.

22. The participants acknowledged the presentation related to implementation of the Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations of the Council and the Declarations and Joint Statements of the Ministers responsible for Tourism. There were no conclusions drawn up.

23. The participants acknowledged the willingness of the Country-Coordinator to prepare the Evaluation Report on the activities of the Working Group and submit it to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials to be held in Yerevan on 14-15 April 2009.

PRESENTATION BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE ON “THE WINE CULTURAL TOURISM EXCHANGE PROJECT” AND THE FOLLOW-UP ON BSEC WGCT–COE DGIV COOPERATION IN THAT RESPECT

24. The representative of the Council of Europe made presentation on the WCTE Project and invited the BSEC to participate in it actively. Presentations are attached as **Annex IV**.

25. The participants expressed their full support to the Council of Europe WCTE Project and agreed to cooperate on it. The modalities of cooperation will be determined by the Working Group and BSEC PERMIS upon receipt of concrete suggestions from the Council of Europe.

A COMMON BSEC MARKETING COUNCIL – EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

26. The Georgian Side expressed its readiness to establish a Common BSEC Tourism Marketing Council.

27. The participants agreed to defer the issue to the next meeting of the Working Group.

MARITIME AND NAUTICAL TOURISM COOPERATION AMONG MEMBER STATES: PROGRESS EVALUATION ON RELEVANT ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN WITH AIM TO ENHANCE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL COOPERATION

28. The participants decided to postpone the discussions on maritime and nautical tourism cooperation for the next meeting.

29. The participants agreed to invite a representative of the International Association for Tourism Promotion “Danube” to the next meeting of the Working Group.

SETTING-UP CULTURAL TOURISM PLANS

30. The participants decided to organize a joint meeting with the Working Group on Culture and discuss the issue in details.

31. The participants entrusted BSEC PERMIS with the task to invite the Working Group on Culture for a joint meeting and thereupon to secure the holding of the joint meeting in 2009.

32. The participants invited the Republic of Azerbaijan as a forthcoming Chairman-in-Office to explore the possibility of convening joint meeting of the BSEC Working Groups on Cooperation in Tourism and on Culture, while drafting the Calendar of the BSEC Events.

FOLLOW-UP OF THE CONFERENCE “BLACK SEA CRUISES 2008” (ODESSA, 24-25 SEPTEMBER 2008)

33. The participants decided to exchange their ideas and suggestions on the issue through BSEC PERMIS.

DISCUSSION ON THE ISSUE OF THE BSEC CONFERENCE “DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE BLACK SEA REGION” (GELENDZHIK, 8-9 OCTOBER 2008) WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ISSUES OF INVESTMENTS, RESORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRAINING OF PERSONNEL

34. The participants decided to continue the discussions at the next meeting of the Working Group in order to establish a mechanism for the preparatory stage of the interconnections of the Gelendzhik Conference resolutions and the activities of the Working Group.

35. The representative of the Russian Federation informed the Member States about the practical results of the Conference, held in Gelendzhik in 2008, stressing the growing success of this event.

36. The BSEC PERMIS is kindly requested to promote an effective international support of the Conference among the Member States for attracting a larger number of participants.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

a) Initial exchange of views on the preparations of the BSEC Ministerial Meeting on Tourism to be held later in 2009 or in the beginning of 2010;

37. The participants decided to start preparations for the Ministerial Meeting, which could be held by the end of 2009, and entrusted the Country-Coordinator to prepare together with BSEC PERMIS a draft Ministerial Declaration in due course.

b) Setting an eventual date and a venue of the next WGCT meeting;

38. The date and the venue of the next Meeting of the Working Group will be communicated by the Country-Coordinator through the BSEC PERMIS in due time.

c) New PDF Manual of Operation – Project Priorities;

39. The participants took note of the presentation made by the BSEC PERMIS Project Coordinator on New PDF Manual of Operation – Project Priorities and on the BSEC-Hellenic Development Fund. The new PDF Manual of Operation and the Terms of Reference of the BSEC-Hellenic Development Fund are attached as **Annex V**.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

40. The Working Group adopted the present Report and submitted it for consideration to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States to be held in Yerevan on 14-15 April 2009.
