



BS/WG/AAI/R(2010)1

**REPORT OF THE
MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON AGRICULTURE AND AGRO-INDUSTRY**

Sofia, 13 April 2010

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry was held in Sofia on 13 April 2010.
2. The following BSEC Member States participated in the Meeting:

Republic of Albania
Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
Hellenic Republic
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
3. The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC (PABSEC) attended the Meeting as BSEC Related Body.
4. The Meeting was attended by the representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt in its capacity as a BSEC Observer.
5. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) participated at the Meeting as an Official Guest.
6. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex I.
7. Dr. Tzvetan DIMITROV, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Bulgaria, made an inaugural statement. In his statement Dr. DIMITROV stated the willingness of Bulgaria to cooperate with the Member States of the BSEC based on the Action Plan to be adopted by the Working Group. He also mentioned the efforts of the Working Group to identify the projects in the field of agriculture and agro-industry to be implemented in the BSEC Member States.
8. Mr. Alexander BAKALOV, Head of Department of Regional Cooperation, Neighboring Countries Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, made a welcome

address on behalf of H.E. Mr. Nikolay MLADENOV, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria. In his address Mr. BAKALOV mentioned the efforts and activities of Bulgaria carried out in the BSEC as the Country that holds the sessional Chairmanship of the BSEC. He also stated that the future activities of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry reflected in the Action Plan, elaborated by Armenia as the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group, will strengthen the cooperation of the BSEC Member States in this field.

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

10. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mrs. Evgeniya VALEVA, Director of European Coordination and International Relations Directorate, and Mrs. Iliana HRISTOVA, Head of International Relations Department, European Coordination and International Relations Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Bulgaria.

CONSIDERATION OF THE ACTION PLAN OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR 2010-2011

11. The Working Group considered and amended the Action Plan on the activities of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry for 2010-2011.

12. The Working Group agreed that the Plan of Action will aim to intensify the cooperation of the Member States in the field of agriculture and agro-industry and will facilitate the interaction of the relevant institutions of the Member States while implementing regional programs and projects of common interest.

13. The Working Group took note of the Work Program for 2010-2011 and agreed to submit to PERMIS the events and activities related to agriculture and agro-industry planned in the BSEC Member States for their inclusion into the BSEC Calendar of Events for 2010-2011.

14. The Action Plan and Work Program as adopted by the Working Group are attached as Annex III.

DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF FOOD SAFETY

15. The Working Group continued the consideration of the issues related to food safety, initiated at its previous meetings.

16. Dr. Ventseslava TASEVA, Director of Animal Health and Food Safety Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, made a presentation on “Establishing a Food Safety Agency and a Risk Assessment Centre”. In the presentation Dr. TASEVA acknowledged the eventual establishment of the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency as the main organ entrusted with the control of food safety and food quality. She mentioned the future objectives of the Agency and identified its activities in the implementation of relevant directives of the European Union. The presentation is attached as Annex IV.

17. Following the presentation the representatives of the Member States had an exchange of information concerning the establishment and functioning of the National Food Safety Agencies

and expressed the wish to share the national experience in this respect. Specifically it was mentioned the delimitation of responsibilities of different Ministries in enforcing the food safety legislation in the Member States.

18. Mrs. Eleonora DUPOUY, Food Safety and Consumer Protection Officer, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia in Budapest, made a presentation on “Food safety and its relevance for food security”. In her presentation Mrs. DUPOUY mentioned the importance of food safety for food security and adequate nutrition. She touched upon the issue of climate change implications for food safety, as well as the vulnerability of public health against the spread of diseases that have an impact on food safety and nutrition. The presentation is attached as Annex V.

19. Mr. Milan KUZNIK, Senior Adviser from the Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of Serbia, made a presentation, entitled “Harmonization of current regulations of Serbia with EU requirements in the field of food safety”, attached as Annex VI. He mentioned the importance of the efficient management of food safety system based on a food safety strategy on internationally recognized principles. He also informed the Working Group on the legislation of his country related to food safety and security of nutrition.

20. The Working Group took note of the draft report and recommendation 114/2010 of the Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee of the PABSEC on “Food security in the BSEC Member States” which contains an analysis on the state of play with the security of food at large and in the BSEC countries in particular.

21. The Working Group mentioned that the conclusions of the report aim at strengthening the food security in the Black Sea area.

22. The Working Group pointed out to several proposals to the PABSEC recommendation and suggested that some specific proposals made by the representatives of the Member States be incorporated in the PABSEC documents to be adopted by the 35th Plenary session of PABSEC General Assembly scheduled for 2 June 2010 in Belgrade as a recommendatory document for the Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC Member States.

FINAL REPORT ON PDF PROJECT “FATTY LIVER INCIDENCE ON MINI DAIRY COW FARMS IN SERBIA, ROMANIA AND REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA”

23. In conformity with the Manual of Operations of the BSEC Project Development Fund (PDF) the Working Group considered and assessed the Final report on PDF project “Fatty Liver Incidence on Mini Dairy Cow Farms in Serbia, Romania and Republic of Moldova”.

24. The Working Group concluded that the Final report on this PDF project has been completed in conformity with relevant provisions of PDF Manual of Operations and that it is in conformity with the adopted priorities of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry.

25. The Working Group agreed that the participants would inform the relevant institutions and private companies in their own countries regarding the possibility to submit project proposals to the BSEC PDF.

COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

26. The Working Group expressed its readiness to extend cooperation with regional and international organizations, specifically Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as well as Codex Alimentarius in implementing in the BSEC region projects and programs of common interest, related to food safety.

27. The Working Group reiterated the view that participation of the Commission of the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution in the meetings of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry would be beneficial as the Commission, as a BSEC Observer, is negotiating the Draft Convention for Fisheries and Conservation of Living Resources of the Black Sea (CFCLRBS). The Working Group expressed its readiness to assist the Commission in negotiating the Draft Convention and finalizing its legal framework.

28. The Working Group stated that it would be also beneficial if the European Commission would also participate as a BSEC Observer in the meetings of the Working Group.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

29. The Working Group took note of the meeting of the incoming (Republic of Armenia) and outgoing (Russian Federation) Country-Coordinators held on 12 April 2010 in Sofia. It was noted that the Country-Coordinators discussed the draft Action Plan for the Working Group prepared by the Republic of Armenia and stated that it represents a continuity of the previous 2-year Action Plan implemented by the Working Group while the Russian Federation was the Country-Coordinator. The Country-Coordinators also mentioned the food safety as one of the priorities for activities of the Working Group for the next 2 years.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

30. The participants expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the Host Country of the Meeting, for the hospitality and excellent conditions extended to them during their stay in Sofia.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

31. The date and venue of the next Meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture and Agro-Industry will be communicated to the BSEC Member States through BSEC PERMIS.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

32. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of the Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States to be held in Sofia on 26-27 May 2010.