



**JOINT STATEMENT ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF INTERNAL  
AFFAIRS OF THE BSEC PARTICIPATING STATES  
Yerevan, 17 October 1996**

**We, Ministers of Internal Affairs and Heads of Delegations of the BSEC Participating States:** Republic of Albania, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, Hellenic Republic, Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Republic of Turkey and Ukraine,

- taking into account the principles and terms of the Statement adopted at the High Level Meeting of the BSEC Participating States in Bucharest on 30 June 1995, and in particular its provision regarding undertaking concerted actions through bilateral agreements with the view of combating organized crime, drug dealing, illicit traffic of weapons and radioactive materials, all acts of terrorism and illegal border crossings and the main international instruments, including the relevant United Nations General Assembly Resolutions and Declarations in the field of fighting against all forms of criminal activities mentioned above,
- meeting in Yerevan for the first time to discuss the issues of creating the basis for international cooperation and elaboration of effective ways and measures in the said fields,
- being anxious of the rough increase of the organized crime during the previous decade both on national and international levels, which is a serious threat to internal security and stability of the independent states, and taking as a basis the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan adopted by the World Ministerial Conference on Transnational Crime held in Naples, Italy, in 1994,
- being aware of cases of growing linkage between terrorism and organized crime, illegal traffic in drugs and weapons which represent serious threat to international relations, peace, democracy and fundamental human rights,
- being concerned with the increase of trans-national crime, and in particular with the emergence of relatively new forms of crime, such as illegal traffic of radioactive materials and dangerous wastes as well as computer related crime,
- paying special attention to the effective cooperation of the BSEC countries in elaborating measures of combating illegal migration,
- stressing the importance of mutual understanding, mutual benefit and equity of the BSEC countries as the basis for cooperation in combating crime,
- taking into account the differences in legislations and law-enforcement systems of the BSEC States which often complicate effective cooperation in the said field,
- stressing the importance of the effective implementation of the UN programs related to crime prevention and control in the BSEC region,
- expressing firm determination to undertake within the competence of our Ministries necessary measures towards purposeful implementation of the provisions of the Statement with strict observance of legislations and international obligations of our States including those related to the field of protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

declare that fight against criminality, especially in its organized forms, should be considered as a top priority task, mobilizing to its implementation not only governmental structures' efforts, but also mass media, appropriate private institutions, NGOs and the whole population. It is appropriate to work out a concept as a basis for national measures and regional cooperation in the BSEC area in the said fields taking into consideration the international agreements.

We consider it necessary to take all the appropriate measures to cut off financial sources of criminality, especially to deprive criminals of their illegal proceeds. We are convinced that the accomplishment of these goals and tasks will be facilitated by the adoption of concrete projects and measures which will include, *inter alia*:

- strengthening the international legal basis of cooperation of law-enforcement agencies of the BSEC Participating States both by acceding, if it has not yet done, to the existing international and regional conventions and agreements in the field of combating crime or by concluding, in case of necessity, new bilateral and multilateral agreements in the BSEC region;

- introduction of the mechanism of implementation of bilateral interministerial and intergovernmental agreements:

- a) signing protocols to the agreements defining plans of basic actions of collaboration for the one/two year period;

- b) establishing direct contacts between the heads of main operative services of the co-partner ministries, frontier territorial police (militia) bodies;

- c) holding on a regular basis of expert meetings of law-enforcement bodies of the BSEC States for coordination of joint actions on combating specific types of organized crime, terrorism, illegal migration, drug dealing and other grave crimes of international nature; to hold as a first step in this direction in the first half of 1997, a meeting of the heads of law-enforcement agencies dealing with illegal drug trafficking;

- d) expanding the use of the liaison officers or police attachés in the countries of the BSEC on the basis of bilateral agreements;

- elaboration of appropriate measures of bilateral and multilateral cooperation to counter illegal migration taking into account socio-economic factors, internal legislation and international standards;

- cooperation in the sphere of training of personnel of the respective law-enforcement bodies;

- exchange of experience, including holding of meetings, seminars, conferences, training of staff of operative divisions in appropriate law-enforcement agencies of other BSEC Participating States ;

- exchange of legislative and other normative legal acts regulating relations in the sphere of combating crime in order to get acquainted with legal space, in which the partners in other BSEC Participating States are acting and if possible, to use foreign experience in the process of law-making activities in their own States;

- cooperation in the sphere of logistics and forensic support of our Ministries' activities.

We call upon both intergovernmental, first of all UN, European Union, the Council of Europe, OECD, and NGOs to take active steps in elaboration and implementation of projects in the BSEC Participating States in the sphere of crime prevention and control. We consider it advisable to hold on a regular basis Meetings of Ministers of Interior of the BSEC States for further developing cooperation not less than once in two years.