



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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**REPORT
OF THE JOINT MEETING
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUPS
ON CULTURE AND ON COOPERATION IN TOURISM**

BSEC Headquarters, 21 October 2015

1. The Joint Meeting of the BSEC Working Groups on Culture and on Cooperation in Tourism was held at the BSEC Headquarters, on 21 October 2015.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mrs. Brândușa PREDESCU, Special Representative of the Romanian Chairmanship-in-Office to BSEC, Minister Plenipotentiary, Consulate General of Romania in Istanbul.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Albania
Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The representative of the European Centre for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments attended as guest.
5. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present Report.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

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

CULTURAL ROUTES / CULTURAL TOURISM PROJECTS:

A) PROGRESS REPORT PREPARED BY THE BSEC PERMIS

B) PRESENTATION OF PROJECTS BY MEMBER STATES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

C) DISCUSSION ON WAYS AND MEANS TO IMPLEMENT JOINT PROJECTS

7. The Joint Meeting took note of the Progress Report on the Implementation of the Cultural Routes / Cultural Tourism projects, prepared by the BSEC PERMIS (attached as **Annex III**).

8. The Chairperson invited the representatives of the Member States proponents of the projects, first to present updated information on the already existing projects and then to deliver presentations on the new projects.

9. The representatives of the following BSEC Member States presented updated information on the already existing Cultural Routes / Cultural Tourism projects: Republic of Bulgaria, Hellenic Republic, Republic of Serbia, Republic of Turkey, Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Armenia and Romania.

10. The representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan delivered a presentation on “Wine Tourism in Azerbaijan” (attached as **Annex IV**).

11. The Republic of Albania informed on the national efforts aimed at developing tourism projects, including Cultural Routes / Cultural Tourism projects.

12. The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan emphasized that activities and projects presented and being implemented in the framework of the BSEC should be in full accordance with the legitimate rights of the Member States.

13. The representative of the European Centre for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments delivered a presentation on the project “LIMEN. Cultural Ports from Aegean to the Black Sea” (attached as **Annex V**), and addressed an invitation to the BSEC Member States to support the establishment of an institution of the “Cultural Port of the Black Sea”.

14. The Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS underlined the importance of BSEC participation in the establishment of the above institution as, if implemented, it will have a far reaching influence in the cultural and tourism cooperation among Member States and city ports on the Black Sea coast line.

15. The participants took note of the information provided by the representative of the European Centre for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments and expressed interest in the establishment of the above mentioned institution. Member States suggested that a concept paper, defining in particular, the role of the BSEC and other partners in the establishment of this institution, be prepared and circulated, so as to enable national authorities of the Member States to decide accordingly.

16. In conclusion, the Chairperson, as representative of the Romanian Chairmanship-in-Office, highlighted the following points:

- the relevance of bringing together experts on culture and tourism at Joint Meetings;
- large joint projects with a regional dimension and the participation of BSEC and other organizations could be realized on a mutually beneficial and equal basis;
- encouraged the future Chairmanships-in-Office to consider the possibility of organizing periodically Joint Meetings of the Working Groups on Culture and on Cooperation in Tourism given the inter-relation of the fields of culture and tourism in the cooperation among BSEC Member States;
- encouraged BSEC PERMIS to make due diligence to ensure that future Joint Meetings continue to benefit from the expertise of the UNWTO and the Council of Europe by inviting their representatives to participate in the BSEC meetings.

NATIONAL TRADITIONS OF HOSPITALITY IN THE BSEC REGION

17. The Joint Meeting took note of information presented by BSEC PERMIS on the project proposal “National Traditions and Hospitality in the BSEC Region” and suggested that the consideration of this topic be continued in the Working Groups on Culture and on Cooperation in Tourism.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

18. No discussion was held under this agenda item.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

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