

**JOINT DECLARATION**

**ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF THE MINISTERS  
IN CHARGE OF ECONOMY OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES**

**“Facilitating Intraregional Trade and Investments”**

**Chisinau, 29 May 2015**

**The Ministers in Charge of Economy and Heads of Delegations of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC):** the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine, having met in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, on 29 May 2015;

GUIDED by the BSEC Charter, the Istanbul Summit Declaration on the Black Sea Economic Cooperation signed on 25 July 1992, principles and priorities agreed upon in the BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership (Belgrade, 11 June 2012), Istanbul Summit Declaration on the Occasion of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (Istanbul, 26 June 2012);

RECALLING the Joint Declarations by the Ministers in charge of Economy of the BSEC Member States (Bucharest, Romania, 17 May 2011; Yalta, Ukraine, 23 May 2013) and the importance of this policy documents as a platform for strengthening cooperation among the BSEC Member States,

APPRECIATING the role of the Baku Declaration of the Meeting of the Heads of Customs Administrations of the BSEC Member States (Baku, 26 November 2014) and the Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Transport of the BSEC Member States (Thessaloniki, 25 November 2014) in promoting activities aimed at trade facilitation in the BSEC Region,

EMPHASIZING the importance of undertaking efforts for trade facilitation and simplification of customs procedures, elimination of non-tariff barriers to trade, enhancing transparency and regional cooperation in investment policies, in conformity with the standards and rules of prior agreements that each Member State is part of;

AWARE of the significant role of the regional businesses established under the BSEC Member States jurisdiction, including SMEs, in the economic and social development of the BSEC Member States, and of the importance of the development of the SMEs for their economic growth,

WELCOMING the steps aimed at strengthening the project-oriented dimension of BSEC, in particular the creation of the Project Management Unit (PMU) within the BSEC PERMIS,

**Declared their willingness to:**

**Give priority consideration** to trade facilitation among the BSEC Member States and support ongoing efforts at the relevant BSEC Working Groups to establish a Regional Trade Facilitation Strategy for the BSEC Region;

**Reveal** existing restrictions for trade and investment and explore the ways of establishing mechanisms for trade and investment facilitation among the BSEC Member States in conformity with the standards and rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), as relevant;

**Support** the efforts initiated at the Ministerial Meeting in Yalta aimed at the implementation of the provisions of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation in the BSEC Region as relevant;

**Continue**, in close cooperation with the business community of the BSEC Member States, joint examination and elaboration of practical mechanisms for elimination of non-tariff barriers on trade and simplification of the existing border crossing procedures in the BSEC Region;

**Encourage** initiatives and develop cooperation mechanisms among the BSEC Member States in the sphere of electronic commerce, with the aim to create conditions and develop a barrier-free, secure and transparent cross-border e-commerce environment, in the BSEC Region;

**Explore** the possibility for the interested BSEC Member States to join and make use of the provisions of the Pan-European Mediterranean (PEM) Convention in order to increase the level of cooperation in producing, trading flow (Diagonal cumulating of ROs) and investments;

**Support** the creation of the BSEC Networks in the interested Member States aimed at promoting intra-regional trade and investments;

**Develop** effective policies and concrete measures to support the sustainable development of the SME sector in the BSEC Region, focusing on high technology, innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable development, technology parks and incubators, and to help the SMEs improve their quality performance;

**Support** efforts at national level and in the BSEC framework for practical steps towards the implementation of the BSEC projects with a major impact on the economic development in the BSEC Region, in particular in the fields of trade, transport and customs affairs;

**Encourage** their respective national institutions to identify new projects of common interest for the BSEC Member States, to be submitted to the PMU, attaching priority to joint projects reinforcing the economic cooperation in the BSEC Region;

**Support** youth and women entrepreneurship in the BSEC Member States including though elaboration and implementation of relevant projects;

**Invite** the future BSEC Chairmanships-in-Office to explore the opportunities of holding joint meetings at ministerial level for promoting cooperation in trade facilitation and encouraging investment in the BSEC Region;

**Call upon** the specialized BSEC Working Groups to explore ways and means to support the implementation of the provisions of the current Joint Declaration, including through the elaboration of projects, with assistance of international organizations.

The Participants express their gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Moldova and to the organizers of the Meeting for the excellent arrangements and their warm hospitality.