

**REPORT
OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE BSEC-CEI
WORKING GROUPS
ON
TRANSPORT**

Istanbul, 25-26 September 1996

1. The first joint Meeting of the Working Groups on Transport of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and of the Central European Initiative (CEI) was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 25-26 September 1996.
2. Apart from the delegations of the BSEC Participating States and of the CEI Member States, the representatives of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Israel, Tunisia, the BSEC Business Council and the International Black Sea Club attended the Meeting as BSEC Observers.
3. The Meeting was also attended as guests by the representatives of the International Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC (PABSEC) as well as of the European Commission (EC).
4. The Meeting was opened with an inaugural address delivered by Mr. Talat GÜNSOY, Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications of the Republic of Turkey. The text of the inaugural statement is attached as Annex I.
5. The Meeting was chaired by Dr. Ercan Özer, Deputy Director General, Directorate General of Multilateral Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.
6. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted with amendments. The agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex II.

INFORMATION PRESENTED BY THE BSEC AND THE CEI ON THE ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN WITHIN THE RESPECTIVE WORKING GROUPS ON TRANSPORT

7. The participants took note with interest of the information presented by the Chairmen of the BSEC and CEI WGs on Transport regarding the current activities of the respective bodies and some future projects of multilateral cooperation.

They appreciated the activities and initiatives undertaken by the said Working Groups, as a solid pre-requisite for establishing a permanent collaboration between the BSEC and the CEI on various matters of mutual interest in the field of transport.

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION POLICIES, PROJECTS AND PRIORITIES

a) Developments related to some transport corridors

8. The participants had a thorough exchange of views and updated information with regard to some Pan-European transport corridors, such as: Corridor No. 8 (Durrës-Skopje-Sofia-Varna), Corridor No. 7 (the Danube), Corridor No. 4 (Dresden-Prag-Bratislava-Budapest-Arad-Bucharest-Constantza-Sofia-Istanbul-Thessaloniki), etc.

9. They stressed the need for joint efforts by the BSEC and the CEI aimed at the proper implementation of the said projects, on the basis of relevant documentation provided, if possible, in advance.

10. The BSEC and CEI Secretariats were requested to continue to circulate relevant information to the BSEC Participating States and the CEI Member States regarding new concrete developments in the realization of the above-mentioned corridors.

b) Extension of European and BSEC transportation networks towards the Central Asian and Middle Eastern Countries

11. The participants exchanged views with regard to the possibility of extending certain transportation networks, envisaged within the BSEC, the CEI and other European adjacent sub-regions to the Central Asia and the Middle East, with the view to ensure a more efficient transport of passengers and cargoes on a larger scale.

12. It was decided to further proceed a comprehensive study on the whole range of possible options for the transportation routes and consider the matter again at the next joint meeting of the WGs in Sofia next November.

The participants agreed that a joint meeting of the Working Groups of the BSEC and Central Asian Countries to discuss the said matter of extension of the European Corridors (No. 8, No. 4,

No. 7) to the East in the framework of TRASECA project could be held in Georgia in the Spring of 1997.

c) Ongoing and future transport projects requiring joint BSEC-CEI efforts

13. The participants considered the common maps on rail, road transportation, and on ports and shipping lines in the Black Sea region, as elaborated by the experts of the BSEC Participating States and adopted by the Seventh BSEC Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

It was pointed out that the said maps which incorporate the existing and prospective infrastructure projects and most preferred links up to the year 2005 could be useful for future activities of the BSEC and the CEI in the field of transport.

14. Several delegations presented a series of specific projects of multilateral cooperation in the field of transport, on the understanding that further elaboration and practical implementation of future projects will require joint efforts of the interested BSEC and CEI States.

The participants agreed to consider the said projects in their regular meetings, with the view to identifying concrete modalities for collaboration between the BSEC and the CEI in this field.

DISCUSSION ON THE POSSIBILITIES FOR FINANCING THE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AND INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN THE REALIZATION OF THE PROJECTS

15. The participants expressed their firm belief that necessary attention should be given to the use of such external sources of financing, like respective PHARE and TACIS programs and the EBRD for the development of the BSEC/CEI joint projects in the area of transport.

16. During the debates, the participants were informed of the procedures proposed by the CEI with the view of promoting and facilitating exchange of information, project preparation and funding of transport infrastructure projects, particularly concerning Corridor No. 8. Information was also provided with regard to seminars on project preparation methodologies organized by the CEI Center in Trieste.

17. They also emphasized the importance of the inner dynamics of the private sector for the implementation of various transport projects and for the improvement of the effectiveness and safety of the transportation systems in the respective regions.

18. While welcoming the efforts and actions undertaken so far, the participants called upon the BSEC Business Council in Istanbul and the CEI Chambers of Commerce Secretariat in Trieste to continue their study reflecting the opportunities existing in the private sectors of the BSEC and CEI States in the field of transportation and present for consideration by the two Working Groups proposals for stimulating the interest of the business communities and their involvement in some joint concrete projects.

19. The participants expressed the view that it would be advisable to ensure effective flow of information through the facilities provided by the CID-CEI, BSEC PERMIS and BSEC Business Council, including relevant data on results of pre-feasibility study, forthcoming tenders, etc. They agreed that favorable mechanism of access by national contractors from BSEC and CEI countries to the international projects will be also useful.

PREPARATIONS FOR AND ADOPTION OF POSSIBLE APPROACHES REGARDING REGIONAL TRANSPORT ISSUES AT:

a) The joint Ministerial Conference in Sofia

20. The participants took note of the information provided by the Bulgarian Delegation regarding the preparatory process for the Conference of the Ministers of Transport of the BSEC and CEI countries, to be held in Sofia, on 20-22 November 1996 and of the information of the Ukrainian Delegation related to the Conference of the Ministers of Transport from the Eastern and Central Europe and the Black Sea Region in the middle of May 1997 in Ukraine.

21. Having emphasized the necessity of a good preparation of the Conference in order to reach concrete and significant results, the two WGs agreed to convene their next joint meeting in November 1996 in Sofia for discussing mainly various aspects related to the Ministerial Conference on Transport.

b) 1997 Helsinki Pan-European Transportation Conference

22. A thorough exchange of views was made on the subject of the preparation for and convening of the Third Pan-European Transport Conference in 1997, where all the BSEC-CEI States are expected to participate.

23. The participants expressed the viewpoint that the forthcoming BSEC-CEI Ministerial Conference in Sofia and the Ministerial Conference in Ukraine in 1997 should be a timely and significant framework for harmonizing the positions of the countries involved prior to the Third Pan-European Transport Conference.

An emphasis was made on the possibility of jointly promoting some concrete transport projects of cooperation, agreed by the BSEC and CEI, at the said forum in 1997.

24. The participants took note with interest of the information presented by the representative of the European Commission on the preparatory work for the Helsinki Conference as well as of the ideas regarding adjustments for the Corridors.

JOINT EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS RELATED TO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION

25. The participants exchanged information regarding the existing problems of organizational, technical and financial nature faced in land and maritime transportation in various BSEC and CEI States and concluded that all necessary measures should be taken for the alleviation of the said problems and difficulties.

26. The participants welcomed the proposal of the BSEC Business Council to submit a report on possible joint efforts to solve the problems related to regional transportation to the BSEC PERMIS, prior to the joint Ministerial Conference of the BSEC and the CEI in Sofia.

They also took note of the information of the BSEC PERMIS regarding the Workshop on Border Crossing Improvement and Trade Facilitation in the Black Sea region which will take place in Edirne, Turkey on 11-13 November 1996.

27. The meeting of the WGs decided to recommend to the BSEC-CEI Ministerial Conference in Sofia the endorsement of a resolution calling upon all the BSEC Participating States and the CEI Member States to cooperate more closely on this subject.

POSSIBILITIES FOR COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF TRANSPORT RESEARCH BETWEEN THE BSEC AND CEI COUNTRIES

28. The participants shared the view that the scientific research should be jointly developed between the BSEC and the CEI countries with regard to the transport issues in the two regions.

It was recommended that this subject be thoroughly discussed at next meetings of the respective BSEC and CEI bodies dealing with multilateral cooperation in the area of science and technology.

29. Taking into account the importance of the exchange of relevant statistical information and the establishment of data banks on transport issues, the participants recommended that working contacts be established between the BSEC Coordination Center for the Exchange of Statistical Data and Economic Information in Ankara and the CEI Center for Information and Documentation in Trieste.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

30. No subjects were discussed under this item.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

31. The participants expressed their gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey for the hospitality extended to them and for the excellent arrangements made for the joint meeting.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

32. The Meeting adopted the present report for its submission to the Conference of the Ministers of Transport of the BSEC and CEI Countries in Sofia.
