



**ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
Permanent International Secretariat**

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**PRESS RELEASE
ON
THE MEETINGS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE BSEC PERMIS WITH
COMMISSIONER CORINA CREȚU AND THE HEAD OF CABINET OF
COMMISSIONER KARMENU VELLA**

On the initiative of the Romanian Chairmanship-in-Office, the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. Christides, visited Brussels on 10-11 November 2015 for appointments with **Commissioners Karmenu Vella** (*Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries*) and **Corina Crețu** (*Regional Policy*). The Deputy Permanent Representative of Romania to the EU, **Mr. Cristian Bădescu**, accompanied Ambassador Christides to the above meetings.

Because of a last moment pressing engagement of Commissioner Vella, the first meeting was held with the Head and members of his Cabinet, as well as a representative from the DG for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

During the meetings, Ambassador Christides underlined the importance of BSEC in promoting stability, prosperity and cooperation in the wider Black Sea area and the willingness of the BSEC Member States to increase interaction with the EU, in a practical and focused direction. The Secretary General noted the steady increase of the frequency and level of contacts between BSEC and the EU in recent years and underlined that BSEC and its Related Bodies should be seen as trustworthy partners for the implementation of regional projects.

Commissioner Crețu expressed her vivid interest in enhancing cooperation with BSEC with the view of promoting sustainable development and economic cooperation in the region. She also

suggested that an eventual macro-regional strategy of the EU for the Black Sea could help better define a framework and programme of interaction and cooperation among the EU and the BSEC.

The Head of the Cabinet of Commissioner Vella, Mr. Juergen Mueller, referred to the added value of cooperation between BSEC and the EU and reiterated the readiness of the European Commission to make good use of the experience of BSEC in promoting trans-border cooperation and development in maritime affairs. He underlined that the Integrated Maritime Policy of the EU for the Black Sea provides many possibilities for cooperation and expressed his commitment to explore ways for the actual realization of a practical synergy with BSEC.

Both meetings were held in a friendly and constructive spirit, allowing a sense of perceptible optimism for the future of the relations between the BSEC and the EU.