

# News from the Black Sea

## Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS)

BSEC



*"Enhancement of Regional Economic Cooperation"*  
(BSEC Armenian Chairmanship)

### OFFICIAL START OF THE ARMENIAN CHAIRMANSHIP-IN-OFFICE OF BSEC

The Armenian Chairmanship-in-Office got officially underway during the *"Coordination Meetings for the Presentation of the Priorities and the Calendar of Events of the Armenian BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office"*, which took place at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul, on 24 January 2018.

Among the most important priorities of the new Chairmanship remain the strengthening of regional economic cooperation in the BSEC region and the improved interaction among all Organizations, members of the BSEC "family". For more information please refer to the Chairmanship page on the BSEC website: [www.bsec-organization.org](http://www.bsec-organization.org)

The Armenian Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC will cover the period from 1 January 2018 to 30 June 2018.

In addition to the Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Yerevan, 21 July 2018), the Meetings of the Ministers of Tourism, Education, as well as the BSEC High-Level International ICT Conference *"General aspects of data management within the global digital transformation challenge"*, are among the highlights of the calendar of events of the Armenian Chairmanship. The BSEC Calendar of Events is available on the following link:

[http://www.bsec-organization.org/  
Pages/CalendarEvents.aspx](http://www.bsec-organization.org/Pages/CalendarEvents.aspx)



## VISIT OF THE DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY OF THE TURKISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



The Deputy Undersecretary for Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Ambassador Murat Ateş paid a working visit to the Headquarters of the BSEC PERMIS on 8 February 2018.

The Deputy Undersecretary and the members of his delegation were received by the Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS, Ambassador Michael B. Christides, who, together with the Legal Advisor of the BSEC PERMIS, informed them on the latest activities and projects being pursued by the Secretariat.

The two sides exchanged in-depth views and opinions on the improvement of the PERMIS performance and agreed to continue coordinating their relevant efforts.

## The Marmara Group Foundation

BSEC has always welcomed cooperation with civil society organizations and considers the latter among the leading promoters for a better understanding among people and countries, thus assuming an indispensable role on the international scene.

In the light of the above, Dr. Akkan Suver, President of the *Marmara Group Strategic and Social Research Foundation*, which is considered one of the most prominent peace and dialogue initiatives in Turkey, paid a visit to the BSEC PERMIS on 1 February 2018 and was received by the Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. Christides.

During their meeting the two men exchanged views on the latest activities of their institutions.

The Marmara Foundation is the organizer of the prestigious annual event held in Istanbul “*The Eurasian Economic Summit*”, which attracts each year prominent political, business, and academic personalities from all over the world. Dr. Suver invited Ambassador Christides to participate in the “*21st Eurasian Economic Summit*” to be held in Istanbul in April 2018 and briefed his interlocutor on the main subjects included in the agenda of this year’s edition.



## TOURISM AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Tourism has become an important factor for sustainable development and is for many regions and countries one of the most important sources of income. BSEC firmly believes that Tourism is the best way to cultivate and establish a culture of friendship, cooperation and good neighborliness between people and States. Thus, among other priorities, the BSEC Organization seeks to promote all forms of Tourism in the Black Sea region.

In this framework, Ambassador Michael B. Christides participated, upon the invitation of the Bulgarian Presidency of the European Union, in the “*High-Level International Conference on Tourism and Economic Growth*”, held in Sofia on 13 February 2018, back-to-back with the “*Informal Meeting of the Ministers of Tourism of the EU Member States*”.

The High-Level Conference focused on three major issues: I. *Tourism and Economic Growth – factors for Tourism Development*; II. *Tourism and Security – Geopolitical and Geo-economic aspects*; and III. *Europe and China 2018 – new dimensions, challenges and opportunities*.



During his interventions the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General underlined the importance of Tourism cooperation for the wider Black Sea region and outlined the substantial contribution of the BSEC Organization to the development of Tourism coordination and synergies in the area.

On the sidelines of the Conference Ambassador Christides had a bilateral working-meeting with the Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria, H.E. Mrs. Nikolina Angelkova. As Bulgaria shoulders the coordinating role of the relevant BSEC Working Group, a number of concrete issues for further joint activities in the field of Tourism were discussed.

Ambassador Christides was also received by the President of the Bulgarian Parliament, H.E. Ms. Tsveta Karayancheva, who underlined Bulgaria’s important role for the development of Tourism partnerships in the BSEC region and the positive contribution of PABSEC in enhancing the climate of dialogue and understanding among the people of the BSEC Member States.

Ambassador Christides held also his first working-meeting with the new UNWTO Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Zurab Pololikashvili, with whom he extensively consulted on a number of ongoing joint projects and on issues concerning the future cooperation between the two Organizations.



## INTERMODAL FREIGHT TRANSPORT & CONNECTIVITY



*BSEC is the “natural bridge” connecting Europe to Asia and vice versa.*

Ambassador Christides participated at the “80th Session of the Inland Transport Committee of the UNECE”, which was held on 20-21 February 2018 at the “Palais des Nations” in Geneva and addressed the audience during the second session of the meeting under the title: “*Intermodal freight transport and connectivity*”.

The PERMIS Secretary General underlined the crucial geographic region covered by the ter-



ritories of the BSEC Member States, especially today when many initiatives are underway for improving the overall connectivity between Europe and Asia, and informed participants on the past, recent and future projects and efforts of BSEC to comprehensively promote transport and trade facilitation in the wider Black Sea region and beyond.

He stressed the complementary character of the BSEC initiatives to other transcontinental projects and described the close cooperation and coordination between BSEC and other international Organizations with experience in the field, especially with the UNECE.

Ambassador Christides assured the audience that the BSEC Organization was, is and can be an even more important regional vehicle for the promotion of intermodal freight transport in the geostrategic region of the Black Sea, the “natural bridge” connecting Europe to Asia and vice versa.

## WE CARE ABOUT OUR GLOBE

### The BSEC “Black Sea Project Promotion Facility” approves funding for a Green Energy project.

BSEC promotes, among other, the construction of environment-friendly buildings, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions considered as one of the main causes of Climate Change.

In this vein, the Steering Committee of the “Black Sea Project Promotion Facility” (BSPPF) approved and decided to award a grant to a project titled “Promoting application of high-performance energy efficiency standards in buildings in Member States of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)”.

The total cost of the project is 158,165 US Dollars, out of which 79,665 US Dollars will be provided by the Facility.

The project was elaborated by the UNECE and aims to improve energy efficiency in buildings and reduce global greenhouse gas emissions from buildings in the BSEC and UNECE regions through improved knowledge of policy makers and professionals of the building sector in the application of high-performance building standards. It, thus, envisages the organization of training courses for policy makers and professionals (including future trainers in their respective countries) on the application of advanced energy efficiency standards, technologies and practices in buildings.



## Visit of Students from Bahçesehir University (Istanbul)

Youth being our future, the BSEC Organization wishes to maintain contact with students from various universities.

A group of undergraduate students from the *Department of International Trade and Business Administration of the Bahçesehir University*, accompanied by Prof. Dr. Byron Matarangas, paid an information visit to the premises of the BSEC PERMIS on 28 February 2018.

The Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. Christides and BSEC PERMIS Staff members informed their guests on the history, the legal basis and functioning of the Organization; they underlined the current and future activities of BSEC, especially those concerning trade and economic development and described BSEC's relations with other regional and international organizations.

Ambassador Christides underlined once again the usefulness of such visits for both sides.



## THE WORLD TOURISM FORUM LUCERNE THINK TANK 2018



The BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B. Christides, was invited and participated in the “*World Tourism Forum Lucerne Think Tank 2018*”, (WTFL) which was held in Costa Navarino, Greece, from 2-3 March 2018.

The WTFL is a prestigious leading engagement platform, where Ministers, Academics, CEOs, Financiers, Start-Ups, Next Generation and Young Talents interact as a strong multi-stakeholder community addressing the future challenges of the Tourism, Travel and Hospitality sector.

This year the Forum focused on the conditions for innovative and sustainable public - private - partnerships (PPPs) in Tourism, a sector that has proven itself as a force for economic development and as a serious facilitator for dialogue and understanding among people and nations.

Ambassador Christides had the opportunity to inform participants on the efforts of BSEC to promote cooperation and synergies in the sector of Tourism at the regional level, underlining that especially in what concerns tourism infrastructure projects, the regional cooperation assumes even greater importance.

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS:**

## Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea

The BSEC PERMIS is going to host in its premises the “4th Meeting for Developing a Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea”, to be held on 27 March 2018 in Istanbul.

Experts from all Black Sea riparian States plus Moldova will take part in the meeting, as well as representatives from the European Commission (DG MARE, DG RTD).

The main goal of this research body of stakeholders from all Black Sea countries plus Moldova is to develop a Vision Paper leading to a *Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda for the Black Sea basin (SRIA)*, on the model of the work done in the Mediterranean Sea. The SRIA will be a major pillar of a broader Maritime Strategy for the Black Sea.



## Workshop on Project Promotion Addressed to Regional and Local Authorities and Other Stakeholders from the Wider Black Sea Region 28 March 2018, Istanbul (Turkey)

The Workshop is organized by the *Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS)* and the *Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)* and its *Balkan & Black Sea Commission (BBSC)*.

The aims of this event include bringing actors and stakeholders from different levels together to discuss crucial issues which will allow them to take greater advantage of the existing opportunities and pave the way for more efficient collaboration among them.

The participants will:

- Hear about best practices applied in other sea basins that could be adapted for use in the Black Sea region,
- Establish contact with other interested stakeholders and
- Present their future priorities for the benefit of policy-makers like BSEC and the CPMR.

For registration and further details: <http://cpmr-balkan-blacksea.org/event/bsec-cpmr-workshop-on-project-promotion-28-march-2018-istanbul-tr/>



www.bsec-organization.org

## BSEC 2nd MOTORCYCLE RIDE

**BULGARIA - ROMANIA** (30 June - 7 July 2018)

You are cordially invited to discover historical cities and natural beauties of Bulgaria and Romania, as well as to ride on the legendary Transfagarasan and Transalpinia routes.

Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation  
Permanent International Secretariat



This trip is organized by Baltic Tourism, under the patronage of BSEC, and the tour guidance of Kazoom Moto Adventures. For participation and price details kindly contact Mr. Kazım Uzunoglu on (+90 232) 284 25 22, or visit <https://www.facebook.com/KazoomMotoAdventures>. We thank the monthly MotorON magazine for promoting the event.

KAZOOM MOTO ADVENTURES

Baltac

25 YEARS PROMOTING COOPERATION

The Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) considers Tourism as one of the best ways to establish a culture of friendship and understanding between people and States: thus it encourages Motorcycle touring, which attracts an ever-growing

number of travelers, as it offers a unique sense of liberty and greater opportunities to enjoy the trip.

With the aim to promote the *Black Sea Ring Highway* (BSRH), which is connecting the territories of BSEC's 12 Member States, it organizes this year the "2nd BSEC Motorcycle Ride", which will cover two of its Member States: Bulgaria and Romania. The route will include historic cities and spectacular scenery, including the legendary Shipka and Transfagarasan alpine-pass roads.

Local authorities of the two countries will facilitate border crossing formalities and the smooth realization of the ride.

The event is open to all bikers ready to discover different sites and make new friends. If you wish to be part of this adventure, which promises to be fun and offer unique moments of diversion, culinary delights and sheer "motorcycle adrenaline", then kindly announce your interest and participation by sending an e-mail to [kazoom@kazoom-moto-adventures.com](mailto:kazoom@kazoom-moto-adventures.com).



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