



**Statement of the Ministers Responsible for Science and Technology  
of the BSEC Member States**

*Istanbul, 31 October 2007*

We, the Ministers responsible for Science and Technology of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Member States met in Istanbul on 31 October 2007 in accordance with the provisions of the Athens' Declaration (28 September 2005) to review the progress in the implementation of the *BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology* adopted in Athens on 28 September 2005 and approved by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Chisinau on 28 October 2005;

*Recognising* the significance of the BSEC *Action Plan* and of the *Athens Declaration* as key policy documents for the enhancement of the competitive performance of every BSEC Member State and of the Organization as a whole in the fields of scientific research and technological development, since they provide the guidelines and clearly define the priorities that need to be addressed for improved regional cooperation;

*Guided by* BSEC 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summit Declaration, which called upon the Member States to deepen cooperation in Science and Technology as one of the priority areas of common interest;

*Taking account of* the increasing dynamic of the Scientific and Technological activity in BSEC highlighted by the *Mid-term Report* on the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan as prepared by the International Centre for Black Sea Studies on the basis of the contributions from the BSEC Member States;

*Reiterating* our commitment to the targets set in the BSEC *Economic Agenda for the Future* for sustainable and equitable development among the BSEC Member States, and having in mind the Millennium Development Goals as well as specific agreements and programmes in the field of science and technology developed under the aegis of the EU, UN and OSCE;

*Acknowledging* the recently published communication by the European Commission on a *Black Sea Synergy – A new regional cooperation initiative*

[COM(2007) 160 final] where Science and Technology is identified as a key area for enhancing cooperation between the BSEC and the EU;

*Reemphasising* the ever increasing potential that the national authorities and research communities of the BSEC Member States are called upon to turn to good account for the further advancement of science and technology in our region;

*Bearing in mind* the resolutions of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States (Moscow, 1 November 2006; Belgrade, 19 April 2007) concerning the monitoring of the implementation of policy documents agreed upon at Ministerial level;

state the following:

*We approve* the *Mid-term Report* on the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan;

*We reconfirm* the importance of the Athens Declaration and of the objectives and content of the BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology;

*We pledge* all best efforts towards the enhancement of the regional dimension of the cooperation among the BSEC Member States in the agreed areas of action and specific activities, i.e.:

- human resources;
- capacity building;
- research infrastructure;
- innovation, and
- priority domains for research.

*We welcome and support* the efforts of the Council of Presidents of National Academies of Sciences of the BSEC Member States (CoPNAS) to enhance its role and the contribution of the National Academies to the development of Science and Technology cooperation within the BSEC framework; in the same spirit, we welcome and encourage the activity of the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN).

*We recognize* the importance and benefits that may arise for the scientific communities of our countries from a closer cooperation and participation in the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7) of the European Community. In this context, we encourage the participation of our countries in policy dialogue activities aiming at an increasing participation of our research communities in FP7 and improving interregional research cooperation. We support initiatives such as the project *S&T International Cooperation Network for Eastern European and Central Asian*

*Countries* (IncoNet EECA) submitted by the ICBSS and accepted by the European Commission and the ERA-NET proposal under preparation *Networking on Science and Technology in the Black Sea region*.

*We agree* to convene a meeting of the Ministers responsible for Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States at the end of the four years duration of the BSEC Action Plan, in order to assess its impact, reassess the state of affairs and chart the way forward;

*We commend* the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology, the Country-Coordinator, the BSEC PERMIS and the ICBSS for their efficient work and dedication towards the implementation of the priorities set out in the BSEC Action Plan;

*We express* our appreciation and gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey, and in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Scientific and Technological Research Council (TUBITAK), for the successful organisation of this meeting and for their warm hospitality in Istanbul.

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