

CHAIRMANSHIP

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PRIORITIES OF THE MOLDOVAN BSEC CHAIRMANSHIP-IN-OFFICE

(January - June 2022)



The process of economic cooperation in the Black Sea area, launched in 1992, has entered its 30th year of existence. The Black Sea initiative, as termed in the **Bosphorus Statement**, was aimed at achieving concrete schemes of cooperative actions that would contribute directly to the well-being and prosperity of the peoples of the region, turning it into one of peace, stability and prosperity.

After 30 years since its inception, BSEC has turned into a mature, most representative and institutionally developed Organization in the geostrategic region that connects Europe and Asia. BSEC expanded its membership from eleven Founding Members to thirteen Member States promoting the cooperation in the Black Sea region and beyond and offering throughout its existence a useful platform for interaction in various fields.

Under the motto **"30 years of BSEC"**, which comes to celebrate this momentous occasion, the Moldovan Chairmanship will continue to build on the achievements of the previous Georgian, Albanian and Romanian Chairmanships in order to fulfill the objectives set forth in the **"Economic Agenda towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership"** and the subsequent Resolutions and Decisions of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

The 30th anniversary gives us a chance to reflect on what has changed since the organization's inception, but also what remains constant. The changes stem from new opportunities but also from challenges. Some of the challenges that we face today, such as those related to climate change or cyber security, would have been inconceivable to the architects of BSEC 30 years ago. What remains constant – are the shared values at the core of the BSEC organizations.

The Moldovan Chairmanship proposes itself to further uphold the values at the core of BSEC while facilitating a coordinated approach to address the challenges that the Organization is facing. We need to build on the BSEC's ability to follow the shared principles and values that brought us together 30 years ago replicating it to tackle the most urgent challenges of nowadays.

First and foremost, the most stringent challenge is the COVID-19 pandemic, which is still causing all countries to experience devastating losses, and implicitly economic repercussions. In this regard, the Chairmanship-in-Office of the Republic of Moldova will endeavor to boost the initiative on the BSEC Covid-19 information platform and **"BSEC Coronavirus Protocols"** in Tourism.

Another pressing challenge is the climate change. Every member state is experiencing extreme weather events, with cascading implications on other aspects of our lives, from agriculture to infrastructure to public health and food security. To prevent cataclysmic consequences, immediate, bold action should be taken to build resilience and adapt to the unavoidable impacts of future crises. In particular, the Chairmanship in close cooperation with the Member States, international organizations and institutions and other interested stakeholders, will support the projects and initiatives for a blue economy of the Black Sea, aimed at reducing the environmental pollution and ecological scarcities which in turn will contribute to the sustainable development of the Black Sea region.

During the 6-month period, the Chairmanship will focus on the following priorities to be implemented with the participation of the Member States, Related Bodies and other interested parties:

MAIN SECTORAL PRIORITIES

Environment and Blue Economy

The wider Black Sea area is vulnerable to climate change which has local and regional impact on the environment and socio-economic development, and therefore requires from the Member States consolidated efforts towards promoting environmentally sound mechanisms and proactive solutions for facing and overcoming challenges and problems of the region. The Chairmanship will promote the cooperation in the field of environmental protection taking into account the **"BSEC Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for the Black Sea"**, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

In order to promote the **Blue Economy** concept in synergy with the response to climate change, the Chairmanship will support the implementation of the projects and programs focused on a gradual turn towards new technologies, including cleaner energy and higher energy efficiency projects, including the World Bank's **"Blueing the Black Sea"** Global Environment Facility (GEF) regional project.

Transport, Trade and Connectivity

The Chairmanship will continue to promote the **development of reliable, efficient, safe, integrated and sustainable transport systems in the BSEC region**. This work will be carried out through activities and within the framework of the BSEC Working Group on Transport, Steering Committee on the **Development of the Black Sea Ring Highway**, Ad Hoc Working Group on the **Development of the Motorways of the Sea** and Steering Committee on the **Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region**, ensuring that practical measures are taken for the implementation of the provisions of relevant Ministerial Declarations and Memoranda.

The Chairmanship will render its assistance for further enlargement of the geographical coverage of the **BSEC Permit system** and extension of its usage by developing new technologies and regulations for increasing efficiency and security of transport, including the successful implementation of the **e-Permit** project.

The Chairmanship will support any other projects, programs or actions aimed at **improving transport networks and connectivity links in the Black Sea area** which may constitute the regional contribution to the extension of the Trans-European Networks, development of Euro-Asian transport links and facilitation of trade and transport in the BSEC Region.

Moldovan Chairmanship will also continue to support the efforts undertaken under the activities of the **Working Group on Trade and Economic Development**, with a view to adopting the **Regional Trade Facilitation Strategy for the BSEC Region** and the **Framework for BSEC Single Window Cooperation** – two important documents, which will streamline the efforts of the BSEC Member States on trade facilitation and will contribute to the prosperity of our region. The Chairmanship also recognizes the need to update the **"BSEC Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership"**, adopted in 2012. This strategic document will contribute to further promote regional trade cooperation and economic development, by introducing innovative ways for regional trade expansion and diversification.

Culture and Tourism

The Chairmanship will continue to promote cultural ties among Member States and will encourage joint projects in the field of contemporary culture, cultural itineraries and intercultural dialogue.

The Chairmanship will further support the implementation of the "Letter of Intent" on cooperation between PERMIS and the Secretariat of the Enlarged Partial Agreement (EPA) on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe aimed at developing partnerships between the two Organizations and for closer collaboration on activities and issues of common interest, such as mapping of various authentic Black Sea cultural routes.

The Chairmanship will facilitate the implementation of the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding between the BSEC and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) paying a special emphasis on promoting BSEC region as an appealing leisure and business destination. In this regard, the PERMIS will be entrusted with the tasks to further explore the ways and means of further strengthening the cooperation between BSEC and UNWTO, including by exploring the possibility of initiating joint projects in the field of tourism.

Given the importance of the BSEC region and its Member States in terms of diverse cultural traditions, and attractive geographical landscape the Chairmanship will encourage the discussion at the level of the Working Groups on Culture and Tourism to consider the possibility of further developing cultural tourism in the region.

During the 6-months period and in addition to the already mentioned activities, the Chairmanship will convene the regular meetings of other subsidiary organs of the BSEC in conformity with their Action Plans and as directed by the relevant resolutions and decisions of the Council.

STREAMLINING THE PROJECT-ORIENTED DIMENSION

The Moldovan Chairmanship will continue to promote the project-oriented character of the Organization and strengthen its operational capabilities and mechanisms. Further steps will be taken towards activities aimed at implementing the already existing and identifying new projects of common interest for the Member States, specifically those that will reinforce the blue economy of the Black Sea area and regional connectivity in and among the Member States.

The existing mechanism for financing pre-feasibility and feasibility studies of the potential joint projects, the Project Development Fund (PDF), will require a new approach towards examining the ways of sustainability of the resources available for financing the projects of common interest. A separate role in implementation of the projects shall be played by the Project Management Unit (PMU) which has the leading role in developing, planning and implementing joint projects.

IMPROVING THE ACTIVITIES, INCREASING THE VISIBILITY

The Chairmanship will work closely with PERMIS in order to take into consideration the necessity for structural and organizational adaptations of the Organization to the on-going changes in the region and beyond in order to improve its activities and enhance its efficiency and effectiveness. Lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic will be taken into account while planning the activities of the principal and subsidiary organs of the BSEC.

The Chairmanship will continue to support the efforts of PERMIS to increase the profile and the relevance of the Organization for its Member States, for the region and for the international partners. The Moldovan Chairmanship will support the promotional activities of the PERMIS to increase the visibility of the Organization, including on the social networks and other media platforms, contributing to these efforts to the extent possible and in line with its competences.

ENHANCING THE COOPERATION BETWEEN BSEC AND THE RELATED BODIES, OBSERVERS AND SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNERS AND OTHER REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Chairmanship-in-Office of the Republic of Moldova will further promote the existing relations with the international and regional organizations, which have established an institutional relationship with the BSEC.

The PERMIS, under the authority of the Chairman-in-office, will continue to maintain and further develop these relations based on the existing legal framework of interaction as well as on the already established cooperation that has been carried out with these organizations and institutions.

As a basic priority, the Chairmanship will assist and encourage the efforts to further develop and enhance BSEC-EU interaction.

The Chairmanship will continue to render its support for developing a balanced, mutually beneficial and result-oriented relationship between BSEC and EU institutions based on complementarity, partnership and coordination in those areas where such cooperation is deemed to be desirable and feasible, benefiting from the various and relevant regional dimensions and policies.

The Chairmanship will encourage the contacts and coordination meetings at executive and working level between the BSEC PERMIS and Related Bodies with their counterparts in the EU institutions. The BSEC-COEST format and the Ad hoc Working Group of Experts on BSEC-EU interaction shall be maintained as useful tools for advancing the interaction between BSEC and EU.

The Chairmanship will attach high importance to ensure a close cooperation between the BSEC and its Related Bodies, Parliamentary Assembly (PABSEC), BSEC Business Council (BSEC BC), Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) and International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS).

The Moldovan Chairmanship will also aim at improving the interaction of BSEC with the Observers and Sectoral Dialogue Partners in order to encourage a pro-active participation from their side in the activities of the organization and, where possible, their contribution, including financial, to the ongoing and prospective projects implemented in the BSEC.

PRINCIPAL EVENTS DURING THE MOLDOVAN CHAIRMANSHIP:

The Chairmanship will support the organization in June 2022 of a Summit meeting of the Heads of State or Government jointly with the Host Country in Istanbul.

The 45th regular meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs will be held at the end of the term in office of the Moldovan Chairmanship.

The Chairmanship will support the organization of other ministerial meetings, regular meetings of the Working Groups, conferences, seminars, workshops and webinars in conformity with the BSEC Calendar of Events.



- PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND
- BLACK SEA PROJECT PROMOTION FACILITY
- EMPLOYMENT / INTERNSHIP



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