

PAPER PRESENTED
BY
THE PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA
ECONOMIC COOPERATION (BSEC)
ON THE OCCASION OF
THE FOLLOW-UP MEETING
TO THE UNCTC SPECIAL MEETING

1. **Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)** came into being in 1992 as a political initiative for economic cooperation when the whole world was going through a tremendous change. In its existence of 11 years it has gradually but successfully transformed itself into a full-fledged international organization with the ratification of its Charter. By developing economic and trade relations between the Member States in the geography which consists of the Balkans, Caucasus and the Black Sea Littoral States, BSEC aims at contributing to the regional and international peace, security, stability and welfare.

2. It goes without saying that economy and security are closely related issues. A process of economic cooperation and development can only evolve successfully in a secure and stable environment. Whereas security has never been a static concept. Since the end of the Cold War it has been extremely fluid and it seems that this will continue well into the 21st century.

3. **BSEC** Member States share the view that terrorism and issues such as organized crime, illicit traffic in narcotic drugs, small arms and light weapons, and sensitive material and technologies as well as illegal migration, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human

beings are the key challenges and major threats to regional and international peace, security and stability.

4. **BSEC** in carrying out its mission of contribution to peace, security and stability in the Black Sea region mainly through economic cooperation among the Member States has also embarked on “**soft**” security measures.

One of the areas of cooperation enumerated in the **BSEC Charter** is “**combating organized crime, illicit trafficking of drugs, weapons and radioactive materials, all acts of terrorism and illegal migration.**”

5. **The Working group** which has been established within the framework of **BSEC** as a Subsidiary Organ is exclusively dealing with “**Cooperation in Combating Crime.**” **BSEC** launched in 1997 the process of regular meetings of the Ministers of Interior of the Member States. That process resulted in signing, on 2 October 1998, the “**Agreement among the Governments of the BSEC Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its organized forms.**”

6. **The Agreement** which entered into force in October 1999 provides for, inter alia, **cooperation for the prevention, suppression, detection, disclosure and investigation of crimes, and in particular of acts of terrorism; organized crime; illicit cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; illicit trafficking in weapons, including biological, chemical and radiological weapons, ammunition, explosives, nuclear and radioactive materials, as well as poisonous substances; international illegal economic activities and legalization of proceeds (money laundering) deriving from criminal activities, suspicious economic and banking transactions and abuses in the investment; smuggling; criminal activities related to migration, illegal crossing of borders and illegal trafficking in human beings; counterfeiting and forgery of banknotes, credit cards, documents, securities and other values, as well as any kind of identity documents; corruption; and theft and illegal trafficking in vehicles, etc.**

In **the Agreement** forms of cooperation is enumerated in an extensive list including, inter alia, **cooperation in education and training of personnel, development of information systems, communications means and special equipment, etc.**

7. Out of their determination to achieve through joint efforts the constant improvement of the implementation of the provisions of **the Agreement, BSEC Member States** signed in March 2002 in Kiev an **“Additional Protocol to the BSEC Agreement on Cooperation in Combating Crime, particularly in its Organized Forms.”**

8. **The Protocol** which entered into force in April 2003 provided for the establishment of the **“Network of Liaison Officers.”** The objectives of the **“Network”** are as follows:
 - a) **To enhance cooperation in the field of crime control and provide for coordination of interaction between the competent bodies of the Parties;**

 - b) **To establish an information exchange network among the Law Enforcement Bodies of the Member States to effectively fight against crimes and criminals.**

9. The **Liaison Officers of the Network** have the following tasks and functions:

- a) **To send the requests forwarded by other Liaison Officers to their respective countries for urgent cases in one day and for the other cases in three days;**
- b) **To send the required information to the Parties upon their requests;**
- c) **To meet periodically to consider the trends in transnational crime in the region in order to identify new forms of cooperation among the Law Enforcement Agencies of the BSEC Member States;**
- d) **To report and propose to the respective bodies the ways of further enhancing cooperation;**
- e) **To facilitate the exchange of legislative documents and practical experience among the Law Enforcement Agencies of the BSEC Member States in the field of combating transnational crime.**

10. In keeping with their firm stand against terrorism the **BSEC** Member States issued in October 2001 **“the Statement on joint**

Measures in Combating International Terrorism.” In the **Statement** the Member States expressed **their determination to take all the necessary steps to prevent and fight international terrorism and called upon the relevant BSEC bodies to consider new means of cooperation within the mandate of BSEC.**

11. Subsequently the drafting of the **“Additional Protocol on Combating Terrorism to the Agreement on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in Particular in its Organized Forms”** has been initiated in the **BSEC Working Group on Combating Crime**. The elaboration of the draft text of the **Protocol** has reached its final stages. The final version of the text is expected to be signed this year by the Ministers of Interior/Public Order of the BSEC Member States.

12. In the Preamble of the draft text of the **Additional Protocol on Combating Terrorism** the BSEC Member States express their consciousness **“that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations poses a serious threat to international peace and security, political, economic and social stability of the Parties, to their territorial integrity and safety of the BSEC Member-States, as well as to the development of friendly and**

good neighborhood relations and bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the States of the Black Sea Region” and state that they take **“into consideration the provisions of the United Nations documents on combating terrorism and fully support the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, in particular Resolution 1373”** in agreeing on a set of articles contained in the draft Additional Protocol.

13. The political, economic and security developments in Europe have clearly indicated that peace on the continent depends on the stability and prosperity of its regions. They have also demonstrated that the Black Sea region is in need of further efforts towards security and stability. That was the conclusion of the Heads of State or Government of the **BSEC** Member States in their meeting in İstanbul on 25 June 2002 on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Founding of the BSEC. Proceeding from that conclusion the Leaders of the BSEC Member States, in para 4 of İstanbul Decennial Summit Declaration, encouraged the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs **“to consider ways and means of enhancing contribution of BSEC to strengthening security and stability in the region.”**

In keeping with that mandate an **Ad Hoc Study Group** was established. It has held two meetings in Athens with the financial assistance and intellectual contribution of International Center of Black Sea Studies, a BSEC think-tank. The third meeting of the **Ad Hoc Study Group** will take place shortly in Athens.