



BLACK SEA UNIVERSITIES NETWORK

International Permanent Secretariat

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Distinguished members of the Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers of BSEC Member States,

In 1997, at the Meeting of the PABSEC Committee for Cultural, Educational, and Social Affairs, held in Bucharest, Romania, the establishment of a Network of the Universities from BSEC Member States was proposed and recommended, as a framework for academic cooperation in the Black Sea Region.

Professor Mircea Malitza, President of the Black Sea University Foundation was invited to initiate this process. By the joint efforts of several Rectors of Universities from BSEC Member Countries, in 1998, at "Ovidius" University of Constantza, the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) was conceived. The process has been developed under the coordination of the PABSEC and the assistance of the BSEC PERMIS.

In the last four years, the Network has been developed covering the whole Black Sea region. The activity of the Network has been analyzed by the PABSEC General Assembly at its Meeting in Sofia, in 2001. A special evaluation was done also by the BSEC, at the Senior Officials Meeting in Kiev, in 2002.

Recently, the BSUN issued a "General Report on Current Status of Higher Education in the Black Sea Region" devoted to the description of the higher education systems of the Black Sea Region countries.

We, the Rectors of the BSUN Member Universities, gathered in Baku at the BSUN General Assembly Session/4th Conference of Rectors, of BSUN Member Universities have reviewed the statute, official documents, and the future programs of our Network, and agreed to continue our activities with a much closer connection with BSEC.

We already have close cooperation with the BSEC and its International Secretariat, as well as other BSEC Related Bodies and we are committed to strengthen this collaboration. Also, we are cooperating with National Ministers of Education, of Research and Technology, and the National Academies of Sciences. The Network gathers almost hundred of the most prestigious universities of the region having a functioning structure and running cooperation programs.

The BSUN programs on developing scientific, cultural and educational cooperation, on unifying and harmonising academic curricula for equivalence of degrees and regional diploma recognition, on strengthening academic solidarity through joint research projects, on developing regional modular education and training programs, on promoting university-industry link etc. represent a creative and substantial contribution by the universities in promoting overall goals of the multilateral cooperation in the region.

APPENDIX VII

Taking into account all the above mentioned reasons, we kindly ask your support to consider the possibility of granting to the Black Sea University Network the Statute of BSEC Related Body, under the Article 23 of the BSEC Charter.

The new BSUN President, Professor Abel Maharramov is authorized herewith to submit this application to the BSEC Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers, and undertake other required diligence in this respect. It is presumed as well that, if necessary, Professor Abel Maharramov may assign specific tasks to his representatives to promote this objective.

This letter was adopted by the participants of the BSUN General Assembly/ The 4th Conference of Rectors from the BSR, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on September 13, 2002.