

**INTERVENTION BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE BSEC PERMIS, AMBASSADOR MICHAEL B. CHRISTIDES, AT THE PRESENTATION EVENT OF THE VOLUME “ENERGY VIEW OF BSEC COUNTRIES – 2015”, HELD IN ATHENS (KEPA PREMISES, UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS) ON 25 FEBRUARY 2016.**

Thanks for your presence here today. Warm greetings to the organizers of this event, the prestigious Energy Policy and Development Centre (KEPA) of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, directed with professionalism and impressive dedication by Professor Dimitrios Mavrakis.

We are proud that this event takes place under the auspices of BSEC, in the framework of which, a small project financed by “our” Project Development Fund, entitled “EU-BSEC Energy and Environmental Policy Network – PROMITHEAS- 1”, in 2004-2005, has developed over the years into the **Promitheas Network**, managed by KEPA, connecting decision makers, prestigious academic and research institutions, as well as market stakeholders from all the 12 BSEC Member States and from other states in our neighbourhood.

We have to emphasize that the development of this project has been possible with funds offered by the European Union and with generous contributions of the Hellenic Government, for which we are grateful and **hope** that they can be repeated in the future.

We are very thankful to KEPA for agreeing to coordinate and manage the BSEC Green Energy Network, linking administrative bodies and centers - organizations mandated to promote renewable energy sources, energy efficiency measures and policies in the BSEC Member States.

This is an important tool for exchanging information and for sharing know-how and good practices among our Member States, which had set for themselves, in the strategic document guiding the activities of the Organization - *BSEC Economic Agenda 2012* - the task of taking gradual steps to materialize the vision of a BSEC Region transformed into a model for clean energy by the year 2050.

We, in the Permanent International Secretariat of BSEC, feel the need of strengthening the interaction between the academic sector and energy stakeholders for an efficient cooperation within the BSEC framework in the area of energy, in general, and in the area of Green Energy, in particular. Experience has shown that such interaction always produces ideas and concrete recommendations that we can subsequently submit to our Member States.

Therefore, allow me to seize this opportunity to encourage administrative bodies, academic and research institutions, market stakeholders and **financing institutions**, active or interested in promoting Green Energy in the BSEC Region, to consider joining the Network. Let me add here that we are particularly satisfied with the presence today of “our” Bank, the BSTDB, in the person of Mr. Roman Matkiwski, who will elaborate on how and when the Bank can be a valuable partner in projects concerning Climate Change and Energy efficiency.

The conferences and the publications prepared by KEPA over the years have been very valuable for us, providing food for thought as to where and what BSEC should focus on, so that it could bring added value and act really in support of the needs and interests of its 12 Member States in the field of energy. At the same time, they have made significant contributions to the knowledge transfer and development on energy and climate change issues in the region.

I wish to particularly mention the series of *Energy View of BSEC Countries*, starting with its first edition in 2005, which has been a useful instrument in investment planning and in promoting regional policies of cooperation in the fields of energy and environment protection.

The 2015 volume has a special value for the Working Group on Energy, which has embarked upon elaborating a Green Energy Strategy Paper of the BSEC Member States, aiming to promote renewable energy sources, clean technologies and energy efficiency, taking into account the relevant provisions of the *BSEC Economic Agenda*.

More generally, the volume we are launching today has a distinct importance in the light of the new international agreement on the climate agreed upon at the COP21, which took place in Paris in December 2015, a crucial conference enabling all countries to combat climate change effectively and boost the transition towards resilient, low-carbon societies and economies, whilst promoting fair and sustainable development

Having all these considerations in mind, we, as Permanent International Secretariat of BSEC, will do our best to ensure the widest possible distribution of the special edition of the *“Energy View of BSEC Countries”* so that it could reach energy stakeholders and decision-makers in our Member States.

But what we mostly want is to pass into another phase of our – and KEPA’s – endeavours: **that of supporting concrete investment projects in the fields of Energy - Climate Change!** Let us take advantage of the potential the accumulated data and information, included in the volume, offers! It is a useful instrument for planning investments and promoting regional policies! So, we believe that the next stage of our efforts should be an annual or bi-annual event, promoting concrete projects, a **“BSEC Green Energy Investment Forum”!**

We in PERMIS have already worked on a draft concept paper on the issue and will be soon informing the competent BSEC organs accordingly.

All the above means, also, that perhaps we should bring back to life the older proposal concerning the establishment of a **“BSEC Strategic Green Alliance between Policy makers, Academia and Private Entrepreneurship”**, for a number of reasons that have already been amply illuminated in the past. The main objective of this endeavour is to enhance synergy and coordinated action between all the above mentioned stake holders, facilitate SMEs to investigate investment options, encourage the exchange of new technologies, enhance cooperation with national and international financial institutions, like the BSTDB, EBRD and the “Green Investment Fund”.

So, Ladies and Gentlemen, thanks again for your participation and presence here today, we will certainly try to make as much as possible from the work already achieved and we will not shy from opening this new chapter in our cooperation that I mentioned before, that is helping plan and implement concrete projects and investment opportunities in the vital sector of Energy conservation – efficiency and RES, in order to improve the quality of life of our Member States’ people.-