

**Statement of the Executive Secretary, H.E. Marek Belka
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

Black Sea Forum on Dialogue and Partnership Summit

5 June 2006

Bucharest, Romania

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to participate in the *Black Sea Forum on Dialogue and Partnership Summit* and to address you. I join others in expressing appreciation for the warm hospitality of our Romanian hosts and support of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) staff.

I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts being made by BSEC Governments of Member States towards linking and unifying Europe and towards creating a Europe without dividing lines. The BSEC is also making a remarkable contribution to promoting peace and prosperity in Europe through dialogue and cooperation projects. As an initiative playing its part in the European integration processes, the BSEC has set as its goal cooperation with European institutions and organizations.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) has contributed to your efforts in the past and will continue in the direction of achieving common objectives, moving towards achievements in the transition process, closer integration within Europe, and economic, social and environmental development.

Cooperation between the UNECE and the BSEC has continued in accordance with the 2001 cooperative agreement between the two organizations. The main line of cooperation in the economic dimension includes cooperation in transport area; promotion of entrepreneurship, and support and development of SME's; promotion of economic cooperation through trade facilitation; and providing advice to governments in the Region.

In the area of transport, ECE assisted in elaborating the Map of the BSEC Ring Transport Corridor and its Hinterland Connections and in monitoring the process of harmonization of national legislation of the BSEC member States on the basis of their accession to major ECE agreements and conventions. ECE has also supported the implementation

of the Ministerial Memorandum of Understanding on the Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region. In the field of promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises, ECE participated in the work of BSEC working group on SME's and contributed to the organization of a number of workshops and seminars on related issues.

In the area of environment, the UNECE is involved in the project on Trans-boundary cooperation and sustainable management of the Dniester river in which the two riparian countries Ukraine and Moldova have worked together to assess the situation in the Dniester river basin and agree on the way forward to strengthen collaboration and to improve management of the river.

Moreover, there are strong potentials to strengthen the cooperation in the area of trade and agriculture. In particular, the UNECE would welcome an invitation to present its expertise on agricultural quality standards, trade facilitation, etc. in the context of the inter-regional and cross-border cooperation.

The UNECE is paying attention to those countries that are either acceding to the EU or looking forward to accession. The UNECE will work with these countries in order to facilitate their future integration into the EU through speeding-up the accession process. The UNECE will also work in the area of legislative framework that would promote integration between the enlarged-EU and non-acceding countries.

The countries in the Wider Black Sea Region are making a remarkable contribution towards achieving long-term stability in the Region, and to the common and joint efforts towards sustainable growth and development. The UNECE recognizes the efforts to achieve these objectives within a framework of economic and social development, and common security in the Region. The UNECE will continue to provide its support to these activities through our normative work, policy recommendations and technical assistance. In particular, I would like to extend our cooperation with the BSEC members in implementing the political commitments in the areas of trade and trade facilitation, transport, enterprise development, and environment.

In concluding, UNECE is convinced that working together at the regional level is a source of innovation and progress in both institutions and standards. Regional and sub-regional integration can lead to the adoption of programmes and action plans to establish a set of guiding principles

and commitments specific to the region and contribute to the development of global programmes.

I am looking forward to a lively discussion today that would lead to a better international understanding of the Wider Black Sea Region, its potential and its perspectives.

Thank you.