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**Powers
Partners
Projects
EU and Black Sea Regional Cooperation
Common goals
Common interests**

Statement by Valeriu Ostalep

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of
Moldova, Chisinau

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished audience,

It is a great pleasure for me to attend this event which proposes itself to address *via* an interactive, focused and at the same time multidimensional approach one of the most topical issues on the current agenda of the EU and as well as of the region itself – cooperation between the European Union and the Black Sea region.

Since the importance of the Black Sea region as a hub for the security and stability with far more reaching implications is a *fait accompli* allow me to go straight to the point by briefly presenting the Republic of Moldova's position on this issue.

As a country belonging to the Black Sea space and actively participating in BSEC activities, inclusively in the process of invigorating its efficiency and weight as a unique player, Moldova is very much in favour of a more elaborated and policy driven approach of the EU towards the Black Sea region. Establishing a regular cooperation between EU and BSEC can serve as one of the relevant channels in this regard. Moldova would undoubtedly welcome an eventual positive decision of the EU to get an observer status in BSEC and subsequently to set some EU-BSEC format for dialogue.

We follow with interest the EU internal decision-shaping process on a comprehensive EU policy towards the Black Sea region. It is true that there some elements referring to this region in the ENP, but in our opinion there is need for an approach that would take the Black Sea region as a whole. We are glad that the recent Commission's Communication "Black Sea Synergy – a new regional cooperation initiative" responds mainly to this idea, which is shared by all our regional partners.

In our view based on the experience of south eastern European cooperation processes, cooperation with the EU in implementing the ENP EU-Moldova Action Plan, and obviously collaboration within BSEC organization a successful cooperation between EU and Black Sea region should encompass the following essential, as we think, elements:

- A deep and regular political dialogue between the parties allowing several levels of dialogue formats, ranging from that of high ranking officials, ministers of foreign affairs to the level of senior officials. The important role of the parliamentary dimension in creating more efficient collaboration schemes should be also taken into consideration.
- A focused thematic dialogue along clear priority lines based on common interests and needs, that will naturally lead to benefits for the entire region and of course EU, as a key partner. In this context, I would like to mention that Moldova has come to the European Commission with the initiative of developing a Pan-European information and data exchange mechanism on migration flows between the EU, south eastern European states and ENP eastern dimension states that can be extended to the Black Sea region to represent one of the first initiatives to link in a single network of cooperation EU and Black Sea region states.
- There are also other several areas whose potential is still to be explored at regional level, such as: energy and transport fields, science and cultural domains.
- A wider participation of the civil society could contribute to outlining a newly patterned dialogue of the countries from the region.
- The settlement of the region's frozen conflicts represents an indispensable factor for obtaining real essential progresses in enhancing cooperation in the Black Sea space, namely because their perpetuation concentrates a lot of political energy.

Honorable audience,

Currently the EU-Moldova relations are framed by the Action Plan which was proposed to Moldova within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Although both ENP and the new Black Sea Synergy approach follow the same ultimate objective, they differ in scope and substance.

Last but not least I would like to express the Republic of Moldova's gratitude to the German Presidency of the European Union for the commitment to formulate an EU policy for the region that would build on the already accumulated experience and bring an added value to a further promotion of a secure, stable and prosperous space all over Europe and its neighbourhood.

Thank you for your attention