



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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THE 3rd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RISK MANAGEMENT IN ENERGY

Webinar 28 May 2020

- Ladies and Gentlemen, I first of all wish to congratulate the organizers for today's very timely Webinar-event and, also, to thank them for inviting me to address this distinguished panel of specialists in Energy matters.
- I have the honor to represent the Organization of *the Black Sea Economic Cooperation* (BSEC), a regional international entity, which for the last 28 years promotes mainly the economic cooperation – in the widest sense of the term – among its Member States and beyond.
- BSEC is today the oldest and institutionally the most mature intergovernmental vehicle for the promotion of economic dialogue and coordination in a, certainly, very volatile region of our small World. Yet, it is also one of the most geostrategic regions, straddling three continents – Europe, Asia and Africa – and serving as a very significant Transport and, especially, Energy hub.
- Given the above, I am sure it comes as no surprise to you that BSEC deals also with issues closely connected to Energy, yet, I have to admit, that the risk factor and risk-management in the Energy sector did – and do not – figure in our agenda of deliberations and joint endeavors.
- BSEC is interested and involved more in what I would call “light Energy issues”, that is, we mostly deal with Energy conservation, Energy efficiency and alternative sources of Energy. The “high-politics” concerning the production, transport and distribution of oil or natural gas, for example, are beyond the interests of the BSEC Working Groups dealing with Energy matters.

- Yet Energy risk management, industrial, informational and ecological safety are issues that highly affect the every-day life of the average citizen in our Member States and beyond, so it is only natural that we are highly interested in all the many and important items that are on the agenda of this Webinar.
- Even more so, given the recent and persistent instability and lack of security that has afflicted the overall Energy market, with fluctuating production volumes, uncertainty over deliveries and, also, of energy storage, with prices that constantly oscillate, etc.
- Certainly, the Coronavirus outbreak has shown how vulnerable the Energy Market remains to similar global pandemics and how little the interested stakeholders can do in order to address the dramatic reduction in Energy demand that we witness.
- On the other hand, the extraordinary slowdown in industrial production, energy demand and in transport activity during the first 5 months of 2020 has led to significantly lower levels of air pollution, sparking debate over whether the coronavirus outbreak will lead to long-term shifts in consumer and industrial behaviors that could reorient economic policy towards more sustainable development goals.
- The BSEC PERMIS hopes that the above factors will facilitate the financing of more **green investments in BSEC Member States**, as their governments seek viable strategies for kick-starting their economies, once the disruption from the pandemic subsides.
- For all these reasons BSEC will follow closely today's deliberations and possible conclusions, on which we intend to inform the relevant authorities of all BSEC Member States.
- Dear friends, not being a specialist, I do not wish to venture more in a terrain in which I feel very insecure and unprepared to enter.
- I wish every success in the discussions among experts and I hope that some of the issues they will be touching upon could be valuable "food for thought and action" also in the framework of the regular BSEC activities in the Energy sector.
- Thank you for your kind attention.