



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic participated today in the 34th Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Member States.

Today, the Republic of Serbia took its semi-annual Chairmanship of BSEC over from the Russian Federation, and Serbia will transfer it to Turkey on 31 December 2016.

"Starting today, Serbia will chair the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, which consists of twelve countries. It is important to emphasise that it comprises some very big and economically strong countries, like the Russian Federation and Turkey, but also countries with different economic potentials and positions in various international organisations; some of them are members of the EU and some of the Eurasian Economic Union.

Without a doubt, there exists a huge potential for the development of economic cooperation; we have in mind projects in the fields of transport, energy and trade development. There are various bodies within the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, from banks to institutes that deal with projects, and there are also many funded projects.

Serbia will use its Chairmanship to revitalise this Organization because it too is laden with political conflicts between its members. These conflicts occur on a bilateral basis and they affect the economic cooperation. Politics should be put aside and economic interests pursued instead.

It is important to note that these are the first meetings after the renewal of relations between Russia and Turkey.

The crowning event of our Chairmanship will be the Ministerial Meeting in December, in Belgrade, where twelve Foreign Minister will be present. We expect all twelve countries' Foreign Minister to be in Belgrade, and it will be, after last year's OSCE Belgrade Ministerial Meeting, another large gathering in our country," Minister Dacic said today in Sochi.

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