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PRESS RELEASE

Meeting of Prof.dr. Marian Preda, Rector of the University of Bucharest with
Prof.dr. Eden Mamut, BSUN Secretary General

On 23rd of July, 2020, a working meeting took place between Prof. dr. Marian Preda, Rector of the University of Bucharest and Prof. dr. eng. Eden Mamut, Secretary General of the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN). Rector Marian Preda is a member of the BSUN Executive Board, representing the universities from Romania.

The purpose of the meeting was to analyze the current situation and the priorities of the BSUN activities from the perspective of the involvement of the Romanian universities. In this context, Prof. Mamut informed Rector Preda about the partnership agreement between the BSUN and the European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. By signing this agreement, BSUN will become a member of the Consortium of Academic Institutions that promotes this initiative. During the discussions, it was identified the opportunity to promote corridors that highlight the Danubian-Pontic cultural heritage, as the Dobrogea cultural treasures, but also the existing connections of the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic space to the Caucasus, the Balkans and the Mediterranean.

Regarding the SARS CoV2 pandemic crisis, the challenges that the universities and in general, the education sector encounter have been highlighted. In this respect, the BSUN International Permanent Secretariat initiated an agreement with the Constanța County School Inspectorate, in order to develop a collaboration model for the involvement of universities in supporting the pre-university education sector, in order to overcome the existing challenges.

Prof. Mamut presented the methodology that was used, by sending questionnaires to the subordinated schools of the County School Inspectorate, gathering and processing data, and organizing thematic workshops. On 30th of June, 1st and 2nd of July, 2020, there were organized thematic meetings focusing on the topic of the "blue growth" initiative and related topics as STEM and social cohesion education.

Based on these workshops, a number of opportunities were identified in order to initiate pilot projects in a wider partnership between universities and schools. Rector Marian Preda appreciated this initiative and proposed that in the next period, the possibilities of involving teaching and research staff from the University of Bucharest shall be evaluated. In this sense, Prof. dr. Romiță Iucu has been appointed as responsible person.

Regarding the BSUN priorities on scientific research activities, one of them that has been defined by the members of the BSUN Executive Board refers to research activities on the prevention of SARS CoV2 virus transmission in communities. In this regard, based on the discussions, it was agreed that the University of Bucharest shall initiate a pilot research project on how the virus is transmitted from infected people to the surfaces they come into contact with and the duration of persistence of the virus on those surfaces. In the second stage, several virucide substances will be synthesized on the basis of nanotechnologies and will be tested for disinfection of closed spaces and other types of spaces on university campuses. The results that will be obtained in this stage, will allow to promote such a research topic for wider collaborations, both with universities within BSUN, and also within the partnership that the University of Bucharest develops under the auspices of the European CIVIS Network.

In the last part of the discussions, administrative issues were addressed. The discussion were focused mainly on the organization of the BSUN 2020 Congress between 20th and 22nd of October 2020, in Yerevan, Armenia. For the first time, the Congress shall be organized in an online event format with the participation of the Rectors from the BSUN member universities and some worldwide notorious personalities.