

Declaration*
on the Tenth Anniversary of the Assembly

1. *We, Parliamentarians of the BSEC member states, have met in Athens on 26-28 November 2002 for the Plenary Session marking the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.*
2. *On this occasion, we reaffirm our faith to the Assembly and our determination to fully use its potential and concert the efforts of the national parliaments in order to materialise the shared ideas and principles enshrined in the Istanbul Summit Declaration, the Bosphorus Statement, the BSEC Charter and the PABSEC Rules of Procedure.*
3. *Committing ourselves to continue and consolidate this process laying down a solid foundation for multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea region vis-à-vis the formidable challenges of the 21st century we shall follow the common vision on turning the Black Sea into a region of democracy, prosperity, stability and peace, bounding countries together by the shared values of tolerance, equality, solidarity and cultural diversity, as a substantial contribution to shaping the new Europe.*
4. *We recognize that in addition to our responsibilities towards our societies, we have a collective responsibility for promoting dialogue on a wide range of issues, strengthening mutual trust and stability in the region. The Black Sea is on its way to become a family with viable means to respond effectively and efficiently to the challenges in the economic, social, political spheres including settlement of the conflicts.*
5. *Political will and determination, the shared understanding of the urgent need to implement mutually advantageous priority projects, boosting the overall integration are essential for the future development. To a large extent, this depends on resolute actions to ensure that democracy and the rule of law take root throughout our region. The PABSEC recommendations on primary elements of civil society - pluralistic democracy, free and democratic elections, separation of powers, free and independent mass-media, good governance - clearly illustrated that our national parliaments stand together and are determined to promote these basic principles.*
6. *In order to reinforce and underpin the regional cooperation, the Assembly attracted new actors in this process by setting up a framework of cooperation at the level of capital cities' administration, public broadcasters and constitutional courts. Specialised meetings organised under the PABSEC auspices have outlined the frameworks for future cooperation and interaction at different levels. At the same time, the initiative to organise the Children and Youth Festival of the BSEC states cemented*

* Adopted by the 20th General Assembly in Athens, on 27 November 2002.

friendly relations among the young people in the region promoting spirit of partnership for the new generation.

- 7. Coordinated interactions between the Assembly and the BSEC, the BSEC BC, the BSTDB and the ICBSS on the basis of complementarity and responsibility for carrying out specific tasks according to their area of expertise and ability remains as a priority importance.*
- 8. The Parliamentary Assembly shall further consolidate cooperation with the parliamentary assemblies and will concentrate particular attention to the development of relations with the European Parliament.*
- 9. Reviewing the decennial experience of the Assembly, we admit that only together, through strengthened cooperation and active involvement of our citizens can we and our countries meet tomorrow's challenges and resolve the problems that are central to our peoples.*