



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
PABSEC

**FORTY NINTH PLENARY SESSION
PABSEC GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

DECLARATION*

*of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation
on the 25th Anniversary of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic
Cooperation*

Establishment of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) a quarter of a century ago was an important event that initiated the process of multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea region as the response of the Member States to the contemporary challenges that remain topical today in the context of growing significance of the Black Sea region. The common aspiration to improve wellbeing and welfare of the citizens of the Member States contributes to strengthening cooperation in the economic, energy, transport, social, cultural and other fields.

We recognize the need to fully adhere to the norms and principles of international law, enshrined in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, in particular those of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of the Member States, to this end.

We, the members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, emphasize capital importance of the activities of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation over the past 25 years and support strengthening of this process, using the Assembly's potential to implement the shared ideas and principles set forth in the 1992 Istanbul Summit Declaration and the Bosphorus Statement.

Over the years the BSEC has played an important role in international context and has gained support from the international community, thus contributing to strengthening of multifaceted intergovernmental cooperation built upon the mutual trust.

Having adopted the "BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards Enhanced Partnership", the Organization announced its vision for the future of the region and defined a

* adopted at the 49th General Assembly in Istanbul on 5 July 2017

strategy for regional cooperation. In this regard, it is necessary to strengthen the legal framework for the effective implementation of joint mutually beneficial projects developed within the framework of the BSEC.

The practice of supporting the new initiatives introduced by the countries holding the BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office over the years is a proof of sustainable partnership and promotion of mutually beneficial interests with the aim to enhance the efficiency of cooperation and uphold peace, good-neighborhood and progress in the region.

With the purpose to strengthen the BSEC process, the Assembly in recent years has focused on the fundamental aspects of socio-economic development and integration: investment, new technologies, transport, small and medium-sized business development, employment, climate change, terrorism, corruption, civil society, the role of local government, Refugee problems, education, health, and the improvement of public administration. The efforts of the PABSEC to involve new actors in the BSEC process within the framework of cooperation at the level of the local authorities, public television and radio broadcasting companies and constitutional courts contributed to greater regional cohesion. The initiative of the Children's and Youth Festivals of the BSEC countries strengthened friendship ties among young people in the region.

A complex regional and international context with new threats and challenges requires resolute, comprehensive and coordinated actions based on the tradition of mutual friendship and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of the Member States. In its turn, the PABSEC is taking steps towards deeper involvement of parliamentary diplomacy in strengthening the climate of cooperation, friendship and mutual understanding on the basis of the above principles.

At present, when the Black Sea region has embarked on the path of deepening economic and trade cooperation in the region, the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC has decided to qualitatively increase its role at the international arena in order to contribute more effectively to enhancing the credibility of the Organization and strengthening contacts and cooperation with regional and international organizations.

Today, coordinated interaction between the BSEC, the Parliamentary Assembly, the BSEC Business Council, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank and the International Center for Black Sea Studies within their competences, accumulated experience and available opportunities, is of utmost importance for complementing the overall process of the regional cooperation.

Marking the 25th Anniversary of the Organization of the BSEC, the Assembly reaffirms its will to continue to work towards broader involvement of parliamentary diplomacy in strengthening the climate of friendship and mutual understanding for the realization of the present and new areas of cooperation.