

Seminar on  
**“FOSTERING COOPERATION ON SMALL- AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES AND ITS LEGAL  
FRAMEWORK IN THE BLACK SEA REGION”**,  
23 June 1998,  
Bucharest

## **CONCLUSIONS**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 1998, the seminar on **“FOSTERING COOPERATION ON SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES AND ITS LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN THE BLACK SEA REGION”** was held in Bucharest by the Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), after the initiative of the Term President of the Assembly, Mr. Petre Roman, President of the Senate of Romania.

The participants in the seminar, which brought together parliamentarians and economic decision makers from the Black Sea countries, deeming it as particularly useful, and after examining the present conditions in the field of cooperation among SMEs, recommended:

- to urge the Parliaments of the PABSEC member states to support Small- and Medium Enterprises, and through that support to contribute to the increased economic cooperation in the Black Sea Region;
- to promote a strategy of increased relations among the specialised structures of the PABSEC and EU;
- to firmly support and establish a business-friendly environment widely supporting SMEs.

In order to carry out a harmonised and supportive policy, beneficial to the SMEs, it is recommended to take action at the strategic and structural levels, as well as at the level of the economic operators, such as:

- to continuously improve the legal framework and the SME-supportive regulations, mainly by involving the parliaments of the countries in the region;
- to step up the exchange of information on business opportunities and their legal framework and networking of the business databases;
- to prompt business contacts among companies by simplifying visa formalities and by facilitating the movement of businessmen in order to organise joint activities and investments;
- to develop joint projects on drawing in foreign investment, aimed at increasing the economic power of the SMEs;
- to assist the SMEs in organising and participating in fairs, exhibitions, workshops and other promotional commercial events;
- to support the SMEs in meeting the European quality standards for commodities and services, stepping up competitiveness, promoting access to the EU market;

In order to develop regional cooperation, the participants in the seminar also deem necessary to approach the task-oriented issues listed below:

- to provide a harmonised definition of the SMEs at legislative level and to harmonise the economic concepts, keeping in mind the national legislative specificity and the EU relevant standards;
- to identify and harmonise the fiscal facilities in the field, with the organisation by the PABSEC member countries of a specialised seminar on taxation issues;
- to promote a harmonised customs system;
- to ensure an environment favourable to the free capital circulation, liable to entail the promotion of direct and portfolio investment;
- to encourage the development of innovation centres and technologic transfer networks, as well as of industrial parks;
- to adopt legislative measures aimed at fostering partnership among the SMEs and large enterprises;
- to harmonise the legislation on the protection of industrial ownership in the PABSEC countries;
- to ensure the transparency of national trade policies and dissemination of business information, as well as to join in the international, regional and subregional agreements;
- to encourage the NGOs in the Black Sea Region (Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Balkan Centre for SMEs, professional associations, consulting centres and business promotion centres, capital markets, banks, stock- and commodities exchanges), to step up cooperation among the decision-makers concerned in SMEs in each country;
- to render systems compatible and standardise information at the level of service suppliers for the SMEs under the “Black Sea Net” project, and attract financing by cooperating with the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank and international donor bodies;
- based upon PHARE assistance, to promote the EURO-Info centres in the PABSEC member countries on account of the expertise acquired in Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Turkey;
- to take action aimed at establishing Trade Points in the PABSEC countries;
- to make use of the Trade and Information Promotion System in Romania by the PABSEC member countries as a gateway accessing the international TIPS network;
- to work out and edit a catalogue of the business information sources available in the PABSEC member countries, aimed at an easier identification of and capitalising upon the business opportunities.