

THE EIGHTEENTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE PABSEC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RECOMMENDATION 57/ 2001*

on the Second General Assembly of the Black Sea Capitals' Association

1. The successful outcome of the Second General Assembly of the Black Sea Capitals' Association, held under the auspices of the Parliamentary Assembly, upon the invitation by the Prefect of Athens, on 15-16 October 2001, in Athens, has marked a major step forward towards implementation of the goals of the Black Sea Capitals' Association and an important contribution aimed at consolidating and expanding multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea region as a whole.

Of particular importance was the fact that the Governors and Mayors have been received by H.E. Mr. Constantinos Stefanopoulos, President of the Hellenic Republic, and Mr. Apostolos Kaklamanis, President of the Hellenic Parliament, which illustrated the attention paid by the highest Hellenic authorities to this event, substantially boosting cooperation among the capitals of our countries, as the local governance dimension of the ongoing multilateral process in the region.

2. The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly, Mrs. Maria Arsenis, Head of the Hellenic PABSEC Delegation, underlined that the Athens Meeting was the best evidence of the importance of the Parliamentary Assembly's initiative in paving the way for the establishment of the Black Sea Capitals' Association (BSCA) as the institutional framework of cooperation among the political, administrative, economic and cultural centres of the Member-States. The BSCA activities have a positive impact on promoting close contacts on matters under the competence of the local authorities and a real and pragmatic impact on the common efforts with a view of turning the Black Sea region into a zone of prosperity and stability and achieving a higher degree of regional cooperation and further integration into the broader European space. As a result, the capital-cities became an efficient component of the overall cooperation in the Black Sea region. Therefore, the PABSEC representative stressed the determination by the Parliamentary Assembly to mobilise the National Parliaments in order to improve

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national legislation pertaining to the role of the capital-cities' administrations and the BSCA in this process.

The meeting was also addressed by Mr. Grigoris Niotis, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, Mr. Theodoros Kassimis, member of the PABSEC Economic Committee, representing the "New Democracy Party", and by other leaders of political parties, as well as by the PABSEC Secretary General.

3. The debates focused on the topical subjects of international terrorism, organised crime and environmental protection which are among the priority objectives both of the BSEC Organisation and its Parliamentary Assembly.

4. **The Parliamentary Assembly:**

- i. **welcomes** the results of the Second General Assembly of the Black Sea Capitals' Association, organised under the auspices of the Parliamentary Assembly, which clearly demonstrated that the local authorities, rendering direct service to the public and addressing every day problems encountered by citizens, can and must make a valuable contribution to the attaining the aims of the Organisation of the BSEC and its Parliamentary Assembly;
 - ii. **expresses** satisfaction that all the participants appreciated the leading role of the Parliamentary Assembly in fostering close cooperation among the Black Sea capitals and, within this framework, the Declaration adopted by the PABSEC General Assembly, on 30 November 2000 as a consistent support granted by the Parliamentarians to the endeavours of the Black Sea Capitals' Association;
 - iii. **stresses** the significance of the Athens Declaration adopted by consensus and signed by the Governors and Mayors, underlining the commitment by the capital-cities of the Member-States to substantially contribute to the efforts towards the achievements of the goals of the Black Sea cooperation process, to use all legal and other appropriate means for protecting the fundamental rights of the citizens for providing equal opportunities in all sectors and all levels of social life, to support the policy of the Parliaments and Governments aimed at ensuring economic prosperity and democratic development. To this end, the Governors and Mayors decided to work out relevant programs at local governance level, taking also advantage of the multilateral cooperation projects agreed upon in the Statute of the Black Sea Capitals' Association;
 - iv. **appreciates** the unequivocal condemnation of the international terrorism and the organised crime as well as the support by the capital-cities' administrations of the endeavours by the Parliaments and Governments of the Member-States in combating these criminal activities gravely affecting the overall development, democracy and security in the region and in the world at large;
 - v. **highlights** the resolute actions undertaken by the Governors and Mayors to reduce the ongoing degradation of the environment in the capital-cities, jeopardising the public health and the economic development, and to place the environmental protection among the priorities of the capitals' administration programs.
5. **The Parliamentary Assembly**, therefore, recommends the Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC Member-States:

- i. **to support** implementation of economic and social projects undertaken by the capital-cities administration having a vital importance for the citizens, mainly, infrastructure, urban planning, housing, health, environment as well as strengthening multi-sided cooperation within the framework of the Black Sea Capitals' Association as a significant new component of the regional cooperation process;
- ii. **to enact or update** legislation securing a greater involvement by the citizens in the management of the administration of the capital-cities as well as a growing role of the capitals in developing result-oriented projects beneficial for the well-being and sustainable development of the Member-States;
- iii. **to encourage** broader cooperation between the Black Sea Capitals' Association and the similar European organisations.

5. **The Assembly** invites the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider this Recommendation.