

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
PABSEC

THE EIGHTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Doc. GA 2393/96

RECOMMENDATION 18/1996¹

**On the Guidelines for the Programme of the Protection of the Cultural Heritage
in the Black Sea Region**

1. Reaffirming its firm stand regarding the need to preserve and protect the cultural heritage in the countries of the Black Sea Region and in order to make a further contribution to developing a relevant regional programme, the Assembly has prepared and adopted the Guidelines for the Programme of the Protection of the Cultural Heritage in the Black Sea Region (Doc.CC 2392/96).
2. Recalling its Recommendation 6/1994 on the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of the PABSEC Member Countries which was adopted in December 1994, the Assembly notes a certain progress achieved by the member countries in implementing the Recommendation as regards the introduction of new relevant legislation. At the same time there is a need for further legislative action in order to provide a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of the cultural heritage.
3. International legal instruments effective in this field have laid down universally recognised principles and criteria. The accession of each member country to these conventions would be the most reliable guarantee for a more effective protection of the cultural heritage. However, today some member countries may find it difficult to carry out the obligations deriving from these conventions which in some cases envisage considerable public spending.
4. The Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information (1993), stressing the need for preserving historical and cultural values, is a vital regional-level tool for cooperation aiming to study and safeguard historical and cultural monuments..
5. The political, economic and social changes under way in the countries of transition in the region have been accompanied by severe financial constraints leading to a dramatic reduction in public financing set aside for the study and protection of the cultural heritage.
6. At the same time, some member countries have yet to develop and establish an institutional framework to deal with the protection of the cultural heritage, envisaging a fruitful interaction between central and local government authorities and non-government organisations.

¹The Assembly debate on 12 December, 1996 (See Doc.CC 2392/96 - Report on the Guidelines for the Programme of the Protection of the Cultural Heritage in the Black Sea Region adopted by the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee at its Seventh Meeting in Yerevan on 4 October, 1996; Rapporteur: Mrs.Nina Zatssepina)

7. While maintaining the general supervision of the state over heritage protection policies, in some cases it may be advisable to consider the transfer to the private sector, where this possibility is granted by the national legislation, of those monuments that the state cannot afford to maintain provided that such steps can actually contribute to a better preservation and use of the monuments themselves.
8. A prerequisite for the successful accomplishment of measures to study and safeguard the cultural heritage is a favourable climate in the society and first of all within the legislative, executive and judicial branches of power. Therefore, environmental education with a strong cultural environment content would help to raise the public awareness and ensure a wide public participation in the study and protection of the cultural heritage.
9. **The Assembly recommends** the Parliaments and Governments of the PABSEC Member Countries:
 - i. to take further action with a view to implementing the provisions of Recommendation 6/1994 on the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of the PABSEC Member Countries;
 - ii. to consider the gradual accession to the following universally recognised international legal instruments:
 - UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972),
 - European Cultural Convention (Paris, 1954),
 - Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada, 1985),
 - European Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valetta, 1992),
 - UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague Convention, 1954),
 - Paris Convention concerning the measures prohibiting illegal import, export and transfer of cultural goods (1970),
 - European Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (Delphi, 1985);
 - iii. to continue, in the countries of transition, the development and enactment of new legislation in the field of the cultural heritage protection, based on internationally recognised principles and adapted to new political and socio-economic conditions;
 - iv. to take steps with a view to establishing and reinforcing a viable institutional framework for the study and protection of the cultural heritage by developing government strategies and institutional capacity while at the same time encouraging the activities of non-government organisations engaged in studying and protecting the cultural heritage;
 - v. to consider the Guidelines for the Programme of the Protection of the Cultural Heritage in the Black Sea Region adopted by the Assembly and take appropriate action with a view to engaging concerned national bodies and international organisations, including UNESCO and its national commissions, in the elaboration of the Programme;
 - vi. to this end, to consider convening in the near future an inter-governmental expert-level meeting in order to coordinate the activities related to the elaboration of the Programme;
 - vii. to consider the conclusion of an inter-state agreement on cooperation between the relevant authorities of the Member Countries in the prevention of illegal import, export and transfer of cultural goods.
10. **The Assembly invites** the BSEC Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider this Recommendation.