

RECOMMENDATION 97/2007*
ON

**The Bologna process and the reforms of higher education systems in the
BSEC countries**

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation is fully aware that at present, there is an increasing demand for and a great diversification in higher education, as well as for building the future, for which the young generation will need to be equipped with new skills and knowledge. The role of education in general, and of higher education in particular, in promoting and preserving democracy, and in educating the young generation for democratic citizenship, is now generally acknowledged.

2. The PABSEC has stressed on several occasions the need for mutual recognition of higher education qualifications by the BSEC Member States, which facilitate the free movement of students, lecturers and researchers within the Black Sea region. Within this framework the Assembly recalls its Recommendations: 10/1995 *on Cooperation among the PABSEC Member Countries for the Improvement of Education*, 27/1998 *on Cooperation of the Academic Communities of the BSEC Member Countries and its Legal Framework* and 31/1998 *on Mutual Recognition of Higher Education Diplomas by the BSEC Member Countries*".

3. The Assembly acknowledges the positive role of the collaboration with the Black Sea University ("*Decision 4/1995 on the Framework of Cooperation between the PABSEC and the Black Sea University*") and the efforts undertaken by the Black Sea Universities Network to promote cooperation among the universities of the BSEC Member States (Recommendation 56/2001 on "*Black Sea Universities Network: contribution to the Academic Cooperation*").

* *Rapporteur: Mr. Anastasios Spiliopoulos-Chairman of the Committee*

The Assembly debate on 14th June 2007 (see Doc. GA29/CC28/REP/07 – Report on “The Bologna process and the reforms of higher education systems in the BSEC countries”, discussed by the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee at its Twenty Eight Meeting in Tirana on 28 March 2007 – Rapporteur: Mr. Namik DOKLE (Albania)

4. Welcoming the process of the European Union enlargement, the Assembly at the same time expresses the belief that each BSEC Member State should seek to protect its identity. It recalls Recommendation 86/2005 on “*Cultural, Educational and Social Aspects of the European Enlargement: consequences for the Black Sea Region*”, emphasizing on the educational aspect and regarding the reforms of the Bologna Process set by the European Union.

5. The Assembly recalls also *The BSEC Economic Agenda for the Future: Towards a more Consolidated, Effective and Viable BSEC Partnership*,(Moscow 2001), *The Istanbul Decennial; Declaration* (2002), *Joint Baky Declaration of the BSEC Ministers of Education* (2004), *The Resolution for the establishment of the BSEC Working Group on Education, adopted by the 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States* (2005), as well as *The Joint Athens Declaration of the Ministers Responsible for Education for the BSEC Member States on Cooperation in Higher Education and University Research* (2005), that emphasize the importance of education as a vital component towards political, economic and cultural cooperation in the Black Sea Region.

6. **Therefore, the Parliamentary Assembly recommends** the Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC member states:

i) to cooperate in the development of national frameworks of qualifications in order to secure compatibility of the educational systems in the BSEC region;

ii) to promote joint research programs between the Universities, Institutions and academic foundations of the BSEC Member States in compliance with their priorities with regard to meet the standards of the Bologna process;

iii) to take the necessary measures to adopt a system of comparable degrees in order to promote the BSEC citizens employability;

iv) to promote mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to students and teachers;

v) to profile their own curricula, in accordance with the emerging post-Bologna environment, in particular through the introduction of bachelor courses in systems where they have not traditionally existed, and through the creation of master courses meeting the needs of mobile postgraduate students;

vi) to activate their networks in key areas such as joint curriculum development, joint ventures overseas or worldwide mobility schemes;

vii) to elaborate effective mechanisms for obtaining information regarding current processes in the sphere of education and science;

viii) to secure compliance of the systems of higher education with the requirements of the labour market;

7. **The Parliamentary Assembly** invites the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider its Recommendation.