

RECOMMENDATION 135/2013¹

The Role of the PABSEC in Enhancing Cooperation in the Black Sea Region - Challenges and Prospects

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) reaffirms the resolve to promote and strengthen peace, stability and prosperity in the Black Sea region. The PABSEC remain committed to addressing the existing challenges through scaling up the mutual support to ensure enhanced partnerships based on common interests. It is equally committed to accelerating and intensifying efforts to further to build a better future for the generations to come.
2. Based on solidarity among the states, which is reflected in the sharing of common geographical, historical and cultural values, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation constitutes an effective framework for dialogue on a wide range of issues and initiatives, further motivating regional economic cooperation for the establishment of true partnerships and good-neighbourly relations. This collaboration, in turn, lays the foundation for efficient interactions to facilitate the implementation of shared goals for a more prosperous Black Sea region.
3. The PABSEC welcomes the *Istanbul Summit Declaration on the Occasion of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation* of 26 June 2012 adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the BSEC Member States. The Declaration recognizes that “the main pillars of the BSEC have been all inclusiveness, transparency and regional ownership”, and that the BSEC’s commitment to enhanced dialogue and a pragmatic approach has rallied the Member States with diverse political, economic and social characteristics into sharing a unified spirit of confidence and cooperation.
4. The PABSEC further welcomes the adoption by the BSEC in 2012 of the *Economic Agenda towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership* and *The Way Forward for an Action Plan on the Implementation of the Economic Agenda towards an Enhanced BSEC*

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The Assembly debate on 18 December 2013 (see Doc.: GA42/LC42/REP/13, Report of the Legal and Political Affairs Committee “The Role of the PABSEC in Enhancing Cooperation in the Black Sea Region - Challenges and Prospects ” discussed in Bucharest on 15 October 2013; Rapporteur: Mr. David SAGANELIDZE, PABSEC Vice-President, Member of the Committee – Georgia)

Text adopted by the Assembly in Tbilisi on 18 December 2013.

Partnership. In order to ensure the effective and timely implementation of projects and programs identified in these documents and to establish the necessary mechanism for uninterrupted exchange of information and knowledge, the PABSEC notes the urgent need to increase the level of coordination among the BSEC, the PABSEC, the BSEC Business Council (BSEC BC), the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) and the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS).

5. The Assembly expresses its deep concern over the ongoing adverse impacts of the global financial and economic crisis coupled with global climate change. These negative trends pose serious additional challenges to the achievement of the mutually agreed goals. To effectively combat these threats, it is vital that the countries in the region continue to successfully carry out the tasks set forth in the statutory documents and evolve strategies to rectify the slowdown in launching existing and potential joint projects.
6. The PABSEC is confident that interaction of the BSEC Member States with international, regional and sub-regional bodies will exponentially multiply collaborative linkages and cultivate a spirit of mutual trust, partnership and understanding. In this respect, the PABSEC underlines the significance of active involvement at all levels in the work of international bodies. Such proactive participation will introduce more constructive and progressive elements to improve the current socio-economic situation and to reinforce peace, stability, and prosperity in the Black Sea region.
7. The PABSEC acknowledges that the key to successful cooperation within the PABSEC framework is continual adherence and ongoing commitment to the “spirit of the PABSEC”, which maintains an ethos of mutual trust, mutual consultations, and viable solutions based on a common consensus. This collaborative spirit has been an invaluable achievement of the countries of the region during the many years of their fruitful cooperation, and must be further strengthened and invigorated in the years to come.
8. The PABSEC recalls its Report and Recommendation 132/2012 on the *PABSEC in the Wider Black Sea Region: 20 Years of Regional Cooperation*, which stresses that the PABSEC is required has to strengthen its role and reinforce its commitment to become an active player within the wider Black Sea Region in general and in each Member State in particular”. To attain this objective, the PABSEC is required to provide a series of recommendations on the necessary mechanisms that will “enable it to revitalize and strengthen the role, authority, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Assembly and its International Secretariat”.
9. **Therefore, the Assembly recommends** that the Parliaments and the Governments of the PABSEC Member States:
 - i. *harness* the full potential of the established framework for economic cooperation in the Black Sea region so as to consolidate regional peace, security, and stability by creating greater synergy between nations and to achieve the common objectives of the BSEC;
 - ii. *accelerate* the implementation of the *Economic Agenda towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership* by developing effective strategies for regional integration that promote political, economic, and social stability;
 - iii. *support* the result-oriented and scheduled implementation of the medium- and long-term projects and programs identified in the Paper on *The Way Forward for an*

Action Plan on the Implementation of the Economic Agenda towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership;

- iv. *enhance* the mutually supportive intergovernmental, interparliamentary, banking, business, and academic institutions of the BSEC in order to ensure coherence, balanced workloads, and the creation of a common methodology focusing on the achievement of the identified objectives;
 - v. *promote* the necessary legislative changes to adapt the current legislative framework for the timely implementation of multilateral projects and agreements;
 - vi. *follow up* on the implementation of the PABSEC's Recommendations for the development of proper mechanisms to strengthen multilateral regional cooperation in the most pertinent areas;
 - vii. *develop* a more active approach in expressing support for the new initiatives and in promoting adoption of the new laws and multilateral agreements related to implementation of the commitments and principles enshrined in the BSEC Summit Declarations, the BSEC Charter, and the Declarations of the Parliamentary Assembly;
 - viii. *strive* to achieve greater coherence and coordination between the BSEC and the PABSEC when drafting the respective agendas, so as to ensure that the issues and projects discussed within the BSEC are complemented by the initiatives of the PABSEC and vice-versa.
 - ix. *ensure* appropriate accountability of the Member States in reinforcing cooperative efforts when drafting documents concerning the strengthening of collaborative initiatives, being mindful that each individual country makes an important contribution to the achievement of the region's common goals;
 - x. *fully deploy* the appropriate use of existing bilateral and multilateral agreements and mechanisms and conclude new instruments in the priority areas related to enhancing peace, stability, and prosperity in the region;
 - xi. *strengthen* bilateral and regional cooperation by fully implementing the obligations contracted by States that are parties to regional and international conventions, agreements, and protocols;
 - xii. *enhance* the role and status of the PABSEC by enacting and building on the principles that promote the function, authority, efficacy, and productivity of the Assembly and its International Secretariat.
10. **The Assembly invites** the BSEC Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider this Recommendation.
 11. **The PABSEC requests** the appropriate bodies of the BSEC to show political will and to consider the issue on the need to raise the status of the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC and to introduce the necessary changes into the BSEC Charter.
 12. **The PABSEC instructs** the PABSEC Legal and Political Affairs Committee to follow up on the progress regarding the status of the PABSEC and its International Secretariat and to report on further developments in this respect at the next meeting of the Committee.