

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Doc. GA16/CC15/REC47/00

THE SIXTEENTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**RECOMMENDATION 47/2000<sup>1</sup>**  
**ON**  
**THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN PROMOTING COOPERATION IN THE**  
**BLACK SEA REGION**

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation emphasises the paramount role of the mass media for the creation and development of any democratic society. It provides people with information, which influences the process of shaping opinions. To fulfil its mission the media must be free, pluralistic and independent, and at the same time socially accountable.
2. The Parliamentary Assembly reaffirms its attachment to the principles proclaimed in the UN *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and *the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, providing in particular that everyone has the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
3. The Parliamentary Assembly shares the ideas proclaimed in the UNESCO 1978 *Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights, and to Countering Racism, Apartheid and Incitement to War*, that the mass media have an important contribution to make to the strengthening of peace and international understanding and in countering racism, apartheid and incitement to war; an essential part to play in the education of young people in a spirit of peace, justice, freedom, mutual respect and understanding.
4. Most of the countries of the BSEC region are undergoing political, economic and social transition to the free market economy and democracy. The media are the

---

<sup>1</sup> Rapporteur: Mr. Blagovest Sendov (Bulgaria), Chairman of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee

The Assembly debate on 30 November 2000 (see Doc. GA16/CC15/ REP(d)00 – Report on “The Role of Mass Media in Promoting Cooperation in the Black Sea Region” discussed by the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee at its Fifteenth Meeting in Tbilisi on 27 September 2000; Rapporteur: Mr. Nicolae Dabija)

Text adopted by the Sixteenth General Assembly in Yerevan on 30 November 2000

part of this process of change. Transition has been engaged with by the media as both participant and active observer, experiencing and impacting on the process at the same time.

5. The Parliamentary Assembly notes with satisfaction the fact that the role of media has grown in significance over the last ten years together with diversification of political and social life and development of new communication technologies, based on computer, telephone, cable and satellite television networks. The variety of publications and broadcast media offers a certain degree of plurality to the population.
6. The Assembly notes with concern that the independence of media is threatened by the overall economic crisis, especially in the countries in transition, where the media remain largely dependant either on politically motivated or commercial capital for survival, while financial independence is crucial for truly free media.
7. Since the process of economic cooperation in the Black Sea region is expanding its activities, the issue of promoting the BSEC image is acquiring a paramount importance. To this end the mass media have a leading contribution to make. It is essential that the mass media of the Black Sea region should have conditions enabling them to cooperate. Development of cooperation among the mass media will contribute to eliminate misunderstanding between the peoples, to make citizens of a country sensitive to the needs and desires of others, to ensure the respect of the rights and dignity of all nations inhabiting the region, thus creating a necessary background for political and economic cooperation and prevention of conflicts.
8. The Parliamentary Assembly realises that the television broadcasting is the most powerful and influential medium of mass communication and the most important source of information for the majority of the population of the Black Sea region. The national television institutions, financed from the state budget, have a special responsibility of informing the population on a wide range of events, including the major developments in political, economic, social and cultural life of the BSEC Member Countries, as well as promoting the image of the BSEC, PABSEC and other related bodies.
9. **The Parliamentary Assembly recommends** the Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC Member States:
  - A. **In the field of mass media legislation:**
    - i. *to secure* freedom of expression, freedom of press and development of independent and pluralistic media by continuing the process of adoption of effective national legislation, thereby fostering and strengthening democratic transformation in the Member Countries;
    - ii. *to bring* the national legislation and regulations in conformity with international standards, particularly into line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and

the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;

- iii. *to exchange* legal information in order to harmonise the legal arrangements relating to the mass media whenever necessary, taking into consideration national peculiarities;

**B. In the field of mass media cooperation:**

- i. *to provide* full support to developing and expanding cooperation among the BSEC Member States in the field of mass media;
- ii. *to call upon* the specialised committees on mass media of the national parliaments to evaluate the present coverage by the print media and television of the Black Sea cooperation process and to take appropriate measures with the view of enhancing the contribution by the mass media to developing further on the multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea region;
- iii. *to strengthen* the role of television, radio and print media in promoting friendship, international understanding and the values of democracy and peace among the peoples of the BSEC Member States;
- iv. *to undertake* specific measures for increasing the role of media in combating racism, xenophobia and intolerance which may have significant effect on shaping of attitudes in order to overcome tensions, leading to conflicts;
- v. *to conclude* bilateral and multilateral intergovernmental agreements on cooperation in the field of mass media and to encourage the conclusion of relevant agreements among the private media;
- vi. *to encourage* specialisation of journalists in the political, economic, social and cultural affairs of the BSEC region, to facilitate mutual visits of the journalists interested in the Black Sea region, as well as their participation in the meetings of the BSEC, PABSEC and other related bodies;
- vii. *to support* conclusion of programmes of cultural exchanges, as well as organisation of conferences and seminars for the representatives of the mass media of the Black Sea countries, devoted to the priority subjects;
- viii. *to analyse* the possibility of setting up an information agency with a headquarter in one of the Member Countries and branch offices in all the BSEC Member States;
- ix. *to co-ordinate* cooperation with other international organisations and in particular with the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

**C. In the field cooperation among the national televisions:**

- i.** **to support** organisation by the Romanian Television Society (SRTV) of the Meeting of the Heads of the national public/state televisions of the BSEC Member States under the auspices of the PABSEC in May 2001 in Bucharest, called upon to establish an institutional framework of cooperation among the national public/state televisions;
- ii.** **to encourage** organisation of “TV bridges” by the national televisions among the representatives of economic structures who could exchange information, particularly on major subjects of present and future cooperation;
- iii.** **to exchange** television programmes, particularly on the economic and political issues of utmost priority; to exchange cultural programmes contributing to the better knowledge of each other and discovery of common cultural roots and similarities;
- iv.** **to support** realisation of co-production of television programmes among the national television institutions;
- v.** **to cooperate** with the European Broadcasting Union in promoting closer collaboration among the BSEC and the European Union;

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

