

THE TWENTY SIXTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Doc.: GA26/LC26/REC85/05

RECOMMENDATION 85/2005¹

On the Role of Local Governments in Strengthening Cooperation in the Black Sea Region

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation reaffirms its commitment to put every effort in strengthening regional cooperation and is convinced that heightened role of local governments should lay the groundwork for more efficient and effective participation by the member states in the consolidation and deepening of the economic, political, social and cultural integration fortifying peace and stability and achieving a larger measure of equity, justice, well-being and social cohesion in the region.
2. The Assembly highly evaluates the enhanced efforts by the BSEC member states towards the consolidation of democracy and the improvement of living standards and stresses the necessity to give a new impulse to the process of regional integration developing new initiatives in order to successfully face the challenges of sustainable development.
3. The political support at local level is one of the major elements for successful development of regional cooperation. Each city, region or territory, different in area, population, geography, wealth, cultural heritage and environment develops its own sustainable vision and builds on its own identity with immense capacity to enhance regional cooperation. Implementation of shared policies for economic growth, environmental protection and social improvement at regional level increasingly involve local initiatives and consequently, local governments who enjoy the most privileged position to apply adequate solutions to the topical problems.
4. The Assembly emphasizes the importance of initiatives involving local authorities regarding the enhancement of multilateral regional cooperation and reaffirms its

¹ Assembly debate on 23 November 2005 (see Doc.: GA26/LC26/REP/05, Report of the Legal and Political Affairs Committee “The role of local authorities in strengthening cooperation in the Black Sea region” discussed in Tbilisi on 18-19 October 2005; Rapporteur: Mr. Zurab Davitashvili – Georgia)

Text adopted by the Assembly in Tirana on 23 November 2005.

support to the efforts undertaken by the Black Sea Capitals' Association and the International Black Sea Club promoting contacts among municipalities; and is conscious that coordinated and concrete actions at local level allow advancing in the fulfilment of the goals and objectives of the Black Sea economic cooperation.

5. The Assembly shares the recognition that local governments have wide rights and the ability to develop integrated approaches in working with their communities promoting dialogue and peace through peoples' diplomacy. The exchange of experience and knowledge between local governments, with the involvement of their communities provide significant added value to the cooperative interaction stimulating tolerance, friendship and mutual understanding.
6. Practical progress in solving prevailing economic and social problems and maximum benefit of the process of regional integration can be derived from efficient interaction between and among the local governments making it possible to extend holistic and multidimensional approach within the multilateral economic cooperation.
7. Having in mind that only together can the countries meet the challenges of tomorrow's world, the Assembly urges national parliaments to play their true role by legislating effectively for enhancement of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.
8. **Therefore, the Assembly recommends** the Parliaments and the Governments of the BSEC Member States:
 - i. *to make broader use* of economic integration in the Black Sea region with a view of consolidating the process of establishing peace, security and political stability through greater synergy between the countries with due regard of the role of local governments for the successful realisation of common objectives of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.
 - ii. *to take resolute measures* for boosting integration process in the Black Sea region, including those for creating adequate legal framework for strengthening the role of local governments and building its operational capacity conscious of the fact that local government is an integral part of the national structure of each state;
 - iii. *to promote* political decentralisation and apportionment of powers between the state and the regions based on the shared principles of accountability, transparency and the rule of law;
 - iv. *to pay particular attention* to upgrading existing legal and regulatory framework with a view to introduce systematic and effective methods of citizen participation and development of strong and effective democratic local government;
 - v. *to render every support to* the endeavours undertaken by the Black Sea Capitals' Association and the International Black Sea Club creating the framework for regular interaction among the local government representatives in the Black Sea region as a significant component of the regional cooperation process;

- vi. *to stimulate* new initiatives like twinning of cities and regions promoting unity through bringing people closer together and building awareness among populations and mobilising public support;
- vii. *to provide necessary assistance* in developing different initiatives at local and regional levels aiming to reach a wider public whose involvement is essential for smooth flow of cooperation process.
- viii. *to mobilise* public support for implementation of BSEC projects, and to follow up the implementation of multilateral documents adopted by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, encourage and support actions speeding up economic integration in the region;
- ix. *to ensure participation* in the regional and inter-regional gatherings with a view to share the experience and to enrich the Black Sea regional cooperation with new concepts and elements elaborated at European and global levels;
- x. *to undertake measures* in order to assure dissemination of information through publications, seminars and new information technologies on the role of the local governments in underpinning regional cooperation.
- xi. *to support* the development of strong and effective democratic local self-government, and the establishment and strengthening of national local government associations, through initiatives, programmes and platforms for capacity building exchanges and partnerships.

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