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PABSEC

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THE CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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# RAPORT

on

**THE RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE BLACK SEA CONVENTION ON COOPERATION IN THE  
FIELDS OF CULTURE .EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INFORMATION**

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## **1. Introduction**

The First Meeting of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee which was held in Istanbul on 5 November. 1993 decided to include the review of the ratification and implementation of the Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information into the agenda of the Second Committee Meeting in order to work out relevant documents for the Third Plenary Session of the PABSEC General Assembly in Bucharest in June.1994. The text of the Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information has been circulated as part of the Draft Minutes of the First Meeting of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee (Doc.CC(2)33/93).

## **2. The Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information: Preparation and Signing**

The Black Sea Cultural Convention project was initiated following the Istanbul Summit of the Heads of State or Government and the signing on 25 June, 1992 of the Summit Declaration and the Bosphorus Statement which established the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. A call was made by Turkey in July, 1992 and first Convention drafts were forwarded to the countries involved; then a meeting of the representatives of the signatory states was hosted by the Russian Federation in November, 1992 in Sochi where the text of the Convention was elaborated and agreed upon.

Those steps prepared the groundwork for signing the document at the ministerial level and so, after final revisions, the Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information was signed by the Ministers of Culture of Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine on 6 March, 1993 in Istanbul.

During their meeting in Istanbul the Ministers of Culture also reviewed proposals concerning the draft of the Working Plan on cooperation in the coming years . The following activities were, in particular, suggested for realisation in the nearest future:

- exchanges among art experts, actors, writers, artists, sculptors and students;
- organisation of poetry days, film festivals, folk art festivals, carnivals and exhibitions;
- joint film production and publication of books .reference literature and information bulletins;
- organisation of scientific seminars on the Black Sea civilisations;
- opening of the Black Sea University in Romania;
- establishment of the Black Sea Prize in the field of culture, education, science and information.

### 3. The Scope of the Convention

The preamble of the Convention states, in particular, that the Governments of the signatory States take into consideration the importance of cultural cooperation for better understanding among the peoples inhabiting the Black Sea region, wish to use in a most efficient way the wealth of millennia-old traditions and cultural heritage, and acknowledge the necessity to cultivate mutual respect, understanding and tolerance.

The fifteen articles of the Convention encompass a wide variety of activities and various forms of cooperation in the fields of culture, education, science and information. Among the principal areas of cooperation are:

- cooperation and exchanges among scientific and cultural organisations and educational institutions, including exchanges of teachers, lecturers and students, language practice, scientific and research work and post-graduate education, exchange of information on the opportunities of the mutual recognition of diplomas and degrees;
- expanding the linguistic training in the languages of the Parties, enhancing the volume of reciprocal translation and dissemination of literary work, developing contacts among the people of letters, organisation of book exhibitions and participation in international book fairs;
- cooperation and joint projects in the fields of music, theatre, cinema and fine arts;
- exchanges of exhibits, information, as well as experts among museums and other cultural institutions and organisation of joint scientific projects in history, ethnology, archaeology, studies of ancient civilisations and protection of historical and cultural monuments;
- cooperation among libraries, including the introduction of modern information technology in libraries and network cooperation among the national libraries;
- cooperation among national information agencies, unions of journalists, periodicals, television and radio networks including exchange of publications, television and radio programmes;
- encouragement of participation of the Parties' representatives in seminars, conferences, symposia and other similar events in the fields covered by the Convention;
- development of youth cultural exchange programmes ;
- inter-regional cooperation and direct contacts among cities and regions of the Parties in the fields of culture, education, science and information.

The Parties agreed to establish a Coordination Council consisting of senior governmental officers responsible for the implementation and coordination of the Convention. The Coordination Council will meet annually in the Participating States.

### **3. The Ratification Process**

The Convention is subject to ratification and shall enter into force on the thirtieth following the date of deposit of the fourth Instrument of Ratification with the Depository State. For each state ratifying the Convention after the deposit of the fourth Instrument of Ratification, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after deposit by such state of its Instrument of Ratification. The Depositor of the Convention is the Government of the Republic of Turkey. The Depositor shall inform the Signatory States about the deposition of Instruments of Ratification, as well as any other notices by the Parties.

The Convention is presently undergoing the process of ratification by the national parliaments or endorsement by the governments, in accordance with legislative procedures applicable in the Signatory States. Up to date, Ukraine, Turkey and Moldova have officially informed the Assembly that their parliaments ratified the Convention respectively on 4 February, 1994 (Ukraine), 5 April, 1994 (Turkey) and on 28 April,] 994 (Moldova). According to the information received by the International Secretariat from the Armenian national delegation, the Parliament of Armenia has also ratified the Convention. The State Duma of the Russian Federation is taking adequate steps for the ratification, along with other international documents. In Romania the Convention is undergoing the process of endorsement by the government in accordance with the national legislative procedures. The Assembly will, therefore, appreciate further information from the national delegations on the ratification process and progress in the implementation of the Convention in the respective countries.

### **4. The Black Sea Cultural Cooperation**

The traditional cultural relations existing among the Black Sea nations have received a strong impetus after the signing of the Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information which also ushered in the process of vibrant multilateral Black Sea Cultural Cooperation.

A large number of significant cultural developments have recently been materialised in the region. Among them can be mentioned the establishment in Romania of the Black Sea University which opened in May, 1993 and brought together over a thousand of students from 29 countries for its two-week programmes during the first summer semester. The Black Sea Film Festival in Georgia in 1993 , the Black Sea artists' workshop in Istanbul in June-July, 1993 and the pantomime workshop in Trabzon in October, 1993. Since 1978, Turkey has been hosting annual children's festivals on 24 April which attract participants from about 50 countries, including the Black Sea nations.

This year will see, among other things, an international scientific conference "Cultural similarity and cultural differentiation in the Black Sea region: history, present state and prospects" in Kyiv and the "Waves of the Black Sea" cruise when about 300 writers and translators from the Black Sea and Baltic countries will discuss the ways to enhance writers' contribution to peace, understanding and cultural cooperation . This autumn the Black Sea Arts Festival will be held in Sochi, Russia and the Black Sea Sport Games in Constanta, Romania. The PABSEC itself is giving its patronage to a joint research programme on the

history of the Black Sea Basin. The bilateral ties in the fields of culture, education, science , information, sports and youth activities have also been steadily expanded by the Black Sea nations within the framework of existing bilateral agreements.

The Black Sea Cultural Cooperation, very much like the better known Black Sea Economic Cooperation, reflects one aspect of the general trend towards closer ties in the Black Sea area and represents a part of the process of regional rapprochement and cooperation which have assumed a great importance on today's international agenda. The Black Sea Cultural Cooperation does not need a starting capital or large investment. At the same time, constituting the human dimension of the regional cooperation process, it creates an atmosphere of openness, mutual understanding, respect and tolerance among the Black Sea nations. This atmosphere is indispensable for the development of mutually advantageous economic cooperation and the maintenance and consolidation of peace, calm and stability in the region.

The Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information is a generic legal expression of the multiform and rich Black Sea Cultural Cooperation. Taking into consideration the broad scope and the universal character of the Convention , there is no doubt that this document will constitute a long-term legal framework for this cooperation and will become in the future a solid foundation for the conclusion of other various bilateral and multilateral accords.