



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
PABSEC

Istanbul, 14 December 2001

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

FOREWORD

OPENING CEREMONY

The Eighteenth Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation was held in Sofia on 4-6 December 2001 upon the invitation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The General Assembly was opened by Mr. Ognian GERDJIKOV, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria. H.E. Mr. Simeon SAXE-COBURG-GOTHA, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria, addressed the General Assembly. The message to the participants in the Plenary Session by Mr. Anatoliy ZLENKO, Chairman-in-Office of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, was presented by the Ambassador Olexander MOTSYK, Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

PARTICIPATION

The General Assembly was attended by:

1. *The Chairman* of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria.
2. *National delegations* of all Member Countries: Albania, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine.
3. *Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and Related Bodies:*
 - *BSEC:* the representative of the BSEC Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat.
 - *Black Sea Trade and Development Bank:* Secretary General of the BSTDB
 - *International Centre for Black Sea Studies:* Director General of the ICBSS

4. Observers:

National Parliaments: Delegations of the German Bundestag, the Knesset of Israel, the National Council of the Slovak Republic.

Parliamentary Assemblies: Representatives of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Guests: the National Assembly of Belarus, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Belarus-Russia Union, the Black Sea Universities Network and the Black Sea Region Association of Shipbuilders and Shiprepairers.

5. PABSEC International Secretariat.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. *General debate:*

The General Debate was devoted to “Globalisation and the Black Sea Region’s Challenges”.

Heads of national delegations, the representative of the International Centre for Black Sea Studies, observers from the German Bundestag, the Knesset of the State of Israel, the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as well as guest representatives of the National Assembly of Belarus and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Belarus-Russia Union took part in the General Debate.

The participants underlined the high degree of improvement in human standards in those countries which have taken advantage of the opportunities it provides, the accelerated integration of previously marginalised societies.

But the speakers also stressed that globalisation brings with itself not only new opportunities but also new challenges, given the fragmentation of a globalised world and the clash between the identity ambitions and frustration with the modern and global order within an era of high technology. These threats and challenges could be overcome only by leaving the field of highly emotional cultural conflicts and developing a strategy of common projects - first and foremost of an economic nature - a strategy based on the solidarity of interests. This is exactly what BSEC and its Parliamentary Assembly is trying to achieve.

Economic development and education are two therapies that could cure the Black Sea area diseases. But we must say that today the access to the world property which implies the sharing of the modern technologies implies openness, respect for pluralism and diversity, transparency and accountability.

Globalisation is somehow undermining democracy at the level of the nation state as a result of creating trans-governmental decision making systems, effectively escaping the control of any single nation state. Consequently, in order to avoid the development at international bureaucratic structures lacking democratic legitimacy, a system of a global subsidiary must be put in motion and the role of parliamentarians at the international level should increase, thus moving closer to the citizens the decision making process. Here lies the importance of the parliamentary dimension of international organisations as guarantor of democratic input in the activities of such institutions. The Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC plays an important role in providing such democratic input.

The Director General of the International Centre for Black Sea Studies, Mr. Yannis Papanikolaou expressed the intention to host a common meeting of representatives of the PABSEC, the European Parliament, the OSCE PA, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the IPACIS.