STATEMENT*

of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation on the 15th Anniversary of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

We, the parliamentarians of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, reaffirm on this commemorative occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Organization of the BSEC that our commitment to the idea of the cooperation within the BSEC framework lays as a foundation for successful development of mutually beneficial multilateral relations in the region.

The BSEC has addressed priority issues of regional development and has played a catalytic role in a number of important areas, such as trade, transport, energy, communications, environmental protection, health care, agriculture, tourism, prevention of technological disasters and combating crime.

Over the past fifteen years the concerted efforts of the BSEC Member States have consistently promoted the enhancement of regional partnership. The Organisation of the BSEC has served as an effective tool for increasing dynamism and strengthening of practical approach in the development of the regional cooperation based on utilization of successful experiences of the member countries.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of the BSEC will continue mobilising the national parliaments to provide political and legislative support to the regional projects generated within the BSEC framework.

The determination for turning the BSEC Region into one of peace, stability and prosperity is as vital today as it was fifteen years ago. The Assembly reaffirms its dedication to attainment of this goal and, at the same time, expresses its concern that remaining conflicts in the Black Sea area hamper the progress of economic development and undermine consolidation of stability in the region. The parliamentarians of the Black Sea countries call for peaceful solutions to the persisting disputes based on observance of the principles of international law and agreements in force.

* The Statement text was approved at the 29th Meeting of the Legal and Political Affairs Committee in Bucharest on 25 April 2007 and adopted at the 29th General Assembly in Varna on 13 June 2007.
The Parliamentary Assembly welcomes the new stage in the relationship between the BSEC and the EU and believes that the extension of the European Union standards and norms in the region paves the way towards peaceful, secure and prosperous coexistence meeting the challenges of the 21st century. The Assembly welcomes the efforts by the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation to establish an enhanced relationship with the EU.

On its part, the Assembly takes consistent steps to further strengthen its cooperation with European parliamentary bodies, and first and foremost with the European Parliament, aimed at developing a higher degree of integration of the Black Sea region into the common European space. The activities of the Assembly in this direction were positively assessed in the “Declaration on the Enhancement of cooperation with the European Union” adopted by the Thirteenth Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States in Chisinau on 28 October 2005, as well as in the Communication of 11 April 2007 from the European Commission to the Council and the European Parliament “Black Sea Synergy - A New Regional Cooperation Initiative”.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC once again stresses its determination to further exert efforts to contribute to invigorating dialogue and partnership between the countries in the region in order to attain the objectives enshrined in the BSEC statutory documents.