OPENING CEREMONY

The Eleventh Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation was held in Bucharest, at the Palace of the Parliament, on 23-25 June 1998, upon the invitation of the Parliament of Romania.

The Bucharest General Assembly represented the climax of the events carried out in the first half of 1998, marking the Fifth Anniversary of the Parliamentary Assembly.

The Opening Ceremony was addressed by H.E. Mr. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania, Mr. Petre Roman, President of the PABSEC, President of the Senate of Romania, and Mr. Ion Diaconescu, President of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania. The address by Mrs. Nadezhda Mihaylova, the BSEC Chairperson-in-Office, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, was presented by Ambassador Vassil Baytchev, Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat.

PARTICIPATION

The General Assembly was attended by:

1. **Speakers/Presidents** of the Parliaments of Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania (the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies), Russian Federation (the State Duma) and Turkey.

2. **National delegations** of all Member Countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine.

3. **Black Sea Economic Cooperation**: The Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat.


5. **Observers**: Delegations of the People’s Assembly of Egypt and the Knesset of Israel, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

6. **Guests**: House of Councillors of Morocco and Black Sea University Foundation.

7. **PABSEC International Secretariat**.
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. General debate.

The General Debate was devoted to the Fifth Anniversary of the Parliamentary Assembly.

The Speakers/Presidents of the Parliaments of the BSEC Participating States, heads of national delegations as well as the representatives of the People’s Assembly of Egypt, the Knesset and the IPACIS, as observers, and the representatives of the House of Councillors of Morocco, as guests, took part in the general debate.

The participants in the debate emphasised the role of the Parliamentary Assembly in deepening and consolidating the multilateral cooperation process in the Black Sea region. They also stressed that the Parliamentary Assembly occupies a unique place, offering not only a democratic forum for inter-parliamentary dialogue, but also maintaining an essential link between governments and peoples through their elected representatives. They underlined the positive results of the inter-parliamentary diplomacy in promoting stability, prosperity and understanding among the peoples in the area, as an important contribution to the new European architecture.

2. Anniversary Declaration.

The General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Fifth Anniversary of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

The Anniversary Declaration was signed by the Speakers/Presidents of the Parliaments of the member countries.

3. Recommendations adopted by the General Assembly:


b) Recommendation 26/1998 on “Plan of Action for the Establishment of the BSEC Free Trade Area”(Doc.GA 3991/98)


4. Reports approved by the General Assembly:

a) Report on “The BSEC Stock- and Commodities Exchanges” (Doc.GA 3964/98)

b) Report on the “Plan of Action for the Establishment of the BSEC Free Trade Area”(Doc.GA 3990/98)

d) Progress Report of the Bureau and the Standing Committee (Doc GA 4029/98)

5. **Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation:**

The Assembly devoted an entire sitting to the main activities carried out by the BSEC during the last six months.

A particular attention was giving to the Signing of the Charter of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation during the Summit of the Heads of State or Governments of the BSEC Member-States, held on 4-5 June 1998 at Yalta - Ukraine, which was attended by the PABSEC President.

The participants stressed the significance of this event, turning the BSEC into a regional economic organisation. This is opening new broad perspectives to the regional integration process, strengthening its institutional and legal status and enhancing its prestige on the international arena.

**The General Assembly considered the relevant documents concerning:**

a) The results of the Eleventh Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, held on 13 April 1998 in Yerevan (Doc.GA 4031/98);

b) Memorandum of Cooperation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Participating States in the field of Electric Power Industry (Doc.GA 4077/98), signed on 15 April 1998 in Yerevan by the BSEC Ministers of Energy;

c) Agreement among the Governments of the Participating States of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) on Collaboration in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response to Natural and Manmade Disasters, signed on 15 April 1998 in Sochi (Russian Federation) by the Ministers of Emergencies or Heads of related agencies from Armenia, Bulgaria, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation and Ukraine (Doc.GA 4078/98).

6. **Seminar on “Fostering Cooperation on Small and Medium Enterprises and its Legal Framework in the Black Sea Region”**

The Seminar, initiated by Mr. Petre Roman, President of the PABSEC, President of the Senate of Romania, was held on 23 June 1998 in Bucharest, as part of the PABSEC General Assembly. The main purpose of the Seminar was to boost cooperation among the PABSEC member-countries in the field of SMEs, as a contribution to the multilateral economic cooperation in the Black Sea region.

The participants evaluated the current condition of the SME’s cooperation, seeking to develop the legal basis and create a more favourable environment for the expansion of this cooperation.

The Seminar was attended by the members of the PABSEC Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee as well as by senior experts from the SME’s specialised organisations from the PABSEC member-countries.

The participant adopted the Conclusions of the Seminar (Doc.EC 4834/98)

7. **The Third Round-Table of Governors and Mayors of Black-Sea Capitals, Bucharest 14-15 May 1998**
The General Assembly considered the Background paper on this subject prepared by the International Secretariat (Doc.GA 4084/98).

Reaffirming its conviction that local authorities rendering direct service to the public and addressing everyday problems encountered by citizens, could make a major valuable contribution to attaining the aims of the Black Sea cooperation, the General Assembly welcomed the outcome of the Third Round-Table of the Governors and Mayors, held on 14-15 May 1998 in Bucharest. This meeting highlighted once again the role of the capitals in the BSEC process and opened a new chapter in the collaboration among the regional capitals.

The establishment of a new organisation - the Black Sea Capitals Association - and the adoption of its statute, offer new opportunities for a more intensive cooperation in various fields among the participating cities.

The Parliamentary Assembly adopted Recommendation 28/1998 on the Black Sea Capitals Association (GA 4851/98), urging the Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC member-countries, to support the activities of the Black Sea Capitals Association, which can bring a substantial contribution to a more vigorous interaction at the level of the local authorities within the BSEC framework.

8. Financial matters:

The Assembly adopted the Auditing Report for the Financial Year 1997 (Doc.GA 4032/98).

9. New Credentials:

The Assembly ratified the credentials of the new PABSEC delegation of Moldova as well as of some new members of the Turkish delegation (Doc.GA 4028/98)

10. Election of the Treasurer of the Assembly

The Assembly elected Mr. Alexandru Muravschi from Moldova as the Treasurer of the Assembly for a two years term.

11. Rotation of the Presidency:

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, starting with the end of the Eleventh Plenary Session in Bucharest, on 25 June 1998, Mr. Gennady Seleznev, Chairman of the State Duma of Russian Federation, assumed the rotating six-month Presidency of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

12. The 1998 Autumn Plenary Session of the General Assembly:

The Assembly decided that the 1998 Autumn Plenary Session of the General Assembly will be held on 8-10 December 1998, in Saint-Petersburg.

STANDING COMMITTEE

1. The Eleventh Meeting of the Standing Committee considered the following matters:

a) Activities of the Committees in the second half of 1998 (Doc. SC 4040/98)
The Standing Committee positively assessed the inclusion on the agenda of the three Committees in the second half of 1998 of the following subjects:

- Economic, Commercial, Technological, Environmental Affairs Committee: “Transportation in the Black Sea region”

- Legal and Political Affairs Committee: The Standing Committee included on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the Legal and Political Affairs Committee two new items: “Legal framework of the avoidance of Double Taxation” - as the main item, and “Draft Agreement between PABSEC and the Turkish Government on the terms of the PABSEC International Secretariat Headquarters location in Istanbul” while keeping the subject on “Revision of the Rules of Procedure” as an additional one.

- Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee: “Mutual Recognition of Higher Education Diplomas by the BSEC member-countries”.

b) Seminar on “Transport Technologies and Integration of Europe” The Standing Committee assessed that the Seminar, to be held in Antalya, on 7-8 October 1998, jointly organised by, the PABSEC, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Turkish Grand National Assembly, with the participation by the members of the Economic Committee of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly would enable a fruitful exchange of views on a subject of great importance for the member-countries, in the context of the European integration.

c) Receipt of Contributions to the 1998 Budget (Doc.SC 4044/98)
d) PABSEC Calendar 1998 (Doc.SC 3563/98)
e) Progress Report of the Bureau and Standing Committee (Doc.GA 4029/98)
f) The premises of the International Secretariat (Doc.SC 4043/98)

The Standing Committee decided to include this subject on the agenda of its Twelfth Meeting on 8 December 1998, in Saint-Petersburg.

2. **The Standing Committee approved the following documents:**

a) Draft Budget for the Financial Year 1999 (Doc.SC 4033/98)
b) Financial Regulations for the PABSEC International Secretariat (Doc.SC 4772/98)
c) Revision of Article iv.9 of the Staff Regulations of the PABSEC International Secretariat (Doc.SC 4076/98)
d) Installation of the local computer network in the PABSEC International Secretariat and its connection to Internet (Doc.SC 4806/98)
e) The replacement of inventory articles provided by third parties for the temporary use of the International Secretariat (Doc. SC 4849/98)

3. **The Standing Committee decided to hold the Twelfth Meeting on 8 December 1998, in Saint-Petersburg.**
BUREAU OF THE ASSEMBLY:

a) Considered the reports concerning the participation by the PABSEC representatives in international gatherings in the first half of 1998.

b) Decided that the PABSEC President shall take decision on the participation by the PABSEC representatives in international gatherings scheduled between 1 July-31 December 1998 (Doc. BA 4038/98)

c) Approved the following documents:
   • Report by the Treasurer on the execution of the Assembly’s budget (Doc.BA 4048/98)
   • Matters of Procedure of the Eleventh Plenary Session of the PABSEC General Assembly (Doc.BA 4039/98)
   • Appointment of the Researcher-Archivist (Doc.BA 4230/98)
     Mr. Victor Dediu was appointed as Researcher-Archivist in the International Secretariat.
   • Sale of the out-of-date and unused equipment (Doc.BA 4807/98)

d) Endorsed the following documents:
   • Draft Agenda of the Eleventh Meeting of the Standing Committee (Doc. SC 4040/98)
   • Examination of New Credentials (Doc.GA 4028/98).

e) Took note of the reports by Mr. Faik Kaytanci, Secretary General, on the visit to Strasbourg on 5 May 1998 (Doc. BA 4800/98) and on the visit to Bucharest on 9 - 10 March 1998 by Mr.George Petricu, Deputy Secretary General on organisational matters, for the preparation of the Eleventh Plenary Session of the PABSEC General Assembly (Doc.BA 4081/98).

f) The Bureau decided to hold the Twelfth Meeting on 3 November 1998, in Moscow.