



SEECP ALBANIAN CHAIRMANSHIP
PARLIAMENTARY DIMENSION
REGIONAL OWNERSHIP IN ACTION



Tirana, 23.05.2015 Adopted

**SECOND SESSION OF THE SEECP PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
TIRANA, May 23, 2015**

**D E C L A R A T I O N
of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly**

We, the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly:

1. **Reaffirming** the principles enshrined in the Charter of good neighbourly relations, stability, security and cooperation, signed in Bucharest in 2000, as the founding document of the SEECP;
2. **Following** the Declaration on the Inauguration of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly (SEECP PA) adopted on May 10, 2014;
3. **Guided** by the Rules of Procedure of the SEECP PA adopted on 10 May 2014 which establish the functioning of the SEECP PA;
4. **Welcoming** the establishment of three General Committees of the SEECP PA, namely on: Economy, Infrastructure and Energy (Annual meeting held in Sofia, 20-21 March 2015); Justice, Home Affairs and Security Cooperation (Annual meeting held in Istanbul, 9-10 February 2015); and Social Development, Education, Research and Science (Annual meeting held in Bucharest, 26-27 February 2015);
5. **Praising** the work done of the three General Committees of the SEECP PA, including the adoption of Committee reports and Committee resolutions, which bring a substantial level of knowledge to the inter-parliamentary cooperation in the SEECP area;
6. **Welcoming** the work and the results achieved by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), as an operational arm of the SEECP;

7. **Acknowledging** the importance of the enlargement process and the commitments and reforms undertaken by all SEECP Participants in their EU integration efforts;
8. **Recognising** that the integration of Southeast Europe to the European Union represents one of the most important mechanisms for ensuring peace, stability and progress of the region;
9. **Acknowledging** the importance and role of parliaments in promoting further enlargement of the European Union and in transferring knowledge and experience to the parliaments of the SEECP participants that are engaged in the EU integration process;
10. **Having in mind** the commitment to the principle of “all inclusiveness” expressed at the Ohrid Conference of SEECP Presidents of Parliament of May 2013, as an important element of regional stability and long-term development, and acknowledging the Declaration of the June Bucharest Summit of Heads of State and Government of SEECP participating states, which “decided to invite Kosovo*¹ to participate on a permanent basis in the SEECP activities an meetings, at all levels and on equal terms and which stated that “the Charter of the South East European Cooperation Process is to be interpreted and applied accordingly in order to allow the participation of Kosovo* in the SEECP activities and meetings, at all levels and on equal terms”;
11. **Commending** the agreements reached between Belgrade and Pristina which contribute to further improving of the cooperation in the region;
12. **Committing** ourselves to promoting free, fair and transparent elections in the region and to observing the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, as a means of making our societies more democratic and more inclusive;

Have agreed to:

13. **Highlight** that the SEECP PA can play a key role in assisting the parliaments of the SEECP Participants to harmonize their own legislative framework with EU acquis by developing a comprehensive exchange of best practices, knowledge and experience with the Parliaments of EU member-states;
14. **Call** upon the parliaments of the SEECP PA Participants that are already members of the European Union to assist the parliaments of the SEECP PA Participants not yet

¹ *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of independence.

members of the European Union in the transfer of knowledge and experience related to the implementation of the *acquis communautaire* and the setting up of the organisational and technical structure of parliaments;

15. **Confirm** that, until having a fully functional Secretariat and an operational budget, the national parliament holding the Chairmanship-in-Office of the SEECP PA shall serve, with assistance of the Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation in South East Europe, as an ad hoc Secretariat for the Plenary Session, the Standing Committee, the President and the Bureau of the Assembly while the national parliament holding the Chairmanship of a General Committee or of an Ad hoc Working Group shall also fulfil the tasks of an ad hoc Secretariat for the respective body of the Assembly;
16. **Invite** Pristina to participate on a permanent basis in the SEECP PA activities and meetings, at all levels and on equal terms.
17. **Aim** at coordinating as appropriate with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Directorate Generals within the European Commission on issues relevant to the functioning of the SEECP PA General Committees; including developing mechanisms of information sharing and discussion on the EU's structural pre-accession funds and European Neighborhood Instrument funds (IPA II and ENI respectively) in the SEECP region; in line with the SEECP June 2014 Summit Declaration when the Heads of State and Government confirmed their "commitment for a sound use of EU funding, taking into account the regulations applicable to the status of SEECP participants (EU member states, candidates, potential candidates and partners) and insist on the importance of promoting meaningful projects taking advantage of the new IPA and ENI 2014-2020 framework";²
18. **Recommend** to the next Chairmanship-in-Office of the SEECP PA to make every effort to continue developing the SEECP PA, exploring the feasibility that General Committees hold more than one meeting per year, requesting the SEECP C-i-O to report to the SEECP PA on annual basis on the follow-up given by the SEECP Governmental Dimension to the reports, resolutions and recommendations adopted by the SEECP PA and its General Committees;
19. **Invite** the Secretary General of the RCC to introduce and discuss RCC projects and programmes with the General Committees of the SEECP PA.
20. **Invite**, on regular basis, the RCC Secretary General to inform SEECP PA on RCC activities.

² SEECP Summit Declaration by Heads of State and Government, 25 June 2014, Bucharest, paragraph 1.9