



**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
PABSEC**

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

Doc.: GA57/CC56/REC181/21

RECOMMENDATION 181/2021*

“The Role of Parliaments in Preventing Human Trafficking - Social Aspects”

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) expresses its serious concern about the global magnitude and nature of human trafficking, which does not recognize national borders, represents a challenge to the national social security with detrimental consequences for humanity as a whole, especially in the context of the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic. Human trafficking undermines the rule of law and poses a threat to the fundamental human rights.
2. The PABSEC stresses the important role of parliaments in adopting all legislative, political and other measures aimed at preventing human trafficking and eliminating social, economic, and other factors that make people vulnerable to human trafficking. The viability of social security systems and enhancing the coverage of social protection are important components of national strategies towards elimination of poverty, improvement of quality of life of people, decrease of dimension of human trafficking and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
3. The PABSEC realizes that human trafficking enhances societal fragmentation and destroys social structures. Social protection plays a key role in ensuring sustainable development, strengthening social justice and realisation of basic human rights. Accordingly, social protection policy is important element of national development strategies that promotes inclusive and sustainable growth by increasing productivity and human development, raising household income, promoting structural transformation of economies and facilitating access to decent work, and seizing the opportunities to build stronger social relations based on social equality, especially during the pandemic.

* Assembly debate, on 22 June 2021 (see *Doc.: GA57/CC56/REP/21*, Report of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee “The Role of Parliaments in Preventing Human Trafficking - Social Aspects” to be discussed on 7 April 2021; Rapporteur: Mr. Mykola Skoryk, Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ukraine)

Text adopted by the 57th General Assembly on 22 June 2021

4. The PABSEC notes that in order to prevent and combat human trafficking, it is important to expand awareness-raising campaigns targeting people who may become victims of human trafficking, as well as the general public, through educational activities and effective involvement of the media. Parliaments and parliamentarians have the role in preventing human trafficking by raising public awareness and enacting laws necessary to protect the rights of victims.
5. The PABSEC stresses that the prevention of human trafficking and related crimes is an urgent challenge for all the countries in the world, including the BSEC Member States. Combating this type of crime requires transnational approach through the international cooperation in efficient information exchange and mutual assistance. Fight against this dangerous negative social phenomenon can be successful only through joint action and close cooperation between the countries of origin, transit and destination at all levels.
6. The PABSEC welcomes the fact that legislation, policies, strategies and plans in the field of preventing human trafficking in the BSEC Member States are becoming more comprehensive. The key priorities in this regard are practical implementation of the international obligations, dissemination of norms and standards of international legal instruments in the field of preventing and combating human trafficking, and more effective cooperation at the national, regional and international levels.
7. The PABSEC is firmly committed to upgrade the activities in preventing human trafficking, taking into account its previous reports and recommendations in this area, calling for strengthening social cohesion and timely implementation of the necessary measures at all levels of government and in all range of activities.
8. The PABSEC welcomes the activities of the BSEC Organization and its bodies within the framework of the BSEC policy documents on strengthening cooperation between the BSEC Member States in the field of combating organized crime, including human trafficking.
9. The PABSEC believes that the global challenges of human trafficking can be addressed through strong and effective international cooperation. Solidarity and cooperation are the most powerful weapons of the international community in preventing human trafficking.
10. **Therefore, the Assembly** recommends that the Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC Member States:
 - i. *review*, as appropriate, the existing laws and ensure the consistency and conformity of domestic legislation with international legal instruments on human trafficking and international conventions on human rights;
 - ii. *provide* legal support and facilitate cooperation between law enforcement and judicial authorities through the implementation of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols;
 - iii. *take measures* to strengthen national legislation and increase the capacity of national social protection systems, develop a new strategy for sustainable development;
 - iv. *improve measures* to mitigate the impact of factors that make people vulnerable to human trafficking, such as poverty, low levels of socio-economic development and lack of equal opportunities;
 - v. *expand consultations* with ombudsmen and representatives of civil society in order to monitor the numbers of victims of human trafficking in the country and follow-up the

- compliance of the governments with the obligations under the social policy to protect victims of human trafficking;
- vi. *strengthen* the role of parliaments in enhancing dialogue and cooperation with the public on risk evaluation and an anti-trafficking approach to ensure broader understanding of this problem;
 - vii. *promote* the development of a clear plan of action aimed at fostering public awareness of human trafficking, and ensuring social rehabilitation and reintegration of the victims;
 - viii. *ensure* allocation of funds to state structures and public organizations that fight against human trafficking in order to provide specialized assistance and rehabilitation to the victims;
 - ix. *elaborate and ratify*, as appropriate, bilateral and multilateral agreements on mutual legal assistance and the extradition of criminals, as well as to provide protection and assistance to victims of human trafficking and their repatriation and reintegration;
 - x. *take* decisive actions to solve the problem of illegal migration, to prevent the organized criminal groups from taking advantage of the gaps in the legislation and enforcement capabilities;
 - xi. *strengthen* the trust between the citizens and public authorities and ensure participation of all segments of society in forming more sustainable society;
 - xii. *ensure* a regular exchange of best practices not only in the process of joint practical work, but also during the international forums on all aspects of predicting and preventing human trafficking;
 - xiii. intensify preparation of mid-term reviews (3-5 years) on combating trafficking in human beings in the BSEC Member States;
 - xiv. *develop* regional cooperation in the fight against organized crime, including human trafficking, by concluding agreements and encouraging measures to be taken in accordance with international norms and standards;
 - xv. *enhance* inter-parliamentary cooperation at the international and regional levels with a view to improving coordination and strengthening responses to crimes related to human trafficking;
 - xvi. *support* more active participation in the global fight against various manifestations of human trafficking with international engagement within the framework of the UN structures, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and others;
 - xvii. *provide* the necessary support for the activities of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Combating Crime and the implementation of the BSEC Action Plan for Cooperation in Combating Crime, elaborated by the Working Group;
 - xviii. *develop* a plan of joint action to combat human trafficking in the BSEC region and set up an interstate database on investigation, prosecution, conviction and sentences in cases related to human trafficking.

11. **The Assembly invites** the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider this Recommendation.