



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

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

Doc.: GA57/EC56/REC179/21

RECOMMENDATION 179/2021*

“The Role of Parliaments in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings- Economic Aspects”

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) acknowledges the multifaceted and complex nature of trafficking in human beings and expresses the concern over its global expansion, despite the strong national, regional and international efforts to eradicate it. The Assembly is deeply worried by the negative economic, social, political, security and cultural implications of human trafficking to the states, as well as by the serious violation of the fundamental rights of its victims.
2. The PABSEC is aware that poverty, social and economic inequality, lack of economic and employment opportunities, volatility of global market, economic crisis and decline, the increasing social instability are specific root causes of the problem of human trafficking, including in the BSEC Region.
3. The PABSEC supports the increased international cooperation in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and appreciates the contribution of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other relevant institutions, in the global fight against different aspects of trafficking in human beings.
4. The Assembly recognizes that the trafficking poses a serious threat to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, adopted by the Decision of the UN General Assembly, in September 2015. The PABSEC extends its full support to the SDG and supports its objective “to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end all forms of modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers and by 2025, end child labour in all its forms”.

*Assembly debate on 22 June 2021 (see *Doc.: GA57/EC65/REP/21*, Report of the Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee “The Role of Parliaments in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings- Economic Aspects” discussed on 17 March 2021; Rapporteur: Mr. Andrea Marto-Albania).

Text is to be adopted by the 57th General Assembly, on 22 June 2021.

5. The PABSEC stresses the determination of the BSEC Member States to support endeavors in the sphere of combating trafficking in human beings. In this context, it recalls “The Economic Agenda: towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership”, adopted in Istanbul, on 26 June 2012, that attributes a special importance to strengthening the cooperation of the BSEC Member States, in the sphere of cooperation on combating crime, in particular its organized forms. The Goal 16 of the Agenda - “Combating Organized Crime, Illegal Trafficking of Drugs and Weapons, Terrorism, Corruption and Money Laundering”, calls for a number of strategic measures on strengthening the cooperation among the BSEC Member States in combating organized crime activities, including trafficking in human beings.

6. The PABSEC highly evaluates the activities of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Combating Crime, for its role in elaborating the BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Combating Crime, organization of the BSEC Network of Liaison Officers and launching of multilateral projects on human trafficking, such as adoption of the Regional Action Plan for Strengthening the Criminal Justice Response to Trafficking in Persons, in the Black Sea Region.

7. The PABSEC further recalls its Recommendation 15/1996 on “Cooperation among the PABSEC Member Countries in Combating Organized Crime”, in which it emphasizes that “the Assembly can and must play a key role in strengthening multilateral cooperation in combating organized crime” and suggests “elaboration of the Black Sea Convention on Combating Organized Crime with regard to the international practice in this field, consolidation of efforts of PABSEC member countries in organized crime prevention”; the Recommendation 35/1999 “The Legal Framework for Combating Trafficking in People” stressed “the necessity of closer cooperation between states and international institutions in order to prevent and counteract effectively and adequately organized crime in the Black Sea region”, as well the Recommendation 124/2011 “Implementation of the Agreements among the BSEC Member States on Combating Organized Crime” which calls “to enhance regional cooperation to combat organized crime, by inviting the existing mechanisms in the region to increase their efforts to achieve tangible results in compliance with international standards”.

8. The Assembly appreciates the efforts of international organizations in sharing knowledge with the BSEC and its Member States. The PABSEC welcomes providing expert advice, research findings, technical cooperation and operational assistance in order to further build national capacities and facilitate international, regional and bilateral cooperation on human trafficking issues.

9. The PABSEC affirms that the fight against trafficking in human beings requires the engagement of various actors and calls for the cooperation in the BSEC Region at the level of governments, parliaments, businesses, law enforcement agencies, courts, prosecutors, border forces, social and health workers, civil society, etc.

10. **Therefore, the Assembly** recommends that the Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC Member States:

- i. *improve* national legal framework to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings and monitor its implementation;
- ii. *ensure* that national human trafficking legislative framework is comprehensive and covers all the dimensions of trafficking, being harmonized with the international legal norms and standards;

- iii. *implement* concrete measures to prevent trafficking in human beings in supply chains and cooperate with the economic sectors and companies in this area, by including them in the integrated efforts, such as the development of national plans of action, along with other relevant anti-trafficking stakeholders;
- iv. *thoroughly regulate and reconsider* if necessary, public procurement procedures in order to mitigate the risks of forced labour and human trafficking and be concerned with the conditions under which the purchased goods and services have been produced;
- v. *make efforts* to address the root causes of trafficking in human beings and fight poverty by promoting both economic development and social inclusion, addressing socio-economic vulnerabilities of the victims and implementing anti-poverty, anti-marginalization, education and information policies;
- vi. *take steps* to fight the shadow economy and mitigate the grave impacts of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, by investments in job creation and economic recovery;
- vii. *strengthen and enforce* broader regulations on labor relations and rights, labour migration and promote regular controls on labour standards, in accordance with the principles and norms of the International Labour Organization;
- viii. *take necessary steps* to raise public awareness and educate and inform on policies and measures taken, to fight trafficking in human beings in the Black Sea region and seek public support for such policies;
- ix. *intensify* the information and communication campaigns about trafficking in human beings and the vulnerabilities and risks linked to it and work together with civil society in detecting problem areas, taking appropriate measures, as well as developing preventive policies;
- x. *dedicate* necessary human and financial resources to prevent and fight trafficking in human beings;
- xi. *strengthen* anti-trafficking efforts by ensuring access to justice and effective remedies, shelters, healthcare, counselling, reintegration support, unemployment services and other welfare services in a coordinated, victim-centered and rights based approach, including for the most vulnerable groups;
- xii. *ensure* efficient use of all forms and methods of cooperation in combating trafficking in human beings, by signing and implementing bilateral and multilateral agreements and protocols;
- xiii. *take appropriate measures* to strengthen law enforcement where needed and promote the effective functioning and mutual cooperation of the national agencies involved in combating trafficking in human beings;
- xiv. *enhance* information exchange on national legislation related to prevention and combating trafficking in human beings;
- xv. *provide the necessary support* to the work of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Combating Crime.

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