



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

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

*Doc.: GA63/LC63/REC197/24*

**RECOMMENDATION 197/2024\***

**“The Role of Parliaments in Promoting Intercultural Dialogue and Tolerance in the Fight against Hate Speech”**

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) underlines that the Wider Black Sea Region is home to different peoples who speak different languages, have distinct cultural identities, and profess different religions, who are bound by strong friendship and for whom intercultural dialogue is an important tool for interaction. Strengthening intercultural dialogue and tolerance promotes friendly communication, smoothing out potential crises and harmonizing the international climate to combat hatred and hate speech.
2. The PABSEC recognizes the special role of the parliaments in promoting intercultural dialogue and tolerance in the fight against hate speech, cooperating with various partners and focusing on a human rights-based approach, including protection of freedom of expression, strengthening intercultural dialogue and tolerance. Through legislative activity, parliaments contribute to strengthening tolerance in the fight against violence and hate speech. Enacting the laws that clearly define and criminalize hate speech, improve responses to hate speech, and promote mutual respect and solidarity.
3. The PABSEC states that activities within the PABSEC have always served as an instrument of interaction and dialogue on a wide range of issues and notes with regret that in the light of the recent events and the tense socio-political situation in the region, hate speech is becoming more common on the Internet and in real life leading to escalating tensions and discord and impede efforts to build positive relationships based on shared values and mutual understanding. To this end, it is very important to gradually open up opportunities for reconciliation and restoration of good neighbourly relations based on the valuable experience of peaceful coexistence of the peoples of the region.

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\* Assembly debate, on 15 May 2024 (See Doc. GA63/LC63/REP/24, Report of the Committee for Legal Affairs and International Cooperation “*The Role of Parliaments in Promoting Intercultural Dialogue and Tolerance in the Fight against Hate Speech*”, discussed on 20 April 2024 in Kachreti (Georgia); Rapporteur: Mr. Daniel Constantin, PABSEC Vice-President, Head of the PABSEC Romanian Delegation, Member of the Committee

*Text adopted at the Sixty-Third General Assembly in Tirana on 15 May 2024.*

4. The PABSEC is pleased to note that states have been taking various measures to fight against hate speech. In order to effectively combat hatred and hate speech, targeted measures are being taken in the field of legal support. Laws prohibiting hate speech have been enacted, serving as a deterrent, and providing a legal basis for bringing perpetrators to justice. These laws balance the right to freedom of expression with the need to protect individuals and groups from hate speech.
5. The PABSEC emphasises the paramount importance of inclusive upbringing and education of the young generation, based on respect for human rights, and notes that building strong, cohesive communities that value diversity and inclusion can help prevent the proliferation of hate speech. In this work it is equally important to ensure participation of civil society and the media, which can make a significant contribution to strengthening the spirit of tolerance and preventing the hate speech, as well as reducing and preventing hate-crimes and discrimination.
6. The PABSEC states the importance of strengthening cooperation in bilateral and multilateral formats in order to promote tolerance, non-discrimination and equality. At the same time, the multilateral format of interparliamentary cooperation helps create the necessary platforms for the exchange of information and best practices, as well as for discussing opportunities to strengthen mutual support in the fight against hate speech.
7. **Therefore, the Assembly recommends** that the Parliaments and the Governments of the BSEC Member States:
  - i. *enact* laws that prevent hate speech, improve responses to hate speech, ensure bringing perpetrators to justice;
  - ii. *improve* the legislation that secures equal opportunities and inclusive society, strengthens intercultural dialogue and tolerance in the context of combating hate speech;
  - iii. *establish* mechanisms to monitor and respond effectively to incidents of hate speech, thereby facilitating timely intervention and preventing the harm of hate speech;
  - iv. *adopt legislative measures* regulating information campaigns to counter the use of hate speech and incitement to discrimination in the media and in the real life;
  - v. *promote* education and awareness campaigns of the impact of hate speech, aimed at enhancing diversity and tolerance, creating more inclusive society;
  - vi. *strengthen* cultural policy aimed at increasing civic consciousness, willingness and ability of people to actively participate in processes of strengthening intercultural dialogue and tolerance in the fight against hate speech;
  - vii. *contribute* to improving mechanisms to counter and prevent incitement to hatred by demonstrating its dangers and understanding the importance of respect for cultural diversity in society and a shared commitment to its protection;
  - viii. *support* intercultural dialogue with a frank and respectful exchange of views between representatives of different cultures for a deep understanding of the positions of the opponents;
  - ix. *promote* the creation of an appropriate mechanism within the government to identify and address potential sources of tension between different groups in order to prevent possible conflicts;
  - x. *work* towards creating specialized parliamentary committees dealing with the issues of tolerance and intercultural dialogue to combat hate speech and its proliferation;

- xi. *develop* strategies and legal frameworks that balance freedom of expression, freedom of speech and non-proliferation of hate speech;
  - xii. *support efforts* to combat the spread of misinformation and the creation of hostile stereotypes, as they can become the basis for the use of hate speech and promotion of violence;
  - xiii. *collaborate* with civil society organizations, promoting intercultural dialogue on non-discrimination, tolerance, including initiatives that foster partnerships to address root causes of discrimination;
  - xiv. *support* implementation of educational initiatives and awareness campaigns promoting tolerance and diversity, information sharing, capacity building, and coordinated responses in the BSEC region;
  - xv. *coordinate* efforts to monitor and counter hate speech through fostering intercultural dialogue and enhancing cooperation, through sharing best practices;
  - xvi. *strengthen* collaboration with international organizations which promote tolerance, inclusivity, encourage the development of international standards for fight against hate speech;
8. **The Assembly invites** the BSEC Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, to consider this Recommendation.