



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
PABSEC

Doc. GA64/CC63/REC201/24

RECOMMENDATION 201/2024*

“The Role of the Parliaments in Strengthening the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the BSEC Member States”

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) underlines the importance of the role of parliaments in strengthening the protection of cultural heritage in the context of increasing contemporary global challenges. Parliamentarians and parliaments contribute to strengthening the legislative framework for the effective implementation of cultural policy strategies, considering the characteristics of national cultures and cultural values. Each country has a unique cultural heritage that shapes national identity and cohesion. In a broader context, the countries of the region share historical ties that shape a collective regional identity and regional heritage. The interconnectedness of cultural heritage at different levels and the strengthening of its protection requires additional efforts from parliaments to ensure the preservation of cultural and national identity, the restoration of historical and cultural heritage, and their popularization-

2. The PABSEC stresses that the protection of historical and cultural heritage is an important condition for the sustainable development. By elaborating and adopting laws, parliaments ensure the implementation of generally accepted principles for the protection of cultural heritage and promote the strengthening of regional cooperation, taking into account the growing international trend of direct linkage of cultural cooperation with broader development goals. The protection of tangible and intangible cultural values within the framework of inclusive socio-economic development programs is a vital factor in economic development, attracting tourism, and supporting cultural industries. In turn, the development of tourism gives impetus to the development of cultural heritage and its potential and, consequently, promotes activities for its preservation.

3. The PABSEC recalls its previous Reports and Recommendations on “Current and Future Perspectives in the Development of Tourism in the BSEC Region” (166/2018); “Enhancing Cultural Cooperation and Multiculturalism in the BSEC Member States” (163/2018);

* Assembly debate on 11 December 2024 (See Doc. GA64/CC63/REP/24, Report of the Committee on Social and Humanitarian Policy “The Role of the Parliaments in Strengthening the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the BSEC Member States”, discussed on 17 October 2024 in Istanbul; Rapporteur: Ms. Blagica Lasovska, Member of the Committee, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of North Macedonia)

The text adopted at the Sixty-Fourth General Assembly in Yerevan on 11 December 2024

“Combatting Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Heritage in the BSEC Region” (148/2015); “Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage” (136/2013); “Preservation and Enhancement of Cultural Heritage of the BSEC Member States” (80/2004); “The Role of Culture in the Development of the BSEC Region” (70/2003); “Guidelines on the Program for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage in the Black Sea Region” (18/1996); “Protection of the Cultural Heritage of the PABSEC Member Countries” (6/1994); “Ratification and Implementation of the Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science, and Information” (3/1994), within the framework of which recommendations are given on issues of international cultural cooperation and the protection of cultural heritage.

4. The PABSEC emphasizes that Black Sea region is home to various peoples and cultures enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation among them. The multiplication and preservation of cultural values is the basis for the development of society, and any loss of cultural heritage or cultural values are irreparable and inevitably affects all areas of life. Preservation of cultural heritage is the most important task of society and the state. Therefore, each person is obliged to take care of the preservation of cultural heritage, to protect historical and cultural monuments. In this regard, parliamentarians and parliaments must do everything necessary to ensure the protection of historical and cultural heritage, as well as to promote its preservation and development.

5. The PABSEC notes that most BSEC Member States have developed action plans and effective programs that include activities necessary to enhance the preservation of cultural heritage through cooperation between central and local government authorities and the non-governmental sector. Parliaments are called upon to ensure that existing problems in the field of cultural heritage protection are addressed and to mobilize all available resources to make fundamental decisions within the framework of shared responsibility.

6. The PABSEC emphasizes that the preservation, revival and study of cultural heritage today acquires special relevance, since it is important for the transmission of knowledge, values and traditions to future generations, thus ensuring the continuity and viability of the cultural identity of societies in the future. In this regard, it is important to strengthen inter-parliamentary cooperation both within the framework of various parliamentary assemblies and international organizations, and on a bilateral basis between parliaments, which will allow for the effective resolution of current issues of mutual interest.

7. The PABSEC highly appreciates the activities of the BSEC Organization within the framework of its Working Group on Culture and emphasizes the need to intensify cooperation with the aim of implementing joint projects and initiatives in the field of cultural cooperation. It is also necessary to intensify work with the BSEC Related Bodies (the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank, the BSEC Business Council, The International Centre for Black Sea Studies) in order to achieve maximum involvement in the potential of culture in the overall development processes in the region.

8. **Therefore, the PABSEC recommends** that the parliaments and the governments of the BSEC Member States:

- i. *review and supplement*, where necessary, national legislation in the area of strengthening the protection of cultural heritage and the formation of national identity;
- ii. *examine* the existing legislation in the field of cultural heritage preservation in order to identify effective and ineffective norms, and identify those legislative gaps that allow damage to cultural heritage;

- iii. *use* available resources to support, enhance and promote movable and immovable, tangible and intangible cultural heritage in a complex manner, taking into account cultural, economic, social, historical, educational, environmental and scientific components;
- iv. *define* priority areas for socio-economic development, taking into account the achievement of a balance between sustainable economic development and the protection of cultural heritage;
- v. *encourage* state programs for the restoration and reconstruction of cultural heritage sites with the aim of maintaining their proper condition and revitalization;
- vi. *take measures* to raise public awareness through participation in events, campaigns and educational initiatives in the field of cultural heritage protection;
- vii. *promote* cultural tourism and create opportunities for strengthening local tourism businesses and the tourism sector as a whole;
- viii. *ensure* the protection of cultural heritage from the risk of destruction during military conflicts, as well as from illegal actions, theft and smuggling;
- ix. *establish* the necessary legal framework for the effective functioning of state and local authorities, as well as civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations in the field of cultural cooperation;
- x. *promote* the development of a mass volunteer and volunteer movement for the preservation of cultural heritage;
- xi. *ensure* the development of the necessary legal instruments that allow for the mobilization of funding for the implementation of activities related to cultural heritage within the framework of public-private partnerships;
- xii. *promote* effective implementation of public and private investment programs aimed at the restoration and use of cultural heritage sites for economic purposes, including the organization of festivals, exhibitions and other events;
- xiii. *utilize* a holistic approach to cultural heritage protection that incorporates cultural, economic, social, historical, educational, environmental, and scientific aspects;
- xiv. *promote establishment of* specialized governmental bodies responsible for the integrated management of cultural heritage preservation and promotion;
- xv. *support measures* for introduction of new information technologies in the process of preserving and protecting cultural heritage, including virtual tours, digital archives and mobile applications;
- xvi. *recommend* incorporation of courses on the study of cultural heritage in educational programs in cooperation with cultural and educational institutions, creative unions, and professional associations;
- xvii. *use* parliamentary and people's diplomacy to foster intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding, leveraging cultural heritage as a tool for strengthening international collaboration;
- xviii. *ensure* the ratification of international treaties and conventions and bring national legislation in line with international standards in the field of cultural heritage protection;
- xix. *continue* cooperation with the BSEC and BSEC Related Bodies to ensure legislative support for multilateral projects in the field of cultural heritage protection;

- xx. *promote* preservation of cultural heritage by strengthening cultural ties and regional cooperation in the field of culture;
- xxi. *enlarge* inter-parliamentary cooperation in the field of culture and the protection of cultural heritage and make targeted joint efforts to achieve concrete goals;
- xxii. *consider* the possibility of establishing a Forum for the promotion, preservation, protection and popularization of cultural heritage in the Black Sea Region with the aim of creating an international platform for representatives of science, education, tourism, executive and legislative authorities, public organizations and civil society institutions.

9. The PABSEC invites the BSEC Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider this Recommendation.