

**Speech of Mr. Igor BECIC, PABSEC Vice-President, Head of the PABSEC Serbian Delegation, at the 141<sup>st</sup> IPU Assembly, on the theme “Strengthening international law: Parliamentary roles and mechanisms, and the contribution of regional cooperation”**

*Belgrade, 13-17 October 2019*

*Dear Mrs. President of the IPU,  
Distinguished Parliamentarians,  
Dear Mr. Secretary General,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is an honour and privilege for me to address you, on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, on such an important issue concerning the Strengthening international law: Parliamentary roles and mechanisms, and the contribution of regional cooperation.

Allow me to use this opportunity to congratulate the IPU on the successful completion of its 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and on the significant role, it has played in strengthening the parliamentary institutions throughout the world.

Established in 1993, the PABSEC brings together members of the Parliaments from twelve Member States of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, revealing itself as a unique forum of inter-parliamentary dialogue in the Black Sea Region. Its main objective is to achieve a high degree of regional economic cooperation and to transform the Black Sea Region into a zone of peace, stability and prosperity.

This requires a close cooperation among national parliaments and also international support that will allow efficient use of the full potential of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

Since its creation, the PABSEC has established a solid ground for political dialogue, which maintains the atmosphere of mutual trust, mutual consultations and viable solutions based on a common consensus. It also striven to strengthen the parliament as the institution which is the key player in ensuring the wellbeing of the citizens and preserving the rule of law at the national and international levels.

In the world politics, the Black Sea Region plays an important role, as a bridge between Asia and Europe, being situated at the crossroads of major transportation routes from the East to the West (Silk Road) and from the North to the South

(Viking Road). The opening of the railway connection Baku-Tbilisi-Kars has recently marked an important step in establishing a freight and passenger link between Europe and China.

At the same time, this region is rich in energy resources and in important energy routes from Central Asia and the Caspian Region, representing an outstanding source of oil and gas for the world markets. The gas pipelines TANAP and TAP will allow gas delivery from the Caspian Sea to the European market and will give guarantee for the European energy security.

I would like to underline here that granting the PABSEC the Associate Member Status to the IPU, in October 2017, represented a very important milestone in the activity of our Assembly, giving a wide opportunity to establish a fruitful cooperation with the IPU as well as with other Parliamentary Assemblies and international organizations, in the frame of the IPU.

*Honorable audience,*

The National parliaments in the BSEC Region are bringing their valuable contribution to the achievement of the objective of turning the Black Sea into the sea of stability and prosperity by channeling the efforts of the interparliamentary cooperation in the PABSEC framework towards the improvement of the political climate, enhancement of dialogue and solidarity in the region.

The parliaments and the Parliamentary Assembly face the very important challenge to promote legislative changes, synergy and cohesion for the achievement of the sustainable economic growth and regional integration in the Black Sea region and in each individual member state as well as for the establishment of a strong and vibrant civil society as a solid foundation for the political stability in the region.

The Assembly has strengthen its efforts to enhance the democratic reforms at the local and regional levels, the further improvement of national legislative systems and the promotion of the development of proper mechanisms ensuring multilateral cooperation towards establishing peace and prosperity in the Black Sea region meeting the aspirations of the countries and peoples.

In this respect, it is important to consolidate the cooperation among the Parliaments and also among the Inter-Parliamentary Assemblies belonging to different regions of the world. Our Assembly is open for the cooperation with other Inter-

Parliamentary Assemblies, not only from Europe, but from the whole world, with which it shares common values and interests.

*Distinguished participants,*

The role of the parliamentarians is of utmost importance, aiming to promote peace and stability all over the world in the age of continuous changes and challenges, with which not only in the Black Sea Region, Europe, but the whole world is faced with.

The Parliamentary diplomacy is of greater significance in promoting dialogue for peaceful settlement of disputes, even for conflicts that are thought by some to be insoluble. Therefore, the role of the parliamentary assemblies is vital in strengthening the cooperation and preserving the good-neighborly relations. Their main objective is the enhancement of the parliamentary contribution to the efforts in strengthening security and stability in every part of the world by respecting each country's territorial integrity.

Parliamentarians, through their active participation in the regional and the international parliamentary organizations have to bring their contribution in promoting security and prosperity through closer cooperation. In this respect, an active interaction of the PABSEC and its member parliaments with the European parliamentary organizations as the European Parliament, the IPU, the NATO PA, the OSCE PA, the PACE, the IPA CIS, etc. will undoubtedly pave the way towards a more constructive contribution to joint efforts for continuous enforcement of cooperation.

Concluding, I want to underline the fact that the PABSEC has declared on several occasions, that the strengthening of inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation are important for promoting democracy and rule of law, as well as for deepening mutual understanding among the countries, developing peace, prosperity and fruitful relations in the Black Sea Region and worldwide. In this regard, the Assembly reaffirms its commitment to continue its efforts towards broader involvement of parliamentary diplomacy in strengthening the climate of friendship and mutual understanding for the successful realization of the present and new areas of international cooperation.

I wish successful meeting and fruitful deliberations.

Thank you for your attention!