



Adopted 10 June 2017, Zagreb

FOURTH PLENARY SESSION
OF THE SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN COOPERATION PROCESS
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
ZAGREB, 8-10 June 2017
FINAL DECLARATION

We, the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly:

Reaffirming the principles enshrined in the Charter of Good Neighbourly Relations, Stability, Security and Cooperation, signed in Bucharest in 2000, as the founding document of the SEECP,

Following the Inaugural Declaration of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly, adopted in May 2014 in Bucharest, as well as the Final Declaration of May 2015 adopted in Tirana and the Final Declaration of June 2016 adopted in Sofia,

Committing to strengthen the work and visibility of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly as a regionally owned framework for parliamentary cooperation, dialogue and good neighbourly relations in the region,

Confirming the commitment to the process of European and Euro-Atlantic integration of the SEECP Participants and reaffirming the importance of the EU enlargement process as a mechanism to secure peace, stability and security in the region,

Acknowledging the role of the Regional Cooperation Council, as the SEECP operational arm, in facilitating regional cooperation and supporting the European perspective of the SEE,

Committing to further explore the possibilities of enhanced cooperation of the SEECP PA with the European Parliament and other inter-parliamentary organizations,

Commending the work of the three General Committees of the SEECP PA and welcoming their reports and resolutions,

Expressing concern about the escalation of terrorism and violent extremism which continue to represent considerable risks to security and stability in Europe,

Recognising the need to enhance cooperation between the SEECP Participants in order to most effectively tackle the problem of irregular migration,

Have agreed to:

1. Reaffirm the outstanding role of the SEECP and the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly in enhancing stability and prosperity in the region of South-East Europe;
2. Increase open and direct communication between the parliaments of the participants of the SEECP PA in order to further develop positive environment for shared progress;
3. Continue strengthening of good neighbourly relations and cooperation in South-East Europe with the aim of transforming the region into an area of democratic institutional consolidation, economic growth and increased welfare;
4. Underline that the perspective of EU membership continues to be the main reform, stability and security factor in the region and that the EU enlargement process represents an irreplaceable tool to strengthen the commitment to EU integration of the SEECP Participants which are on their path towards EU membership;
5. Confirm that the enlargement policy of the EU continues to deliver results and proves to be beneficial both for the EU and the SEE region, as it significantly contributes to the European peace, security, stability and prosperity;
6. Continuously support EU candidates and potential candidates in their efforts regarding the rule of law, fundamental rights, public administration reforms, good economic governance and regional cooperation;
7. Further invest efforts in developing proactive cooperation with the European Parliament and other relevant international and inter-parliamentary organisations in order to enhance visibility and overall effectiveness of the SEECP PA;
8. Reaffirm the importance of fighting corruption and organised crime and call on SEECP parliaments to further promote efficient and unbiased investigations and independent judiciary in that area;
9. Strongly condemn terrorism in all its manifestations and decide to invest our best efforts in building a sustainable network for cooperation and information sharing in order to efficiently combat threats of terrorism and radicalisation in the region;

10. Commend RCC's activities and all its programmes aimed at achieving free flow of goods, services and investments, cross-border enforcement of rights and establishment of businesses and economic growth in the SEE region and call on RCC to engage in building deeper connections with the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly, especially with its committees;
11. Support the efforts of the SEECP Participants to foster entrepreneurial learning and aims presented in the Zagreb Charter on Lifelong Entrepreneurial Learning, addressing the ways to increase competitiveness, smart and inclusive growth and jobs creation amongst SEECP Participants, especially through promoting education and regional cooperation;
12. Highly appreciate the work of the three General Committees of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly and welcome their reports and resolutions as the outcome of their efforts to assist our parliaments in developing efficient exchange of best practices and promoting decisive implementation of reforms in the area of rule of law, building infrastructure and increased energy connectivity in the region, as well as promoting modernization of higher education and implementation of education reforms;
13. Welcome all efforts aimed towards the creation of a business friendly environment in the region and the development of public services necessary for economic growth, thus fully recognising the role of parliaments in promoting and facilitating such an environment;
14. Highlight that having a fully functioning Secretariat is important for raising our Assembly's effectiveness and commit to continue working and debating on this issue in a constructive and thorough way;
15. Recommend that the next Presidency continue to actively work towards the achievement of the priorities of the organization, especially through promoting European integration of the whole region, as well as fostering connection, cooperation and communication for our shared progress.