

X PLENARY SESSION
OF THE SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN COOPERATION PROCESS
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Budva, 17-19 May 2023

FINAL DECLARATION

Parliaments of the SEECP participants met at the plenary session on 19 May in Budva as the Parliamentary dimension of the SEECP to mark the jubilee 10th anniversary of the SEECP PA and assess the EU integration perspective and prospects of closer cooperation in South Eastern Europe.

The SEECP Parliamentary Assembly:

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

Marking the jubilee 10th session of the SEECP PA and recalling the importance of the decisions of the Declaration of Inauguration, adopted in Bucharest in May 2014,

Guided by the Rules of Procedure of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly which establishes the functioning of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly,

Recognizing the importance of promoting the mechanisms of international cooperation as tools for multiplying the political actors means to solve central or urgent problems,

Recalling the priorities set by the Podgorica SEECP Chairmanship-in-Office, which emphasized the multiple cultural bonds that connect the SEECP participants and represent a strong incentive for further improvement of cooperation and partnerships,

Aware that the European Union and the European perspective are a guarantee for peace, stability and development that have no alternative,

Underlining the commitment of the SEECP Participants to the EU enlargement process based on the current aspirations of individual SEECP participants,

Noting that the importance of merit-based acceleration of the accession process of the SEECP participants that are also EU candidates or potential candidates should be a priority,

Reaffirming the importance of parliamentary diplomacy which establishes dialogue channels that contribute to peace and security and plays an essential role in dealing with global challenges,

Estimating the establishment of good neighbourly relations and respect for the basic principles of international law and order - as they are set down in the UN Charter,

We, SEECP Participants have agreed to:

1. **Reaffirm** the crucial role of the SEECP PA in reinforcing the stability, prosperity and well-being in South-East Europe,
2. **Condemn** the illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, by the armed forces of the Russian Federation which continue to threaten peace and security in Europe and worldwide, in line with the positions contained in the text of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution of 2 March 2022,
3. **Express** solidarity with the people of Ukraine and support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders,
4. **Highlight** the full determination towards the European integration of the whole SEECP region and set it as the main goal of the SEECP PA for the next decade,
5. **Encourage** all participants of the SEECP that are at the same time the Member-States of the EU, to continue acting as the main promoters of the enlargement process for all EU candidates and potential candidates in the process of their European accession and in countering common challenges, based on fair and rigorous conditionality and the principle of own merits,
6. **Call** on the EU and its Members, bearing in mind that the EU enlargement is a two-way process, to take further action to enhance the accession process, to make it more effective, predictable, credible and tangible,
7. **Decide** to form an Ad Hoc working body of SEECP PA on European integration issues, to accelerate the process and exchange good practices among SEECP participants,
8. **Encourage** regular exchanges and further strengthening of the cooperation between SEECP PA and the European Parliament as an important step towards the realization of the priorities of the Assembly,
9. **Commend and congratulate** Chisinau, Sarajevo, Skopje and Tirana on their recent progress and achieved milestones on the path towards EU membership,

10. **Welcome** the decision of the European Parliament to grant Prishtina a visa-free regime starting from January 2024, whereby the entire SEECP region will have a similar visa framework for the Schengen area,
11. **Reaffirm** support to South East Europe 2030 Strategy and its goals, which provide the rotating SEECP Chairs with a framework to prioritise their activities in line with the Strategy,
12. **Recognize** that strong implementation of the SEE2030 Strategy being a bottom-up plan where all its priorities and actions are aligned with the cross-cutting policy areas of SEE 13 - is a necessity to strengthen regional cooperation in Southeast Europe so to be able to each collectively the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030,
13. **Highlight** that parliaments play an important role in implementing the SDGs being concurrently one of the key stakeholders in implementing the SEE2030 Strategy. With its role as a facilitator for the implementation of SEE2030, RCC will play a key role in acting as an interlocutor between SEE2030 Governance Structures, SEECP and SEECP PA,
14. **Invite** RCC as the SEECP's operational arm, to continue enhancing regional cooperation, provide assistance and expertise to the SEECP PA whenever deemed necessary,
15. **Extend** its best wishes to the upcoming Skopje Chairmanship-in-office of the SEECP PA.