



**PARLIAMETARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA
ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

RULES OF PROCEDURE

**International Secretariat
ISTANBUL
2020**

The Rules of Procedure of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation were adopted by the First General Assembly in Istanbul on 17 June 1993.

Several articles of the PABSEC Rules of Procedure were revised by the Sixth General Assembly in Ankara on 29 November 1995.

Afterwards, amendments were introduced into the Rules of Procedure at the Seventh General Assembly in Baku on 12 June 1996, at the Ninth General Assembly in Athens on 19 June 1997, at the Tenth General Assembly in Chisinau on 11 December 1997, at the Twelfth General Assembly in Saint Petersburg on 10 December 1998 and at the Sixteenth General Assembly in Yerevan on 29 November 2000.

Pursuant to the decision of the Nineteenth General Assembly (Tbilisi, 11-13 June 2002), a Working Group held four meetings in 2002 - 2004 to revise the Rules of Procedure. As a result, a new edition of the PABSEC Rules of Procedure was approved by the Twenty-Fourth Plenary Session of the PABSEC General Assembly in Antalya on 25 November 2004.

Afterwards, amendments were made by the Twenty-Fifth General Assembly in Kyiv on 8 June 2005, the Twenty-Sixth General Assembly in Tirana on 23 November 2005, and the Thirty-Fifth General Assembly in Belgrade on 1 June 2010.

In conformity with the decision of the PABSEC Standing Committee of 19 May 2011, the Working Group on the PABSEC Rules of Procedure held six meetings in 2011-2012. As a result of this work changes were introduced to the PABSEC Rules of Procedure at the Thirty-Ninth General Assembly in Yerevan on 22 May 2012 and at the Fortieth General Assembly in Baku on 26 November 2012.

The renewed edition of the PABSEC Rules of Procedure was presented at the Extraordinary meeting of the PABSEC Standing Committee in Istanbul on 26 February 2013.

The last changes were made at the 55th meeting of the PABSEC Standing Committee on 6 August 2020.

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PABSEC RULES OF PROCEDURE

PREAMBLE

The Republic of Albania, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine, who have signed the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Declaration of 25 June 1992, have within the framework of this cooperation established a Parliamentary Assembly consisting of national delegations of the Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. The name of the Assembly is the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC).

Following its accession to the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the Republic of Serbia was accepted to the PABSEC in 2004.

PART 1 - Aims, Composition, Membership and Officers of the Assembly

Article 1 – Aims and Objectives of the Assembly

1. The Assembly endeavours to secure the understanding and adoption by the peoples of the Member States of the ideals, objectives and aims of the organisation by using common historical values of the Member States, to provide a legal basis for economic, commercial, social, cultural and political cooperation among the Member States and to further the aims of the PABSEC.
2. The Assembly confirms the adherence to the principles and objectives stated in the declarations by the Heads of State or Government of the Member States and urges national parliaments of the Member States to enact legislation needed for implementation of the decisions by the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.
3. The Assembly also provides assistance to national parliaments of the Member States so as to strengthen parliamentary democracy in the Member States.
4. The Assembly encourages relations and cooperation with the BSEC and the BSEC related bodies ensuring better coordination between National Parliaments and Governments, with a view to reaching the goals of the Charter of the BSEC.
5. The Assembly aims to promote cooperation with other international and regional organisations sharing the common vision of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation as a part of the integration process in Europe, especially, with the European Parliament.

Article 2 – Composition of the Assembly

1. Each Member State shall be represented by at least four seats in the Assembly. Any increase in the number of seats beyond the minimum shall be based on the population criteria. The Member States that constitute the Assembly and the numbers of their seats at the Assembly are set out in the Appendices I and II to these Rules of Procedure.

2. The composition of the Assembly may be varied by a decision of the General Assembly on proposal of the Standing Committee.

Article 3 – Membership

1. The Assembly shall be composed of national delegations formed by the members of the respective national parliaments.
2. The list of the national delegations signed by the Speakers of the national parliaments shall be forwarded to the International Secretariat. This procedure shall also apply to the new members entering the Assembly.
3. In case any member of a national delegation fails to attend the General Assembly or the committee meetings, the Speaker of the respective national parliament may designate a proxy to replace the member for that particular meeting only. In such cases, the proxy who attends that meeting shall have all the rights of the member he/she replaces.
4. A member of the PABSEC must be the member of the national parliament of the country he/she represents but should not be the member of the national government. A member of the PABSEC national delegation, who becomes a member of the government but remains a member of the national parliament, can remain a member of the Assembly. If any member ceases to be a member of his/her national parliament for any reason whatsoever (such as election, resignation, death, etc.), his/her membership at the PABSEC automatically terminates, in which case the respective parliament designates a successor in the shortest time possible, but not later than six months.
5. The credentials of members shall be verified by the General Assembly on the basis of the official documents or communications supplied by the national parliaments and are submitted to the General Assembly by the President, for ratification
6. If the credentials of a member are contested, the Assembly shall appoint a special committee, which within three days shall report its recommendations to the Standing Committee for decision.

Article 4 – Officers of the Assembly

1. The officers of the Assembly shall consist of the President, five Vice-Presidents and the Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters, and collectively shall be known as the Bureau.
2. The President of the Assembly shall be the Speaker of the Parliament of a Member State by rotation for a period of six months. Following the first President who shall be decided by the general agreement, rotation shall be arranged in English alphabetical order of the Member States.
3. The Vice-Presidents and the Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters shall be elected by the Assembly from among its members for the term of office of two years.
4. Candidates for the offices of Vice-President or Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters must be sponsored in writing by at least three members from different national delegations. The candidatures shall be endorsed by the Bureau, prior to submission to the Assembly.

5. The President shall hold office from the close of the Plenary Session in which he/she assumed his/her powers to the close of the next Plenary Session.
6. The Vice-Presidents shall hold office from the close of the Plenary Session in which they are elected to the close of the Plenary Session after two years where their term is expired, except when they are elected to fill a vacancy of an unexpired term.
7. The Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters shall hold office from the close of the Plenary Session in which he/she is elected to the close of the Plenary Session after two years where his/her term is expired, except when early elections take place.

Article 5 – Election of the Officers

1. The Vice-Presidents shall be elected by secret ballot and each member entitled to vote may cast as many votes as there are positions to be filled. The candidates, submitted in conformity with the article 4.4 of the present Rules of Procedure, who obtain the most votes shall be elected for two years' term. In event of a tie, the matter shall be decided by lot.
2. The Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters shall be elected by secret ballot, in accordance with the procedure provided in paragraph 1 above.
3. Whenever, in an election, the number of candidates is the same or less than the number of positions to be filled, the candidates shall be declared to be elected to the respective positions by acclamation.
4. The Officers shall be elected by those members present and entitled to vote in accordance with the provisions of Article 22 and 23 below. All ballot papers bearing the names of persons who have been duly nominated as candidates shall be taken into account for the purpose of calculating the number of votes cast.
5. A representative of one and the same country can be elected to the post of a PABSEC Vice-President or a PABSEC Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters no more than for one term of office.
6. When a Vice-President ceases to be a member, the Assembly will elect in its subsequent meeting another member from the same delegations to replace him/her for the rest of his/her term.
7. If, for any reason the Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters is unable to exercise his or her functions during the period of his or her mandate, one of the Vice-Presidents shall act as Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters upon the decision of the Bureau or in the absence of the meeting of the Bureau by the decision of the President of the Assembly until a successor shall be elected by the Assembly at its next meeting and he/she shall hold office until the expiry of the mandate in question.

Article 6 - The Bureau of the Assembly

1. The Bureau of the Assembly shall consist of the President, five Vice-Presidents and the Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters.
2. The President shall take the Chair of the Bureau and shall have a casting vote to break any tied decision.
3. If for any reason the President of the Assembly is unable to perform his functions,

he/she may designate one of the Vice-Presidents as the acting president. As soon as President has resumed his/her functions, the office of the acting president shall be terminated. If the Speaker of the Parliament who is the President of the Assembly has been replaced, his/her successor shall automatically become the President of the Assembly.

4. The Bureau shall take decisions by simple majority vote.
5. The Bureau of the Assembly determines the agenda and venue of the Standing Committee meeting and convenes the Committee.
6. The Bureau shall take decisions on PABSEC representatives or observers at other international gatherings.
 - The members of the Assembly taking part in the international gatherings as PABSEC observers or representatives shall submit in a month's time the relevant reports on their participation to the Standing Committee.
 - Chairmen of the parliaments of the BSEC member states may represent PABSEC in international gatherings.
7. The Bureau shall take decisions on appointment of the PABSEC Special Representatives at other international organizations or projects for 5 years term. The term shall be renewable. The Bureau shall adopt separate document - the Regulation on the status of Special PABSEC Representative.
8. The Bureau shall be responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Standing Committee are carried out, and ensure the efficient functioning of the Assembly in between meetings of the Standing Committee.
9. The Bureau shall meet upon the call by the President.
10. The Bureau shall meet twice a year – on a day preceding the General Assembly.
11. Upon the proposal of the President or by at least four national delegations the Bureau may be convened in extraordinary meetings.
12. Unless the Bureau decides otherwise, its meetings shall be closed to the public.
13. As a rule, the Bureau of the Assembly shall hold its meetings in the country of the President of the Assembly.

Article 7 - The Standing Committee

1. The Standing Committee shall consist of the Heads of the national delegations to the Assembly. In the absence of a Head of a national delegation, his place may be taken by a member of the same delegation duly designated by the Speaker of the respective national parliament. The President, Vice-Presidents, Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters and Chairmen of the three Committees are *ex officio* members of the Standing Committee.
2. The Speakers of the national parliaments who are not members of their national delegations shall have the status of *special guest* at the Standing Committee meetings. They shall be entitled to speak on any subject but not to vote.
3. The President, other members of the Bureau and the Chairmen of the Committees may

not vote unless they are acting in the capacity of the Head of a delegation.

4. The Standing Committee shall take decisions as to its activities in unanimity.
5. The Chairmen of the three Committees will keep the Standing Committee regularly informed of the activities of their Committees and of the results of their work.
6. The Standing Committee may invite rapporteurs on different subjects of the three Committees to attend its meetings. They may speak, but shall not be entitled to vote in the meetings of the Standing Committee.
7. The main tasks of the Standing Committee shall be:
 - a) to supervise the implementation of the Assembly decisions within the powers vested with it by the Assembly;
 - b) to draw up the agenda, calendar and venue of the Assembly meetings;
 - c) to undertake the necessary initial works for the establishment of new committees with a view to recommending it to the Assembly, as well as to set up working groups to facilitate the work of the Standing Committee;
 - d) to coordinate the activities of the Committees, to make suggestions to them in their fields of activity and to give guidance on issues that are under consideration by the committees;
 - e) to appoint ad-hoc committees for specific purposes, prescribing their term of office, composition and mandate. The ad-hoc committee shall report to the Standing Committee;
 - f) to endorse the budget of the Assembly drafted by the Budget Drafting and Auditing Commission and submit it to the General Assembly for approval;
 - g) to endorse the Auditing Report by the Budget Drafting and Auditing Commission and submit it to the General Assembly for approval;
 - h) to ensure coordination between the BSEC and the PABSEC;
 - i) to ensure cooperation between the PABSEC and other international organisations.
8. The Standing Committee shall meet twice a year on the day preceding the General Assembly to take decisions regarding the agenda within the scope of recent developments.
9. Extraordinary meetings may be convened by the President upon the written request of at least half of the PABSEC national delegations.

PART II - Duties of the President, Maintenance of Order

Article 8 - The President

1. The duties of the President shall be to call and preside over meetings of the Assembly; to guide the debates of the Assembly; to ensure observance of the Rules of Procedure; maintain order; call on speakers; open and close debates; ascertain whether a quorum exists; put questions to the vote and announce the results of votes; to perform similar function in relation to the Standing Committee and the Bureau and to act as the highest representative of the Assembly.

2. When chairing the Assembly, the President shall not speak in the debate. If he or she speaks in a debate on a particular subject, the President shall not resume the Chair until that debate is over. When the President himself/herself is not in the Chair, he/she shall designate a Vice-president to preside in his/her place until such time as he/she resumes the Chair.
3. The duties of the President shall also include initiating and undertaking contacts and dialogue, as well as participating in meetings and fora, which promote the aims and policies of the Assembly. In the performance of these duties the President may appoint, at the appropriate level, others to assist or act on his/her behalf. Such persons shall report to the President. The President shall report on these activities to the Standing Committee.

Article 9 – Vice-Presidents

1. When chairing the Assembly, the Vice-President shall perform the same duties as the President. He/she shall also be subject to the restriction in Article 8.2 above.

Article 10 – Maintenance of Order

1. Words, expressions or actions whose meaning bears an affront to the dignity of people and nations or, which are otherwise contrary to the good conduct of debates or cast aspersions on the honourable behaviour of members of the Assembly and PABSEC Member States, shall be considered improper because they violate the Rules of Procedure.
2. The President has the right to call to order any member of the Assembly who causes a disturbance during the proceedings or violates the Rules of Procedure. The delegates or other participants in the meetings are not allowed to act in provocative or destabilizing manner during the proceedings and during the speeches of other delegates.
3. In case of such offence, the President shall call the member to order and cause the fact to be recorded in the Minutes.
4. In the event of a further offence, the President may propose that the Assembly decide to interrupt the offender. This decision shall be taken without debate by show of hands.
5. In the case of a serious violation of order and the Rules of Procedure by a member of a national delegation, the President may address the respective delegation with the request to call this member to the order. If serious violation of order and the Rules of Procedure is repeated by this or another member of the same delegation, the President may propose that the Assembly pass a vote of censure, which shall involve immediate exclusion from the Chamber of a named member. The vote of censure shall be taken without debate by show of hands.
6. In the case when members of one national delegation repeat serious violations of the order and Rules of Procedure, the President may propose that the Assembly decides not to give the floor to that national delegation until the end of the session. The decision shall be taken without debate by show of hands.
7. In case of repetition of a serious violation of order and the Rules of Procedure, the

President may propose that the Assembly takes the decision to deprive the offender of the PABSEC mandate. The decision shall be taken without debate by show of hands.

8. The audience admitted to the galleries shall remain seated and silent and the President shall have the power to order the withdrawal of the members of the public who commit misconduct. During closed sittings, the audience shall be ordered to leave the galleries.

PART III - Meetings

Article 11 – General Assembly

1. The Assembly shall meet twice a year (spring and autumn sessions), but not less than once.
2. The Speakers of the national parliaments who are not members of their national delegations shall have the status of *special guest* at the plenary sessions of the General Assembly. They shall be entitled to speak on any subject but not to vote.
3. The agenda, calendar and venue of the General Assembly shall be determined by the Standing Committee six months before the meeting date and are communicated by the International Secretariat to the attention of members of the Assembly not less than two months before the meeting. General Assembly Session dates shall be determined in a way that shall secure maximum representation of national delegations at the time of Assembly Sessions.
4. The venue of the General Assembly shall be the country of the President of the Assembly. The host country shall provide necessary arrangements and cover the expenses associated with the holding of the Assembly (accommodation, meals, and local transportation during the event, and any other additional expenses deemed necessary and approved by the host country).
5. A General Assembly shall consist of meetings of the Bureau, Standing Committee and plenary sessions of the Assembly.
6. Unless otherwise decided by the Assembly, all the General Assembly sessions shall be open to public.

Article 12 – Extraordinary Sessions

The Assembly may be convened in extraordinary session by the President at the request of the Standing Committee.

Article 13 - Conference of Speakers of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States

Chairmen of the parliaments of the BSEC member states have right to convene the Conference of Speakers of the Parliaments of the BSEC Member States.

Article 14 – Agenda

1. Each session has its agenda approved by the Standing Committee. The Assembly can make changes to the agenda. The final agenda shall be adopted by the Assembly.
2. The agenda of the Assembly shall include consideration of reports of the Committees

and approval of relevant draft recommendations, as well as reports prepared by the national delegations.

3. The Rapporteur of each Committee shall submit to the Plenary Session a report on the subject area accompanied by a draft recommendation elaborated by the relevant Committee. The International Secretariat shall communicate these documents in English to all national delegations for distribution to their members one month before the date of the meeting. The translations into all PABSEC working languages shall be communicated two weeks before the date of the meeting.
4. Each item on the Agenda containing substantive issues shall be pertinent to the activities of the PABSEC.
5. In the sittings, proposals of the Standing Committee, recommendations, declarations, decisions and reports of the Committees and/or election of the candidates for the Bureau, shall be submitted to the General Assembly for approval.
6. The General Assembly shall vote on recommendations, declarations, opinions and decisions submitted by the Standing Committee and the Committees. Every proposed recommendation, declaration, opinion and decision shall relate to a matter placed on the agenda.
7. A recommendation gives a formal expression to the view of the PABSEC. Recommendations are addressed to the BSEC, the governments and national parliaments of the Member States and the international organisations.
8. A declaration gives a formal expression to the PABSEC view on a relevant issue.
9. An opinion expresses the view of the Assembly in answer to a formal request from the BSEC and other national and international organisations.
10. A decision is a text adopted by the Assembly on a specific issue pertaining to technical matters and/or functioning of the Assembly.
11. Documents adopted by the General Assembly are communicated to the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC, the national parliaments and governments of the Member States and international organisations.

Article 15 – Minutes

1. Minutes of proceedings of each meeting (Bureau, Standing Committee, General Assembly and Committee) shall be drawn up and circulated in all PABSEC working languages to the National Delegations within 30 days following the date of closing the Assembly. A copy of such Minutes shall be stored at the Assembly Archives.
2. At the opening of each meeting, the President shall submit to the vote of the Assembly, the minutes of proceedings of the preceding meeting. If the minutes of proceedings are approved, the Assembly moves on to the following items on the agenda. If the minutes of proceedings are challenged, the Assembly shall vote on the changes requested and the results of any such vote shall be recorded in the minutes of the current meeting.

Article 16 – Register of attendance

1. Each member shall sign the register of attendance at each sitting before taking his/her place.

PART IV – Rules of Debate, Voting

Article 17 – Amendments

1. Every national delegation shall be entitled to introduce and speak upon amendments to texts of recommendations, declarations, opinions, decisions and reports.
2. Amendments shall be relevant to the debated text and shall be signed and submitted in writing to the Chair in English and translated in other working languages of the Assembly.
3. Each amendment may only relate to one paragraph.
4. Amendments are put to the vote before the text to which they relate and following the order of paragraphs of the said text.
5. If two or more amendments relate to the same paragraph, they will be voted upon in the order according to the English alphabetic order of the countries.
6. The Chair may group the amendments for discussion in the order outlined in paragraphs 4 and 5. The authors of such amendments will be called upon in turn to present their respective amendments.
7. When amendments are being considered, unless the Chair decides otherwise, the mover of the amendment or another member speaking in its favour, one member opposed to the amendment and the Rapporteur are entitled to speak. Members shall speak for no more than five minutes.

Article 18 – Languages of the Assembly

1. The working languages of the Assembly shall be English, French, Russian and Turkish.
The official language of the PABSEC documents and correspondence shall be English.
The documents shall be translated into French, Russian and Turkish languages.
2. Any Member State wishing to use another language shall be responsible for ensuring its simultaneous interpretation into one of the official languages and paying all technical expenditures in relation therein with.

Article 19 – Procedural Motion

1. Anyone raising a point of order or moving a procedural motion may be called upon by the President to speak briefly on it. In such a case the time limit of speech may not exceed three minutes. The point raised or motion made, shall then be decided upon by the General Assembly immediately without debate.
2. A simple majority of the delegations present must vote in the affirmative for motions to be adopted.

Article 20 – Urgency

1. Questions of urgency may be placed on the agenda of the General Assembly at any time on the proposal of the Standing Committee.

2. Such proposals, if supported by the signature of not less than 1/3 of the national delegations or 2/3 of the members of the Assembly in writing, shall be considered by the Standing Committee, which shall submit them to the Assembly.
3. In the event of the Standing Committee deciding not to recommend the inclusion of such an item on the agenda, the proposers shall have the right to appeal to the Assembly, which shall decide by not less than 2/3 of the national delegations present to place the proposal on the agenda.

Article 21 – Right to Speak

1. No member shall speak unless called upon to do so by the President. Members shall speak from their place and shall address the Chair.
2. Except for the Chair and the Rapporteurs, members wishing to speak in a general debate shall enter their names in the List of Speakers. The Chair shall determine the order in which members shall be called to speak. The Chair shall close the list when the number of speakers multiplied by five minutes exceeds the time available for the session. Alternatively, the Chair shall reduce the time limit for each speaker to less than five minutes in order to allow more members to participate in the debate.
3. No speaker shall be interrupted without his/her consent, except for the purpose of calling him/her to order.
4. If a speaker is irrelevant, the Chair shall call him or her to order. If a speaker has already been called to order twice in the same debate, the Chair may, on the third occasion, forbid him or her to speak during the remainder of the debate on the same subject.
5. The Chair may decide to allow a member to make a personal statement. There shall be no debate on such a statement.
6. Unless the Chair decides to grant additional time, no member may speak for more than five minutes or for no more than three minutes on a point of order.

Article 22 – Right to Vote

1. In election of members of the Bureau of the Assembly, other than the President of the Assembly, and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Committees, as well as the Secretary General and his deputies, each member shall individually have one vote, while in other issues, each national delegation shall have one vote. National delegations may take internal binding decisions on voting.

In voting where members vote individually, nobody but the designated proxy may vote in place of the member.

2. The Assembly shall not vote unless more than half of the members of the Assembly are present.

Article 23 – Methods of Voting

1. The Assembly shall vote by show of hands except in cases where a roll-call vote or secret ballot is required. Only affirmative and negative votes shall count in calculating the number of votes cast. The number of abstentions shall be recorded.
2. The Assembly shall vote by roll-call when at least 3 national delegations so request.

3. The roll shall be called by the national delegations in the English alphabetical order.
4. The Chair shall be responsible for the counting of votes and shall announce the result.
5. In the case of election of Officers of the Assembly, voting will take place in accordance with Article 5 above.
6. The three-strong Tellers' Committee shall be nominated by the Chair. Only those ballot papers bearing the names of persons who have been duly nominated as candidates shall be taken into account for the purpose of calculating the number of votes cast. The name against shall be crossed out. The Chair shall announce the result.
7. After the Chair has announced the beginning of the voting it may not be interrupted before the results are announced except on a point of order in connection with the actual process of voting. Once the Chair announces the results of the voting, it shall be considered completed and result shall be considered final.
8. Any national delegation has the right to make an interpretative statement, formal reservation or explanation of their vote before the voting has commenced or after the voting has been completed. They may ask that their respective statement be duly registered and circulated by the International Secretariat.

Article 24 – Majorities

1. The majorities required for resolutions of the Sessions of the Assembly are the following:
 - a) For the resolutions concerning the amendments in the Rules of Procedure and the admission of new members, affirmative vote of not less than 2/3 of the national delegations of the Assembly;
 - b) For the resolutions concerning the budget, affirmative vote of not less than 2/3 of the national delegations of the Assembly;
 - c) For any other resolutions – absolute majority of the votes cast;
 - d) For the political decisions including adoption of declarations, reports and recommendations, a system of double majority vote constituting support by not less than half of the national delegations of the Assembly and the majority of the total number of the members of the Assembly shall be applied when any national delegation so requests;
 - e) For the election of the Secretary General of the Assembly and the Deputies Secretaries Generals – according to the items 2 and 3, Article 30.

Article 25 – Quorum

1. The quorum of the meetings of the Assembly and Standing Committee shall consist of not less than 2/3 of the total number of the national delegations.
2. The quorum of the meetings of the Bureau shall consist of not less than half of the total number of the Bureau members.
3. The quorum of the meetings of the Committees shall consist of not less than half of the total number of the national delegations.

4. The Chair shall establish the quorum at the beginning of each PABSEC Bureau Meeting, Standing Committee Meeting, General Assembly Session and Committee Meeting. The International Secretariat shall enter the relevant text thereof into the Procedure Notes for each Meeting.
5. In the absence of a quorum, the vote shall be postponed.

PART V – Committees

Article 26 – Formation, Composition and Officers of the Committees

1. The Assembly shall set up the following committees:
 - Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee;
 - Legal and Political Affairs Committee;
 - Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee.

The setting up of new committees and/or restructuring of the existing ones shall be decided by the General Assembly upon the proposal of the Standing Committee
2. The number of seats in the three Committees shall be 15 to 28. Each Participating State shall be represented by minimum one, maximum four representatives in each Committee (Appendix II).
3. Members of the Committees shall be appointed by the national delegations of the Member States for a minimum period of one year.
4. Members may represent their national delegation in more than one committee.
5. Each Committee shall elect from among its members the Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen each from a different national delegation provided that each country has no more than one representative at a time in the leadership of the committees.
6. Candidates for the election of the Committee officers shall be sponsored in writing by three members representing different delegations. The Committee officers shall be elected for the term of two years by a majority of votes cast in a secret ballot. The elections should take place only if candidates are present at the meeting. A representative of one and the same country can be elected to the post of a Chairman or a Vice-Chairman of the PABSEC Committees no more than for two successive terms of office.
7. If no candidate has obtained a majority, a second ballot shall be held between the two candidates having obtained the highest number of votes on the first ballot. In the event of a tie, the issue shall be decided by lot.
8. If there is only one candidate nominated for an office, the candidate shall be declared elected by acclamation.
9. If the Officers of the Committees are no more the members of the national parliaments the respective Committee at its next meeting conducts new elections.
10. Each Committee shall designate a Rapporteur on each subject.
11. In case of a vacancy in a Committee, the Member State to which that seat is allotted shall appoint a replacement member within three months at the latest.

Article 27 – Speaking in the Committees

1. Members of the Committees shall speak from their places with permission from the Chair of the Committee.
2. Except for the Chair and the Rapporteurs, members wishing to speak regarding the items on the Agenda (reports, recommendations) shall enter their names in the List of Speakers.
3. Committee members, who have registered their names in the List of Speakers may take the floor once with time limit for less than five minutes strictly adhering to the Agenda items.
4. Committee members, who have not been registered in the List of Speakers but are willing to take the floor concerning the Agenda items can be given the right to speak by the Chair for not less than two minutes.
5. No speaker shall be interrupted except for the purpose of calling him/her to order.
6. If a speaker is irrelevant to the Agenda, the Chair shall call him/her to order and upon necessity the Chair may forbid him or her to speak during the remaining of the debate on the same subject.
7. The Chair may decide to allow a member to make a personal statement. There shall be no debate on such a statement.

Article 28 – Duties of the Committees

1. The Committees shall examine the issues within the framework of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation relevant to their area of competence.
2. Committees shall elaborate the documents and examine the proposals and questions submitted to them in pursuance of a decision taken by the Assembly, the Standing Committee, the Bureau or the President.
3. Committees shall adopt draft reports and recommendations to be submitted by the Rapporteurs at the General Assembly.

Article 29 – Procedure in the Committees

1. Meetings of the committee shall be called at the discretion of its Chairman subject to the Assembly's work programme as established by the Standing Committee.
2. Each Committee shall decide the venue and agenda of its own meetings. The Committees shall examine the action taken on recommendations and decisions adopted by the Assembly after discussion of the reports.
3. The Committee meetings shall be hosted by the Member States on a rotation basis in English alphabetic order. If for obvious reasons, a country cannot invite a Committee meeting it can pass its turn to the next country. The country hosting the PABSEC Committee meeting also covers the costs associated with its holding (accommodation,

meals, and local transportation during the event, and any other additional expenses deemed necessary and approved by the host country.)

4. In the absence of the Chairman, the two Vice-Chairmen shall preside over meetings by rotation.
5. Committee may establish sub-committee specialised on certain issues.
6. Number of members, organisation and rules of conduct of the sub-committees shall be determined by the committee, which establishes that sub-committee.
7. Sub-committees are responsible for submitting their final report to the relevant committees.
8. Two committees may hold joint meetings on issues of common interest.
9. Committees shall take decisions by simple majority vote.
10. Committees shall vote by show of hands unless a roll-call is requested by any member.
11. The vote on the final report and recommendation to be submitted to the Assembly by the Committee shall be held under Article 22.1 and Article 23.1.c-d above.
12. Committee meetings may be closed to public when necessary.
13. Minutes of proceedings of each meeting of a Committee shall be kept.

PART VI – Organisation of the Assembly

Article 30 – International Secretariat

1. Each country may be represented in the International Secretariat only at one of the posts of an international officer. If an officer is elected for one of the posts foreseen by the present article, while his / her country is already represented at the Secretariat, the latter representation may be prolonged for an interim period until the next meeting of the Bureau of the Assembly.
2. The Secretary General of the Assembly shall have the status of an international officer elected for the term of office of five years by the General Assembly upon the proposal of the Bureau. The Secretary General shall be elected by double majority – voted in favour by not less than half of the national delegations of the Assembly and the majority of the total number of the members of the Assembly.

National delegations shall forward to the PABSEC International Secretariat their proposals on candidacies for the post of the Secretary General not later than two months before the date of the elections.

Prior to holding the personal secret vote the Heads of the National delegations sign the decision of the respective delegation on supporting one of the candidates to the post of the Secretary General and hand the closed envelopes to the Tellers' Committee. The envelopes shall be announced by the Chairman of the Tellers Committee following the announcement of the results of the secret ballot.

Representative of one and the same country can occupy the office of the Secretary General only in two successive terms.

3. The Deputy Secretaries General also having the status of international officer shall be

elected by the General Assembly upon the proposal of the Bureau for the term of office of three years by simple majority of the total number of the members of the Assembly present at the session.

National delegations shall forward to the PABSEC International Secretariat their proposals on candidacies for the post of the Deputy Secretary General not later than one month before the next session of the General Assembly.

Representative of one and the same country can occupy the office of the Deputy Secretary General only in three successive terms.

4. In case when the new Secretary General is not elected, the current Secretary General stays in the office until the next session of the General Assembly.
5. Secretary General and Deputy Secretaries General must at least:
 - a) be a national of a Participating State of the BSEC;
 - b) have knowledge and experience of international and inter-parliamentary relations and the BSEC;
 - c) speak and write in English. Knowledge of another PABSEC working language (French, Russian, Turkish) being an asset;
 - d) have a bachelor's degree;
 - b) the candidacies to the posts of the PABSEC Secretary General and the Deputies Secretary General should have the experience in the work within the PABSEC and be either a member of the Assembly, a secretary of delegation, a member of the International Secretariat or other interparliamentary assemblies. Other candidates may participate in the elections of the Secretary General and the Deputies Secretary General only if the candidates with the above requirements have not been nominated;
6. The Secretary General shall be responsible towards the General Assembly.
7. Upon the instruction of the PABSEC President the Secretary General may sign a memorandum on cooperation with the organizations having observer status in the Assembly (and PABSEC Partners).
8. If the Secretary General is unable to fulfil his/her functions the Bureau of the Assembly charges one of the Deputies Secretary General to fulfil those functions until elections of a new Secretary General. If the Bureau fails to take such a decision then the President of the Assembly takes the decision on the issue. The dates of the elections of the Secretary General are fixed by the Bureau of the Assembly.
9. In case when the PABSEC Secretary General has violated the provisions of international law and the normative documents of the Assembly, has committed criminal offense or has damaged the credibility and interests of the Assembly by actions or statements, the Secretary General can be removed from the office before completion of his/her term by the decision of the 2/3 of the members of the Assembly upon the initiative of 1/3 of the delegations approved by the majority of the delegations.
10. If a Deputy Secretary General is unable to fulfil his/her functions the Secretary General redistributes the respective functions among the acting Deputies Secretary General until election of a new Deputy Secretary General.
11. In case when the PABSEC Deputy Secretary General has violated the provisions of international law and the normative documents of the Assembly, has committed criminal

offense or has damaged the credibility and interests of the Assembly by actions or statements, the Deputy Secretary General can be removed from the office before completion of his/her term by the decision of the majority of the members of the Assembly upon the initiative of 1/3 of the delegations.

12. Advisor to the Secretary General – Press-Secretary shall have the status of an international officer, and shall be appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly upon proposal of the Secretary General for the period of three years. The term may be prolonged.

A representative of one and the same country can occupy the post of Advisor to the Secretary General – Press-Secretary no more than for three successive terms of office.

In case of unsatisfactory work of the Advisor to the Secretary General – Press-Secretary the Secretary General shall address the Bureau with the issue on early termination of his/her term of office.

13. Each Committee shall have a secretary who shall have the status of an international officer. The Secretaries of the Committees shall be appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly upon proposal of the Secretary General for the period of three years. Their term may be prolonged.

A representative of one and the same country can occupy the post of a Committee Secretary no more than for three successive terms of office.

When appointing the Secretaries of the Committees for the first and the second time the candidacies are submitted by the Secretary General. For the third time parallel to the proposal of the Secretary General national delegations forward their candidacies. The final decision is taken by the Bureau of the Assembly.

If a Committee Secretary voluntary resigns from his/her post before the expiration of the term of office, the Secretary General shall not be eligible to nominate a candidate from the same country to this post.

In case of unsatisfactory work of the Secretaries of the Committees the Secretary General shall address the Bureau with the issue on early termination of their term of office. A candidate from the same country shall not be eligible to be recommended for the vacated post.

14. In considering proposed candidates for the posts in the International Secretariat the fulfilment of financial responsibilities by a Member State towards the Assembly shall be taken into account.
15. The powers, responsibilities, duties, staff, remuneration and administrative structure of the Secretariat shall be determined by the Staff Regulations of the PABSEC International Secretariat approved by the Standing Committee.
16. The PABSEC International Secretariat shall be seated in Istanbul in accordance with the Host Country Agreement between the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the Government of the Republic of Turkey for the International Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.
17. The International Secretariat shall send all the adopted recommendations, declarations,

opinions, decisions and reports to the Speakers of the National Parliaments, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other relevant Ministers of the Member States and the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat in the shortest time possible after the closing of each session of the General Assembly.

Article 31 – Budget and Finance

1. The draft budget of the Assembly shall be endorsed by the Standing Committee before the spring session and shall be presented to the Assembly for approval at the autumn session.
2. National contributions to the Budget of the Assembly shall be apportioned according to the formula used in the BSEC.
3. The Member States shall make their due contributions to the bank account of the Assembly in Euros during the first six months of the year.
4. If a Member State fails to make its due contributions for a period of 12 months, members of its delegation shall attend the activities of the Assembly without the right to vote until the due contributions are paid.
5. The International Secretariat executes the approved Budget without the right to make any changes in it. The Secretariat shall present a quarterly financial report to the Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters. Upon the consent of the PABSEC Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters the Secretary General shall have the right to shift 8% amounts in between the budget articles and subsequently will inform the Standing Committee.
6. The Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters and the Secretary General shall be responsible for the financial administration of the Assembly in conformity with the Financial Regulations.
7. In the absence of the Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters, the Vice-President acting as the Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters shall have all the powers vested with the Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters, including but not limited to, the power to sign the financial documents.
8. The Vice-President in charge of Financial Matters shall supervise the execution of the Assembly's budget and submit a report to the spring and autumn meetings of the Bureau.
9. At its autumn session the General Assembly shall set up a three-strong "Draft Budget and Auditing Commission" in rotation according to the English alphabetical order of the Member States. The Commission shall draw up the draft budget for the next financial year and the Auditing Report for the previous financial year.
10. The Auditing Report considered by the Standing Committee shall be submitted to the General Assembly for approval.

PART VII – Relations with other Organisations

Article 32 – Relations between the Assembly and the BSEC

1. The PABSEC and the BSEC relations shall continue to be based on the principles of the

Summit Declaration on the Black Sea Economic Cooperation adopted in Istanbul on 25 June 1992 and the Charter of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation adopted in Yalta on 5 June 1998, serving as guidelines for these relations.

2. Both the PABSEC and the BSEC shall closely cooperate in attaining the goals of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation in the Black Sea region and beyond it. To this end, they shall undertake, including through their secretariats, appropriate steps aimed at the realisation of legislation necessary to put in action relevant resolutions and decisions of the BSEC.
3. The PABSEC and the BSEC may organise joint meetings at different levels as well as joint activities, which shall serve common objectives, with the aim of developing the Black Sea Economic Cooperation process.
4. Upon invitations, the representatives of the PABSEC and the BSEC may attend at various levels meetings of each other, exchange information on current activities and the floor shall be open to them ensuring their fruitful participation therein.
5. To ensure better BSEC-PABSEC interaction, the Secretary General of the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat shall be invited to inform the Parliamentary Assembly on the BSEC activities and the projects requiring direct involvement of the legislative bodies of the PABSEC Member States.
6. The PABSEC and the BSEC secretariats shall exchange information on the PABSEC and the BSEC activities and advise each other of their respective progress of work with a view to enhancing coordination of their activities and measures to be taken.

Article 33 – Relations between the Assembly and the National Parliaments

1. National delegations shall appoint delegation secretaries who shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Assembly bodies and its committees.
2. Delegation secretaries shall assist the Secretary General in maintaining effective administrative links between the Assembly and the respective parliaments.
3. National Delegations shall forward their contributions for preparation of the documents to the International Secretariat two months ahead of the meeting date.
4. National delegations shall take measures at the national level for securing implementation of the Assembly resolutions.
5. In the agenda of the Assembly periodically shall be included the issue on measures taken and results achieved after consideration of the decisions and documents of the Assembly at the parliaments of the member states.

Article 34 - PABSEC Partners

Following the decision taken at the Session of the Assembly by majority of delegations, PABSEC establishes partnership relations with the organizations that are interested in Black Sea issues and PABSEC activities, as well as state their will to participate in development of projects in the Region. These organizations may be granted the status of a “PABSEC Partner”. The PABSEC Partner status shall be terminated or suspended in accordance with the decision of the Assembly or upon the request of the partner.

Article 35– Observers

1. The parliaments of the states having observer status in the BSEC may be granted observer status in the Assembly with the approval of the Standing Committee endorsed by the General Assembly.

The following parliaments were granted the observer status with the PABSEC: the People’s Assembly of Egypt, Knesset of the State of Israel, National Council of the Slovak Republic, German Bundestag, Senate of the French Republic, National Assembly of the French Republic, Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of Belarus, House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belarus.

2. The observer status of a national parliament shall be terminated or suspended in accordance with its status with the BSEC or upon the request of the national parliament.
3. The following parliamentary organisations were granted the observer status with the PABSEC: the European Parliament (EP), the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Parliamentary Assembly of Mediterranean (PAM), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe (PA OSCE), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia (PAUBR), Parliamentary Dimension of the Central European Initiative (PD CEI), Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy, Parliamentary Union of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference Member States (PUIC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic-Speaking Countries (TURKPA), Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC), Parliamentary Assembly of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP PA), Parliamentary Network on the World Bank (PNWB).
4. Observers shall have the right to address PABSEC meetings and to participate in debates but not to vote.
5. With the consent of the Standing Committee endorsed by the General Assembly inter-parliamentary organisations requesting observer status in the PABSEC may be granted the observer status upon their application.
6. Applications shall be examined on a case-by-case basis in view of readiness of the applicants to make a practical and valuable contribution to the work of the Assembly.
7. The observer status of an inter-parliamentary organisation or assembly may be terminated or suspended at its request.

Article 36 – Guests

1. Representatives of parliaments, governments, non-governmental organisations and business circles may be invited to the committee meetings and the General Assembly by the Chairmen of the Committees and the President of the Assembly. They may take the floor with the consent of the chair of the sitting.
2. The President of the Assembly and the Chairmen of the Committees shall forward to the International Secretariat the tentative list of the invited guests 45 days prior to the date of the meeting. The International Secretariat shall forward the list of the invited guests to the delegations not later than 40 days prior to the date of the meeting. During 10 days

and not later than 30 days prior to the date of the meeting national delegations shall forward to the International Secretariat their objections. The International Secretariat shall forward the list, consented with the national delegations, to the host country 25 days prior to the date of the meeting.

3. Upon the proposal of the national delegations the representatives of business community of the BSEC countries who are interested in the Black Sea region may take part in the meetings of the General Assembly and the PABSEC committees. They will cover all the expenses related to their participation in the PABSEC gatherings. The PABSEC also encourages any voluntary contributions from these participants. In addition, the PABSEC can promote the participation of businessmen in the meetings of the parliamentary assemblies in which the PABSEC has the observer status.

PART VIII – Admission of New Members

Article 37 – Admission of New Members

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation shall be open to new members.
2. The parliament of any country wishing to become a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation shall make a written application for membership to the Bureau of the Assembly on the condition that its country has become a member of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.
3. New membership applications shall be submitted by the Standing Committee for the approval of the General Assembly.

PART IX – Revision of the Rules of Procedure

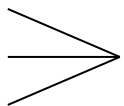
Article 38 – Revision of the Rules of Procedure

1. Amendments to the Rules of Procedure must be proposed by the national delegations of at least 3 different countries.
2. The decision on introducing changes in the Rules of Procedure shall be taken by the Standing Committee.
3. The Standing Committee shall instruct the Legal and Political Affairs Committee to consider the amendments to the PABSEC Rules of Procedure. The Legal and Political Affairs Committee shall set up a Working Group on the Rules of Procedure, which shall discuss the amendments and take decision by consensus. The amendments approved by the Working Group shall be considered by the Legal and Political Affairs Committee and shall be forwarded to the Standing Committee.
4. Amendments shall enter into force following their adoption by the Standing Committee.

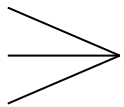
Appendix I

COMPOSITION OF THE ASSEMBLY BASED ON THE DEMOGRAPHIC CRITERIA OF THE MEMBER STATES

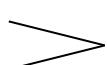
1st Group : Between 1 and 5 millions

Albania	- 3.3 millions		4	members	12
Armenia	- 3.3 millions				
Moldova	- 4.4 millions				

2nd Group : Between 5 and 10 millions

Georgia	- 5.5 millions		5 (4+1)	members	15
Azerbaijan	- 7.1 millions				
Bulgaria	- 8.6 millions				


3rd Group : Between 10 and 20 millions

Greece	-10.3 millions		6 (4+2)	members	12
Serbia	-10.8 millions				

4th Group : Between 20 and 50 millions

Romania	- 23 millions	-	7 (4+3)	members	7
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5th Group : Between 50 and 100 millions

Ukraine	- 51.9 millions		9 (4+5)	members	18
Turkey	- 56.5 millions				

6th Group : 100 millions and over

Russian Federation	- 148.3 millions	-	12 (4+8)	members	12
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TOTAL	76
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Appendix II

NUMBER OF SEATS IN THE COMMITTEES OF THE MEMBER STATES

	Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee	Legal and Political Affairs Committee	Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee
ALBANIA	1	2	1
ARMENIA	2	1	1
AZERBAIJAN	1	2	2
BULGARIA	2	2	1
GEORGIA	2	2	1
GREECE	2	2	2
MOLDOVA	2	1	1
ROMANIA	3	2	2
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	4	4	4
SERBIA	2	2	2
TURKEY	3	3	3
UKRAINE	3	3	3
TOTAL	27	26	23