



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



SPECIAL CO-ORDINATOR OF THE
STABILITY PACT
FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE CHAIR
OF THE PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON SECURITY
IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE
BUCHAREST, 6-7 June 2002**

On 6-7 June 2002 57 Parliamentarians from 22 countries met in Bucharest. The Parliamentary Conference on Security in South Eastern Europe was held under the auspices of the Tri-parliamentary Troika, composed of the OSCE PA, The Council of Europe PA and the European Parliament and it was hosted by the Romanian Parliament. At present the OSCE PA has the Presidency of the Troika.

The participants of the Conference concluded that possibilities provided by the Stability Pact have not been utilized in full. Therefore it is important that Parliamentarians shall promote the Pact and the use of its mechanisms in their National Parliaments, Governments and International Institutions. A more active role of the European Commission would be particularly welcome.

The acceptance and recognition of the present borders and territorial integrity of the existing States in the region is a prerequisite for stability and development. Any attempts to question the present borders must be rejected categorically.

When discussing the cultural aspects of security in South Eastern Europe, the need for an intercultural dialogue and promotion of tolerance was emphasized. A broader approach to culture needs to be developed.

In this respect education is of crucial importance. The misuse of old and politically motivated history books must be prevented. Historians and authorities, responsible for education, of different countries need to cooperate in this matter and produce new books to be used in education on different levels to provide scientifically accurate information and to promote understanding of the historic background of the region as well as knowledge and respect for other nations and their culture. National Parliaments, international institutions and the European Union in particular, should allocate more resources for education and for free media.

Countries of the South Eastern Europe should implement the "Programme of the Council of Europe on education for democratic citizenship, based on the rights and responsibilities of the citizen".



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Stability Pact should also consider, in cooperation with all partners, promoting the implementation of exchange programmes similar to those already existing in the EU.

The role and responsibilities of the media was also discussed.

The security depends on stability and prosperity, as well as trust. When dealing with economic aspects of security, we must address all these aspects in order to ensure long-term approach.

Much of the success of reform, economic development and regional stability will depend on the strengthening of institutions, good governance and the rooting out of corruption. Without success in the fight against corruption there will be few results in economic progress. Corruption works against the very trust people have in the state and its institutions.

Parliamentarians should encourage legislation that seeks to ensure that their policy measures do not lead to intolerable social costs and impacts on the quality of life. To this end, the fight against poverty and social exclusion should go hand-in-hand with the fight for sustainable long-term development.

When discussing the political aspects of security, the parliamentarians, in particular, emphasized the urgency of combating organized crime.

Organized crime has reached dimensions which seriously hamper peace and stability, economic progress and the functioning of the rule of law. Also in these matters a comprehensive approach is necessary. At the same time a root-cause approach is also needed.

One of the focal points of security is combating organized crime and its links to international terrorism. Fighting terrorism may sometimes require military means, but it always requires regional cooperation in such areas as law enforcement, exchange of information and border controls. In the longer run strengthening of civic society, based on the respect of human rights and the rule of law is essential. The Parliaments should ensure the democratic control of the agencies involved in the fight against terrorism and organized crime and ensure that this fight does not weaken, but rather strengthen, the respect of human rights of citizens.

Parliamentarians expressed their support to the Transborder Crime Center in Bucharest. They invited all governments to cooperate with the Center. They also invited the European Commission to examine the possibility for the EU structures to co-operate with the Center and to support it financially.



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Trafficking in human beings was discussed as a particularly serious and inhuman form of organized crime. In this respect special attention must be given to the protection of children. In this area it was emphasized that trafficked persons, mostly young women, need to be treated as victims of crime. They should be supported, not punished. In most cases they should not be simply returned to their countries of origin. The authorities should find ways to help them, which in many cases would require a possibility to remain at least for some time in the countries where they have been trafficked.

It is not enough to ask for the South Eastern European countries to approach their problems from the perspective of regional cooperation, but the European Union itself should promote coherent and integrative vision on the region.

Association and Stabilization agreements should be signed with all countries which are not yet candidates for membership in the EU, namely Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina and Yugoslavia. Consequently all countries in the region will be included into European structured as a unique and coherent process and will be treated on equal basis.

The Conference also discussed the contribution of the Parliamentarians to the Stability Pact process. Various forms need to be utilized and developed. Similar parliamentary conferences, like the present one, should be organized twice a year. The next one will be organized in the fall of 2002 during the CE PA Presidency of the Parliamentary Troika.

Each Institution of the Troika should nominate their representatives to the proper bodies of the Stability Pact, such as the Working Table and the Regional Table. They should also have in their own institutions proper bodies to take the responsibility of their contribution to the Stability Pact.

Two other proposals were also made for consideration:

- Each National Parliament should consider establishing a special committee to deal with issues concerning the Stability Pact.
- Countries of the South Eastern Europe could consider establishing their regional structures. In this respect they could benefit from the experience of other regions in Europe, such as the Nordic countries, Benelux or Central European initiative. In such structure the parliamentarians should play an important role and have the opportunity to interact with the governments of the Region.

The Parliamentary Conference on Security in South Eastern Europe was open to the media.

Several Institutions, involved in the promotion of the Stability Pact, were invited and participated at the Conference. The Conference calls upon everyone, those institutions and the media in particular, to promote the ideas, expressed in these conclusions.