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REPORT
of the South-East European Cooperation Process Parliamentary
Dimension Working Group for the Inaugural Session of the SEECP
Parliamentary Assembly

The host country took over the Chairmanship-in-Office of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) as agreed during the meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs held on the 31st of May 2013, in Ohrid.

In compliance with the Decision by the Parliament of the country holding the Chairmanship-in-Office, Mr Valeriu Ștefan Zgonea was designated as Chairman-in-Office of the Parliamentary Dimension (PD) of the SEECP on the 18th of June 2013.

The activities supported by the Chairmanship-in-Office were based on the following major aspects arising from the documents adopted during the 10th Conference of the SEECP Presidents of Parliaments held on the 26th-28th of May 2013 in Ohrid:

- the agreement of the Speakers that the Inaugural Session of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly is going to be held in Bucharest, in the framework of the next SEECP Chairmanship-in-Office;
- the documents needed for this Session shall be finalized during the next Chairmanship-in-Office of the SEECP PD;
- until the 1st November 2013 each SEECP national parliament shall send to the next Chairmanship-in-Office the names of the 3 to 5 members of their delegation to the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly and their distribution to the three committees;
- the Working Group will continue its work for the preparation of the documents needed to finalize the institutionalization of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly.

Mr Valeriu Ștefan Zgonea sent, on the 26th of June 2013, a letter to the Speakers of Parliaments of the SEECP participating states informing them about the main commitments, priorities and envisaged activities during the one-year Chairmanship-in-Office of the SEECP PD.

Starting upon this moment, the Chairmanship-in-Office carried out many activities - including several correspondences, various bilateral meetings with other speakers of the SEECP national parliaments, a meeting with

the high representatives of all diplomatic missions of the SEECP participating states in Bucharest - in order to encourage the national parliaments to send the names of the members of their delegations to the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly and at the same time to inform them about the activities of the Chairmanship-in-Office.

On the 2nd of September 2013 the Standing Bureaux of the Chamber of Deputies and of the Senate of the country holding the Chairmanship-in-Office, designated Mrs Gabriela-Maria Podașcă as Chairperson of the SEECP PD Working Group.

With the aim to support the activities of the Working Group during the preparation of the documents needed to finalize the institutionalization process of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly, the Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation in South East Europe (RSPCSEE) organized a Parliamentary Seminar with the topic: "Legal Status and Political Functions of Interparliamentary Organizations" on 13-15 October in Sofia. In order to help with clarifications for the Working Group, the organizers consulted the Chairmanship-in-Office in selecting a theme of the Seminar. The Seminar was opened to all Working Group members and national coordinators as well as to the RCC, high representatives in Sofia of the SEECP participating states and to the academic community and media.

During this one year mandate, RSPCSEE has managed - by consulting the Chairmanship-in-Office - all invitations from other parliamentary organizations received for the SEECP PD.

Starting with the 17th of September 2013 the invitation and the practical documents, as well as the working documents for the call for amendments and proposals related to the 11th Working Group meeting were distributed to the participants. The main documents envisaged for being amended had been taken over during June-August 2013 from the previous Chairmanship-in-Office.

On the 8th of November 2013 an aggregate feedback with all amendments and proposals resulted from this call was distributed to the Working Group participants.

The Working Group held its 11th meeting, on the 15th-16th of November 2013, in Bucharest within the premises of the Palace of Parliament.

In the second part of December 2013, the Chairmanship-in-Office announced all national parliaments of the SEECP participating states the scheduled dates for the next Working Group meeting and for the Inaugural Session of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly. At the same time, a general announcement concerning the date for the Inaugural Session was sent to a series of international organizations.

Starting with the 31st of January 2014 the invitation and the practical documents, as well as the working documents for the call for amendments and proposals related to the 12th Working Group meeting

were distributed to the participants. In this respect the Chairmanship-in-Office drafted the following main documents: the Declaration on the inauguration, the Working Group Report and the draft Work Programme 2014/2015.

Starting with the 3rd of March 2014 an aggregate feedback with all amendments and proposals resulted from this call was distributed to the Working Group participants.

The Working Group held its 12th meeting on the 15th-16th of March 2014 in Bucharest within the premises of the Palace of Parliament.

During the two meetings held under the current Chairmanship-in-Office of the SEECP Parliamentary Dimension, the Working Group adopted the following documents to be submitted for consideration to the Inaugural Session of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly:

- the draft Rules of Procedures, as the basic document that, once adopted, can guarantee a certain degree of institutionalization for the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly. During this process this document was aligned with the provisions of the documents adopted by the Speakers in Ohrid;
- the draft Declaration on the inauguration of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly;
- the draft Work Programme of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly for the term 2014/2015;
- the present Working Group Report.

In addition, the current Chairmanship-in-Office conducted procedures that enabled technical correlations to the above mentioned documents to be tacitly agreed by the Working Group. These technical correlations have been integrated afterwards into the related consolidated versions of these documents.

During its mentioned meetings the Group also decided on the following main aspects:

- agreed on special guests to be invited at the Inaugural Session, including a representative of Pristina;
- approved the list proposed by the current Chairmanship-in-Office with regional and international organizations to be invited at the Inaugural Session;
- adopted the following proposals to be submitted at the Inaugural Session of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly:
 - o to establish an Ad hoc Working Group of the Parliamentary Assembly, based on the present provisions of the Rules of Procedure with the mandate of finalizing the work on the issues of Secretariat and budget, in particular the draft Rules of the Secretariat, as well as on other improvements to the present Rules of Procedures. To this respect, the Ad hoc Working Group shall consider all amendments received with regard to the draft Rules of the Secretariat and to the possible

Compromise Model of the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly Secretariat.

- o this Ad hoc Working Group shall report to the next Session and in this respect shall forward its Report to the President of the Assembly at least 30 days prior to the next Session.
- o the composition of this Ad hoc Working Group to consider, as much as possible, the Assembly's members that took part in SEECP PD Working Group.