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The fight against harm to the environment in the Black Sea

Report
Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs
Rapporteur: Mr Laurenţiu MIRONESCU, Romania

Summary

The Black Sea, formerly a highly productive fishing ground, is now on the brink of an ecological disaster due to overfishing, eutrophication and discharge of toxic sub- stances into its waters. The main sources of pollution are the frequently contaminated rivers that flow into the Black Sea and the activities of seaside cities, ports and coastal industry.

The Parliamentary Assembly considers that the Council of Europe must take steps to bring about an immediate and significant improvement in the region's environmental situation and calls on the states concerned to take the necessary measures as soon as possible. It also draws attention to the need to develop co-operation at the regional level and, in this connection, supports the cre- ation of a Black Sea euroregion.

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A. Draft recommendation

1. The Black Sea is an area of crucial importance for Europe, considering its geographical location and its socio- economic, cultural and environmental attributes. In fact, it is located at the frontiers of both geographical Europe (Council of Europe) and the European Union and repre- sents a bridge between different cultures and religions.

2. The Black Sea was once one of Europe's most boun- tiful fisheries. Industrialisation and the regional popula- tion explosion have caused overfishing, eutrophication and the flow of chemical and radioactive poisons into the sea. Now this body of water, once an important source of food and recreation, is in danger of becoming an unprece- dented ecological disaster.

3. This is why co-operation can and must be increased among the riparian states at the national, regional and local levels to combat harm to the environment and improve the well-being of the inhabitants of these countries.

4. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls that there are already a number of co-operation structures in the Black Sea region, some of them dealing with fields extending far beyond that of the environment. At the governmental level we might mention the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), which also has a parliamentary dimension: the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), the Energy Community of South- East Europe, the Black Sea Regional Energy Centre (BSREC), the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution (Black Sea Commission), etc., and at the regional level the Balkan and Black Sea Regional Commission, whose objective is to encourage dialogue and co-operation between sub-state spheres of government.

5. The Assembly regrets however that the Bucharest Declaration, signed in 1985 by the countries through which the Danube flows, is geared to measuring and controlling the level of pollution in this waterway and has had no practical impact, despite its reinforcement in 1994.

6. The Assembly recalls that the six states bordering the Black Sea (Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russian Feder- ation, Turkey and Ukraine) have signed and ratified the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution (Bucharest, 1992), thus providing the frame- work for more effective monitoring of pollution, and the restoration and conservation of the marine resources.

7. The Assembly recalls also that the European Union is currently developing an initiative known as the "Black Sea Synergy" as part of its European Neighbourhood Policy. This initiative concerns namely the environment, maritime policy and fisheries and mainly relies on trans- frontier co-operation.

8. The Assembly notes that the sources of the Black Sea's environmental problems are multiple. The rivers that drain into the Black Sea bring with them heavy metals, synthetic organic compounds, oil, nutrients, untreated sewage and radionuclides from Chernobyl. The dams on these rivers, as well as the need for freshwater for agricul- ture and domestic purposes, have drastically reduced the amount of freshwater flowing into the sea, which com- pounds the existing problems and alters the sea's salinity. Seaside cities are an additional source of untreated sewage, while their ports are a large source of both oil pollution and the importation of non-native species. Overexploita- tion of the Black Sea's fisheries has led to the commercial extinction of 21 of the sea's 26 species of fish.

9. The Assembly notes that the Danube River alone discharges up to 280 tonnes of cadmium, 60 tonnes of mercury, 900 tonnes of copper, 4 500 tonnes of lead, 6 000 tonnes of zinc, 1 000 tonnes of chromium and 50 000 tonnes of oil annually. The other main rivers that flow into the Black Sea (the Dniepr, Dniestr, Don, Kuban, Yuzhnyy and Belaya) deposit another 87 tonnes of cad- mium, 1 500 tonnes of copper, 825 tonnes of lead and 2 600 tonnes of zinc annually. These rivers are also the source of huge amounts of nitrates and phosphorus, which cause increased algal and plankton blooms, reduction of dissolved oxygen concentrations and severe reductions in fish stocks, leading to changes in the food chain.

10. The Assembly therefore considers that the Council of Europe must take steps to reinforce co-operation in the Black Sea region at the national, local and regional levels, given that all the riparian countries are Council of Europe member states.

11. In this connection, it welcomes the initiative of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to set up a new euroregion in the Black Sea, following the example of the Adriatic Sea euroregion. Such a body would promote co-operation among the Black Sea countries at the local and regional levels, help foster sustainable development, reinforce local authorities' management capacities and encourage exchanges of experience among local and regional authorities in order to implement joint projects, etc.

12. The Assembly consequently requests the Committee of Ministers to invite the relevant member states of the Council of Europe to:

12.1. encourage, and if possible to help by financial means, the towns on the shores of the Black Sea to mod- ernise their sewage systems;

12.2. encourage Black Sea ports to modernise their har- bour installations in order to drastically reduce oil pollu- tion from these installations;

12.3. improve co-operation and integration in the field of maritime surveillance with a view to improving pollution control on the main maritime routes;

12.4. ensure drastic reductions in the level of pollution of the rivers draining into the Black Sea;

12.5. refrain from activities which endanger the environ- ment of the protected spaces around the Black Sea and cease the ongoing ones, in particular the so-called “Danube-Black Sea Navigation Route Project” in the Ukrainian part of the Danube Delta;

12.6. promote healthy tourism around the Black Sea, with full respect for the natural heritage;

12.7. encourage increased use of renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and tidal energies in the Black Sea region;

12.8. support local authorities in their efforts at marine management in accordance with the principle of sustain- able development, as well as in their transfrontier co- operation projects;

12.9. improve supervision of the fishing industry and organise concerted action to help rebuild depleted fishing stocks;

12.10. reinforce implementation of environmental agree- ments in the region and introduce mandatory environmen- tal assessments for all regional projects;

12.11. instigate any necessary legislative reforms to ensure productive co-operation at the regional level and therefore actively promote the creation of a Black Sea euroregion.

B. Explanatory memorandum, by Mr Laurenţiu Mironescu

1. Brief description of the Black Sea region and key issues

1. The Black Sea is an area of crucial importance for Europe, considering its geographical location, its socio- economic, cultural and environmental attributes: it is located at the frontiers of both geographical Europe (Council of Europe) and the European Union and repre- sents a bridge between different cultures and religions. Co-operation can and should be increased both among the countries and among the local and regional authorities around the Black Sea, in order to improve the well-being of the inhabitants of the region, in particular from the environmental point of view, but also to increase stability and contribute to general economic growth.

1.1. General information on the region

2. The Black Sea is the world's largest land-locked and anoxic sea. It has a surface area of 461000 square kilome- tres and its average depth is of 1 240 metres, but about 25% is less than 200 metres deep. It is linked to the Mediterranean by the Dardanelles, which is a very shal- low and very narrow strait.

3. The surface water temperature in the Black Sea varies seasonally and geographically between 0°C and 25°C, while the deep water (1000 metres) remains at a constant 9°C. The water below 150 metres in depth contains no oxygen and contains high concentrations of hydrogen sulphide (H2S).

4. The Black Sea was once one of the most bountiful fish- eries, easily supporting the many civilisations that grew up on its shores. Industrialisation and regional population explosion have caused overfishing, eutrophication (the introduction of excessive nutrients into a body of water, encouraging increased algal growth and further decreasing the concentration of dissolved oxygen in the water) and the flow of chemical and radioactive poisons into the sea. Now this body of water, once an important source of food and recreation, is in danger of becoming a toxic and nearly life- less place, an ecological disaster with few peers.

1.2. Environmental problems

5. The sources of the Black Sea's problems are myriad. The rivers that drain into the Black Sea bring with them heavy metals, synthetic organic compounds, oil, nutrients, untreated sewage and radionuclides from Chernobyl. The dams on these rivers, as well as the need for freshwater for agriculture and domestic purposes, have drastically reduced the amount of freshwater flowing into the sea, which compounds the existing problems and alters the sea's salinity. Seaside cities are an additional source of untreated sewage, while their ports are a large source of both oil pollution and the importation of non-native species. Overexploitation of the Black Sea's fisheries has led to the commercial extinction of 21 of 26 species of fish.

6. The Danube River alone spews up to 280 tonnes of cadmium, 60 tonnes of mercury, 900 tonnes of copper, 4 500 tonnes of lead, 6 000 tonnes of zinc, 1 000 tonnes of chromium and 50 000 tonnes of oil annually. The other main rivers that feed into the Black Sea (the Dniepr, Dniestr, Don, Kuban, Yuzhnyy and Belaya) deposit another 87 tonnes of cadmium, 1 500 tonnes of copper, 825 tonnes of lead and 2 600 tonnes of zinc annually. These rivers are also the source of huge amounts of nitrates and phosphorus, which are the cause of increased algal and plankton blooms, reduction of dissolved oxy- gen concentrations and severe reductions in the fishery populations leading to changes in the food chain.

7. The inextricable link between the tributary rivers and the Black Sea should also be seen from the standpoint of the state of the environment at the mouths of the tributar- ies. Of particular concern is the Ukrainian project of building a deep-sea canal between the Danube and the Black Sea on the Kilia and the Bystroe arms of the river, in the heart of the UNESCO-protected Danube Delta. The project entails a likely significant transboundary impact, as revealed by the 2006 report of the International Inquiry Commission set up under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context. The Ukrainian project is being developed in non- compliance with numerous international norms, despite repeated calls from different international organisations. The Parliamentary Assembly has already expressed its concern over this situation in Resolution 1444 (2005) on the protection of European deltas, urging Ukraine, *inter alia*, "to stop immediately the work on the construction of the deep water navigation canal until an international environmental impact assessment has been conducted and to implement its conclusions", and to "observe the rec- ommendations of the relevant international organisa- tions", demands which have not been fulfilled.

8. The coastal cities and ports ringing the sea are also a huge source of pollution with some cities like Odessa pumping raw sewage directly into the sea. The largest port on the Black Sea, Sevastopol Bay, has oil concentrations 100 times higher than the maximum permissible concen- tration that the Russian Federation water standards allow.

9. Extreme overfishing has led to the commercial extinction of 21 fish species, including pike, perch, bonito and bluefish which were quite abundant as recently as 1970. The remaining species are in danger from not only ecological issues, but also from the persisting inadequate fishing policy.

1.3. Actions taken to save the Black Sea

10. While the destruction of the Black Sea has not been at all ignored by those countries bordering it, only limited concerted action had been taken previous to the early 1990s and the ecological disaster was ignored internation- ally until recently. All is not lost, however, as there are now many projects in action to save the Black Sea.

11. As early as 1959, Bulgaria, Romania and the Soviet Union implemented the Convention concerning Fishing in the Black Sea, but not all of the Black Sea nations signed it. In 1985 the countries crossed by the Danube signed the Bucharest Declaration in an effort to measure and control the level of pollution in that waterway, but due to economic and political restraints it has obviously not been as successful as hoped, although the document was strengthened in 1994. In 1992, the six Black Sea countries signed a convention for the protection of the Black Sea from pollution, which provided the framework for more effective monitoring of pollution and the restora- tion and conservation of the marine resources.

12. In 1993, the six Black Sea nations signed the Black Sea Environmental Programme (BSEP). Sponsors for this organisation include the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Global Environment Facility and the European Commission as well as the governments of France, Austria, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Japan. The BSEP used the initial funding to comprehen- sively study, understand and evaluate the nature and causes of the destruction.

13. There is much that needs to be done. Cities and ports need funding to upgrade harbour facilities and sewers. All the nations within the Black Sea drainage region must rigorously monitor and control industrial and agricultural waste. This is very expensive for these nations, some of which are struggling economically. Also, the fishing industry needs to be brought under control. Deepening the co-operation among all actors involved, at national and regional level, would contribute both to increase aware- ness on these issues in the region and possibly improve the environmental situation.

2. Existing co-operation initiatives and tools

14. Co-operation initiatives in the Black Sea region already exist or are currently under development. Among them can be mentioned the following.

2.1. The Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

15. In 1992, 11 countries (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine) signed in Istanbul the Summit Declaration and the Bosphorus Statement giving birth to the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

16. The BSEC came into existence as a unique and prom- ising model of a multilateral political and economic initia- tive aimed at fostering interaction and harmony among the member states, as well as to ensure peace, stability and prosperity encouraging friendly and good-neighbourly relations in the Black Sea region. Its headquarters are in Turkey, in Istanbul.

17. According to its charter, the BSEC creates a frame- work for co-operation in the following fields: trade and economic development; banking and finance; communi- cations; energy; transport; agriculture and agro-industry; health care and pharmaceutics; environmental protection; tourism; science and technology; exchange of statistical data and economic information; collaboration between customs and other border authorities; human contacts; combating organised crime, illicit trafficking of drugs, weapons and radioactive materials, all acts of terrorism and illegal migration and similar.

18. With the entry into force of its charter in 1999, the BSEC acquired international legal identity and was trans- formed into a fully-fledged regional economic organisation: the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

19. As far as environment protection is concerned, the BSEC established an Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection, as a general frame- work to promote co-operation among the BSEC member countries. Among the main objectives of the plan are to sustain the efforts of each country in achieving a clean and healthy environment and to contribute to the improve- ment of the quality of life in the region, to promote the integration of the protection of the environment into the economic and social national policies, and to preserve and manage the region's natural resources in line with the principles of sustainable development.

20. The related bodies and affiliated centres to the BSEC are: the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Eco- nomic Cooperation (PABSEC), the BSEC Business Council, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank, the International Centre for Black Sea Studies and the BSEC Coordination Center for the Exchange of Statistical Data and Economic Information.

2.2. The Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (the Black Sea Commission)

21. Acting on the mandate of the countries bordering the Black Sea (Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine) which in 1992 signed and ratified the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution, the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (the Black Sea Commission) implements the provisions of the conven- tion and the Strategic Action Plan for the Rehabilitation and Protection of the Black Sea.

22. Its main challenges are combating pollution from land-based sources and maritime transport, achieving sus- tainable management of marine living resources and pur- suing sustainable human development.

23. The secretariat of the commission is also located in Turkey, in Istanbul.

2.3. The Energy Community in South-East Europe

24. In the field of energy, countries in South-Eastern Europe, including Black Sea riparian ones, have common goals such as, for example, to improve overall energy con- servation and efficiency and to reduce an excessively high energy intensity of production compared to international standards. The current fragmentation of energy supply might be overcome through co-operation among the var- ious entities concerned and through physical connection of the networks. A regional approach to energy supply, therefore, would offer significant advantages both in terms of improved utilisation of existing supply and pro- duction capacities. Major steps have already been taken over the last couple of years towards achieving these objectives in both the electricity and natural gas sectors.

25. The Treaty establishing the Energy Community was signed in Athens on 25 October 2005. The European Union and nine partners of South-Eastern Europe created the legal framework for an integrated energy market, whose devel- opment is co-ordinated by the European Commission and the Energy Community secretariat (established in Vienna). The treaty entered into force on 1 July 2006.

26. Among its major commitments are:

– to create a regionally integrated energy market for electricity and natural gas networks and to integrate that market into the wider EU market;

– to establish common rules for generation, transmis- sion and distribution of electricity;

– to similarly establish common rules for the transmis- sion, distribution, supply and storage of natural gas;

– to establish state level national energy authorities, regulators and transmission system operators;

– to establish compatible state and regional electricity and natural gas market action plans;

– to establish embryonic regional level dispute resolu- tion mechanisms;

– to open the markets in line with EU commitments but with a suitable transition period.

2.4. The Black Sea Regional Energy Centre (BSREC)

27. Another co-operation structure devoted to energy co- operation in the Black Sea region is the Black Sea Regional Energy Centre (BSREC), which was established in 1994 at the joint initiative of the European Commission under its SYNERGY programme and 11 countries of the Black Sea region. Currently, the

BSREC has as members Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. Its activities are aimed at the implementation of the European Union *acquis* and har- monisation of the energy policy of the Black Sea region countries with the EU.

28. Among the main objectives of the BSREC are:

– facilitating the implementation of a – long/medium – term integrated strategy of security of supply and sustain- able development;

– promoting market reform, with reference to EU direc- tives on electricity and gas and to the European Energy Charter;

– encouraging investment and funding opportunities in the energy sector of the Black Sea region;

– providing co-ordination services for international and bilaterally funded projects addressing the individual coun- tries and the region;

– easing the access of foreign and international institu- tions and companies to the energy sectors of Black Sea region countries.

2.5. University co-operation

29. In 1992, a Romanian academic group took the initia- tive to set up the Black Sea University Foundation, a non- political and non-profit organisation. Since then, its activity has focused on training young researchers, econ- omists, managers, teachers or professionals through post- graduate summer courses.

30. The foundation has set up a network of Black Sea universities, drawing inspiration from its exchanges with the Baltic Sea University (Uppsala) and the University of the Mediterranean Sea (Rome).

31. The Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) num- bers at present more than 100 universities. It seeks, among others, to develop a specialised network of resources, pro- grammes and projects dealing with issues such as envi- ronmental protection.

2.6. Interregional co-operation: the Balkan and Black Sea Regional Commission

32. The Balkan and Black Sea Regional Commission cur- rently brings together 25 regions from Greece, Turkey, Romania, Croatia and Ukraine. It has special partnerships with Serbian, Albanian, Bulgarian and Moldovan regions.

33. The objective of the Balkan and Black Sea Regional Commission is to encourage dialogue and co- operation between sub-state spheres of government. The aim is to constitute a lasting institutional framework to support the integration of these areas and the focus of the commis- sions’ activity is put on strengthening inter-regional co- operation and developing joint projects in sectors such as transport, the environment and economic development.

34. The secretariat of the commission is located in Kavala (Greece).

3. A Black Sea euroregion

35. All the Black Sea riparian countries are members of the Council of Europe, whereas only two of them (Bulgaria and Romania) are members of the European Union. Therefore, while taking into account the existing co-operation structures, the Council of Europe is in a posi- tion to facilitate strengthened co-operation at both national and regional level.

36. In 2006, the Congress of Local and Regional Author- ities of the Council of Europe proposed the creation of a new euroregion in the Black Sea, following the example of the Adriatic Sea euroregion which has been working successfully since June 2006. The latter also was an ini- tiative of the Congress, supported by the Assembly in Resolution 1446 (2005) on co-operation and sustainable development in the Adriatic Basin.

37. The Congress has organised three important confer- ences on this issue: in Constanţa (Romania) in March 2006, in Samsun (Turkey) in November 2006 and in Odessa (Ukraine) in June 2007. They were also attended by representatives of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs of the Council of Europe, which supports this new initiative of the Congress to create a Black Sea euroregion.

38. The conference in Constanţa stressed the significant contribution of the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communi- ties or Authorities (Madrid, 1980) to the reinforcement of regional co-operation in Europe and reaffirmed the link existing between transnational regional co-operation and the democratic stability and sustainable development of the regions concerned. It also stressed that the natural or conventional borders should not prevent the development of exchanges, bonds and dialogue among the peoples and civilisations in the Black Sea area, aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence in multi-ethnic societies and the value of multiculturalism.

39. The conference asked the Congress to contribute to the creation of a euroregion along the lines of the Adriatic euroregion, providing the riparian countries of the Black Sea with an instrument establishing an effective dialogue and co-operation among the local and regional authori- ties, as well as concerted and integrated approaches to the region's problems. It also identified the aims to be con- sidered for the Black Sea euroregion project:

– promoting co-operation among the Black Sea coun- tries at local and regional level;

– consolidating democratic stability and promoting good governance;

– contributing to the promotion of sustainable develop- ment, including improved social and economic cohesion;

– enhancing the development of mutual relations between residents and institutions in this area, as a pre-condition for better knowledge, understanding and co- operation;

– making better use of regional resources to strengthen local authorities' management skills;

– fostering an effective exchange of experience in iden- tifying sustainable financial resources for common proj- ects of local and regional authorities, including assistance programmes developed by the EU;

– contributing to the promotion of the exercise of citi- zens' rights to participate in the public administration at local level.

40. It finally took note of Romania's offer to support the setting up of a permanent secretariat of the future Black- Sea euroregion.

41. The next conference, held in Samsun in November 2006, focused on the protection of the environment, bio- diversity and fishing for safeguarding the sustainability of the fragile ecosystem of the sea and of the principal rivers of the basin and debated, among other issues, investment for renewable energy production, the protec- tion of the sea and of the rivers of the basin through the prevention of oil-spills and of the discharge of waste water, the management of maritime transport risks, the integrated management of coastal areas, the promotion of sustainable tourism, the development of intercultural and social cohesion co-operation initiatives, migration man- agement, the establishment of good governance practices for consolidating democratic stability, the efficient use of regional resources for helping local authorities to dis- charge their management duties and the need for effec- tive exchange of information in order to find financial resources for co-operation projects.

42. The conference in Samsun underlined that the Black Sea Basin is an area where national and international organisations – namely, the BSEC and the PABSEC – intervene to foster economic co-operation but stressed that, nevertheless, there is still a strong need to implement at local and regional level the initiatives conceived there. Globalisation being a phenomenon that can be tackled by increasing interregional co-operation initiatives, local and regional authorities could contribute not only to economic co-operation, but also to multilateral initiatives in the environmental, social and cultural sectors. It also showed high appreciation for the ongoing co-operation established with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for the success of the initiative.

43. In June 2007 a third conference was held in Odessa (Ukraine). It stressed the usefulness of close interaction of the euroregion with the BSEC in view of the shared common goal, which is meeting the practical needs of the populations of the Black Sea region. The Odessa confer- ence invited all potential partners of the euroregion to con- tribute to the definition of an adequate statutory framework for the future euroregion's structure, taking into account the different levels of local and regional gov- ernments while respecting the institutional and legal framework of the countries concerned. It asked the Congress to co-ordinate the preparation of a draft statute of the Black Sea euroregion in co-operation mainly with the technical unit already operational within the Constanţa county council.

44. On the basis of the proposals submitted by the Constanta county council and the municipality of Odessa, the Congress drew up a preliminary draft instrument lay- ing down the general principles governing the euroregion. At the preparatory meeting for the Constituent Act of the Black Sea Euroregion (Strasbourg, 18 March 2008), the participants discussed and amended the draft instrument in the light of their own views and the opinion of the Council of Europe jurisconsult. Among other aspects, they asked the authorities in Constanta to bring the amended draft instrument into line with Romanian legislation so as to meet the procedural requirements for the euroregion's legal seat to be in Romania. They also agreed that the euroregion would have three focal points, namely, Constanta, Odessa and Samsun.

45. At the Strasbourg meeting, it was convened that the launching conference of the euroregion would take place in Varna (Bulgaria). Consequently, the Varna conference, scheduled for 26 September 2008, will be the last in the series of the events aiming at establishing the Black Sea euroregion, before its future operationalisation. On this occasion, the signature of the Constituent Act of the Black Sea Euroregion is equally foreseen.

4. Conclusions

46. Creating a Black Sea euroregion, similar to the Adriatic euroregion, could make a significant contribution to stim- ulating the democratic process and in the promotion of good governance and strengthening security and stability in the area. It would contribute to the promotion of sus- tainable development, through improved social and eco- nomic cohesion and co-operation.

47. The Assembly should give its full support to the ini- tiative of the Congress to create such a euroregion and should encourage national parliaments to proceed with all necessary legislative reforms for an efficient co-operation at regional level.

Reporting committee: Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs.

Reference to committee: Doc. 10674 and Reference No. 3219 of 29 May 2006, extended until 29 November 2008.

Draft recommendation adopted unanimously by the com- mittee on 10 June 2008.

Members of the committee: Mr Alan Meale (Chairperson), Mrs Maria Manuela **de Melo** (1st Vice-Chairperson), Mr Juha **Korkeaoja** (2nd Vice-Chairperson), Mr Cezar Florin Preda (alternate: Mr Laurentiu **Mironescu**) (3rd Vice-Chairman), Mr Ruhi Açikgöz, Mr Miloš Aligrudić, Mr Gerolf Annemans, Mr Artashes Avoyan, Mr Alexander Babakov, Mr Tommaso Barbato, Mr Rony Bargetze, Mr Fabio Berardi, Mr Ivan Brajović, Mrs Pikria Chikhradze, Mr Veleriu Cosarciuc, Mr Taulant Dedja, Mr Hubert **Deittert**, Mr Miljenko Dorić, Mr Tomasz **Dudziński**, Mr József Ékes, Mr Savo Erić, Mr Bill **Etherington**, Mr Nigel **Evans**, Mr Iván Farkas, Mrs María Emelina Fernàndez Soriano (alternate: Mr Gabino **Puche**), Mr Adolfo Fernandez Aguilar, Mr György Frunda (alternate: Mr Attila Bela Ladislau **Kelemen**), Ms Eva **Garcia Pastor**, Mr Zahari Georgiev, Mr Konstantinos Gioulekas, Mr Peter Götz, Mr Rafael Huseynov, Mr Jean **Huss**, Mr Fazail Ibrahimli, Mr Ilie **Ilaşcu**, Mr Ivan Ivanov, Mr Bjørn Jacobsen, Mr Gediminas **Jakavonis**, Mrs Danuta Jazłowiecka, Mr Stanisław Kalemba (alternate: Mr Lukasz **Zbonikowski**), Mr Haluk Koç, Mr Gerhard Kurzmann, Mr Dominique Le Mènер, Mr François Loncle, Mr Aleksei Lotman, Mrs Kerstin Lundgren, Mr Theo Maissen, Mr Yevhen **Marmazov**, Mr Bernard **Marquet**, Mr José Mendes Bota, Mr Stefano Morselli, Mr Pasquale **Nessa**, Mr Tomislav Nikolić, Mrs Carina **Ohlsson**, Mr Joe **O'Reilly**, Mr Germinal Peiro, Mr Ivan **Popescu**, Mr Jakob **Presečnik**, Mr Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando, Mrs Adoración Quesada Bravo, Mr Dario Rivolta, Mr René Rouquet, Mrs Anta Rugāte, Mr Fidias Sarikas, Mr Herman Scheer, Mr Andreas Schieder, Mr Steingrimur Sigfusson, Mr Hans Kristian Skibby, Mr Ladislav Skopal, Mr Rainder Steenblock, Mr Valerij Sudarenkov, Mr Vilmos Szabo, Mr Vyacheslav Timchenko, Mr Bruno Tobback (alternate: Mr Daniel **Ducarme**), Mr Nikolay Tulaev, Mr Tomas Ulehla, Mr Mustafa Ünal, Mr Henk van Gerven, Mr Rudolf **Vis**, Mr Harm Evert Waalkens, Mr Hansjörg Walter, Mr Blagoj Zasov, Mrs Roudoula Zissi.

N.B. The names of those members present at the meeting are printed in bold.

See 20th Sitting, 23 June 2008 (adoption of the draft recom- mendation); and Recommendation 1837.