



Resolution 1312 (2003)¹

Progress on the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe: enhancing security and political stability through economic co- operation

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly has taken note of the report of its Committee on Economic Affairs and Development on the results of the 3rd Parliamentary Conference on the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, held in Tirana from 14 to 16 October 2002.
2. Chaired by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe – and with the participation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Parliament – the conference was devoted to the theme: Enhancing Security and Political Stability through Economic Co-operation: Progress of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.
3. The Assembly fully supports the Tirana Declaration, adopted by acclamation by the conference and appended to the present resolution. The Assembly resolves to follow the implementation of the declaration closely, in co-operation with the above-mentioned parliamentary partner institutions. The conference highlighted the need for rapid economic development and integration, both between the countries of the region and in the wider European context, in order to ensure not only growing prosperity, but also political stability, peace and regional security.
4. In this context, the Assembly notes on the one hand the considerable frustration experienced by many of the Stability Pact members over the slow and organisationally cumbersome realisation of some of the pact's projects. On the other hand, it registers the impatience felt by many donor institutions and countries over what they see as lagging progress by countries in the region in areas vital for the pact's success, such as effective implementation of bilateral free trade agreements, the curbing of corruption and organised crime, the movement of people and the clear establishment and enforcement of property rights. It is essential that all parties concerned show the necessary preparedness to further improve their performance in all of these areas in order to keep the pact's credibility and momentum intact.
5. Finally, the Assembly welcomes and strongly supports the decision of the Stability Pact's "Investment Compact Initiative" in July 2002 to establish a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of key principles and best practices agreed by South-east European ministers with the aim of enhancing investment in South-eastern Europe.

1. Assembly debate on 27 January 2003 (1st Sitting) (see [Doc. 9638](#), report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, rapporteur: Baroness Hooper). Text adopted by the Assembly on 27 January 2003 (1st Sitting).



Appendix Appendix

“Tirana Declaration”² of the 3rd Parliamentary Conference on the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe - Enhancing Security and Political Stability through Economic Co-operation: Progress on the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe - Tirana, 14-16 October 2002

1. The 3rd Parliamentary Conference on the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was held in Tirana from 14 to 16 October 2002, at the kind invitation of the Albanian Parliament. Organised by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, currently chairing the Parliamentary Troika³, with the participation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the European Parliament, the conference was devoted to the theme Enhancing Security and Political Stability through Economic Co-operation: Progress on the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.
2. The conference reiterated its full support for the Stability Pact's work on behalf of South-eastern Europe and welcomed its renewed emphasis on concrete initiatives and projects capable of rapidly enhancing economic growth and regional co-operation and promoting security and political stability for all.
3. The conference welcomed the significant progress in the large majority of the countries of South-eastern Europe – an achievement all the more remarkable considering the present more difficult economic climate at European and world levels. Progress is reflected in high growth rates, enhanced regional co-operation and increased foreign investment in the region. Nevertheless, the conference recalled the risks and challenges that the countries of South-eastern Europe face today in their onward path towards stable democracies and honouring of European values. Major efforts continue to be undertaken by many of the countries concerned to reform their economies and institutions so as to bring them into greater conformity with European and worldwide standards. The move towards the establishment of the South East Europe Electricity Regulatory Forum (SEEERF) and the conclusion of the Sava River Basin Treaty were welcomed as part of this process.
4. The conference expressed its wholehearted support in favour of closer relations between the countries in the region and the European Union, via the Accession Process and the Stabilisation and Association Process, in view of a future accession to the European Union as soon as circumstances permit.
5. The conference, emphasising the crucial importance of a strong parliamentary role for the Stability Pact's success, called for:
 - a. the creation of a parliamentary structure involving the countries concerned;
 - b. a continued push for the speediest possible completion of infrastructure projects, including in the transport, energy and water management sectors and simultaneously the systematic introduction in each sector of a strategic approach to infrastructure development in the region;
 - c. the timely conclusion of the remaining ten (out of the original twenty-one) Regional Free Trade Agreements before the deadline of December 2002, followed by their rapid implementation;
 - d. renewed efforts to develop, by appropriate agreements, the free movement of people across the region;
 - e. an intensified fight against corruption and organised crime, including trafficking in human beings, drugs and arms;
 - f. creating conditions conducive to the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons and ensuring protection of minorities;
 - g. Unmik to provide conditions necessary to promote the participation of Kosovo in regional co-operation.
6. The conference devoted special attention to corruption, economic and organised crime, which are particularly acute in South-eastern Europe as it recovers from its difficult past. The conference emphasised that the blame for corruption cannot be laid at any one door since it results from a social climate of generalised distrust, in which different actors – public officials, domestic and foreign companies as well as the general public – may be intentionally or unwittingly involved, calling therefore for a broader approach in order to combat this affliction. The conference considered that success in this struggle is vital to ensure continued financial support for the region by the international community.

2. Adopted by acclamation by the participants at the conference

3. The Parliamentary Troika of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe has been chaired by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe since July 2002, having taken over the chairmanship from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. In the Troika sponsorship system, the European Parliament will again be in the Chair as from 1 January 2003.

7. The conference called for renewed parliamentary pressure for the establishment of intra-regional legal initiatives to fight corruption and economic and organised crime. In this context, it called on the countries in the region to make full use of the work of the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on the "Group of States against Corruption – GRECO", including the latter's Twenty Guiding Principles for the Fight against Corruption and its Model Code of Conduct for Public Officials, as well as existing Council of Europe conventions in this field.

8. Participants in this context recalled that the Stability Pact owed its existence in part to the tragic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. These conflicts also led to the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia. The conference emphasised the need for universal and unreserved support for the newly established International Criminal Court and for all European countries to resist any pressure or agreement weakening the Court's full effectiveness.

9. The conference emphasised the need to take full advantage of the work performed by those institutions, such as the OSCE Missions in the region, which are working on the ground in close co-operation with the authorities and civic society.

10. The conference welcomed the intention of the European Parliament to give special attention to the role of civil society in rebuilding democracy in South-eastern Europe, when organising, in the course of its forthcoming chairmanship of the Parliamentary Troika in 2003, the 4th Stability Pact Parliamentary Conference.

11. Finally, the conference called on all parties concerned to consider the Stability Pact as the prime facilitator of regional economic assistance to South-eastern Europe, in order to avoid the current frequent dispersion of effort and overlap between the activities of the several actors involved.

Tirana, 16 October 2002