

**STATEMENT OF MR. IHSAN UGUR DELIKANLI
PRESIDENT OF THE BLACK SEA TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BANK
AT THE 44TH PABSEC GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ATHENS, DECEMBER 9, 2014**



Dear Mr. President,
Members of Parliaments,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to express my gratitude to PABSEC for the opportunity to address this Assembly of regional Parliamentarians. As President of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB), I am honored to observe the tradition of regular meetings with PABSEC delegations and to maintain the active dialogue on the Bank's strategy and recent developments.

BSTDB is a partner of the BSEC family institutions in promoting regional cooperation. Close interaction with national Parliaments and with PABSEC is a cornerstone of our complementary efforts and synergies for the benefit of the Black Sea region.

As a development institution, the Bank provides much-needed medium- and long-term financing to companies and the financial sector in the Black Sea Region. BSTDB lending continued during the financial crisis, as international capital markets stagnated, and access to funding was hard to get. Over the past two years, the Bank focused on safeguarding portfolio quality and improved project implementation. In parallel, BSTDB demonstrated continued support for regional development, with new project commitments expected to reach EUR 270 million in 2014.

Today, BSTDB's outstanding portfolio stands at EUR 950 million and includes 110 signed operations in manufacturing, energy, transport, telecommunications, agribusiness, trade, and the financial sector. A significant part of the portfolio accounts for support to small- and medium-sized business development as a key source of growth and employment creation in our countries.

Earlier this year, Moody's upgraded BSTDB's long-term credit rating to "A2", and Standard & Poor's reaffirmed the Bank's rating at "A-" with stable outlook. The rating agencies took a positive view of the BSTDB shareholders' support, the Bank's sound financial position, and prudent banking practices. The Bank is proud to remain the best-rated financial institution in the Black Sea region.

BSTDB is preparing the Medium-Term Strategy for the period of 2015-2018 to be approved by the Board of Governors in early 2015. The Strategy targets a sustainable annual portfolio growth of about 7.5% over the period. The Bank will strive to achieve a better balanced geographic and sector portfolio distribution, with enhanced exposure to

the public sector. The intra-regional trade will receive a stronger support. The Bank will also offer more sophisticated and innovative financial products to business clients in the Region.

Mr. President,

I would like to reiterate the call on all Parliaments of Member Countries to continue supporting BSTDB's developmental mission by approving the national contributions to the Bank's capital. Full and timely capital payments by all Bank shareholders are essential for maintaining the Bank's credit rating, which has a significant impact on the Bank's ability to offer affordable development financing in the Region.

The Bank seeks to strengthen collaboration with PABSEC Secretariat. Let me use this opportunity to thank Mr. Tretiak and his team for cooperation, and to congratulate Mr. Hajiyev on his election as Secretary General of the Secretariat.

On behalf of BSTDB, I would like to wish success to the forthcoming Presidency of the Republic of Moldova in PABSEC.

Thank you.