

European Neighbourhood Watch

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Thinking ahead for Europe

The political and legal logic for Palestinian statehood

The issue is now before the United Nations. It is already obvious from the applause at the UN General Assembly after President Abbas' speech on 23 September that a resolution to support Palestinian statehood will receive overwhelming support from the 193 UN member states, with only the United States threatening to veto the final legal act at the Security Council.

Maarti Ahtisaari and Xavier Solana recently wrote that there are ten or eleven reasons to support Palestinian statehood, in a confusing jumble that gives the impression of a game to find 10+ arguments, which may be summarised as follows:

1. To keep the two-state solution alive
2. The EU has already invested hugely in a two-state solution, around €1 billion per year
3. To respond to President Abbas's state-building achievements
4. To avoid double standards in the context of the Arab Spring
5. European interests in security of energy supplies and countering terrorism
6. To strengthen the hand of the US administration in dealing with Israel
7. In opening up negotiation options, it might help Israel
8. It would not necessarily give Palestine easier recourse to the International Criminal Court
9. It would not make Palestinian violence more likely
10. A 'yes' at the UN does not entail recognition, which requires bilateral action
11. It could be a positive, unified foreign policy act by the EU

Curiously they have mostly omitted the basic arguments, namely the criteria for state recognition embedded in international law. These are the four criteria of the Montevideo Convention of 1932 (see annex for extracts from the text).

The first criterion, for a permanent population, is met without any doubt.

With the second one about a defined territory the argument becomes more interesting. The UN has been adopting resolutions on the frontiers of an Arab state of Palestine since 1947, with Resolution 181 proposing an excellent map characterised by contiguity between Gaza and the West Bank. The ensuing Israeli-Arab war resulted in the 1949 Armistice (or Green) line drawn up between Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. This is nowadays confusingly called

the 1967 frontiers, i.e. the 1949 frontiers that prevailed before Israel pushed further into the Palestinian territories in the six-day war in 1967. Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967 called for Israel to withdraw from the newly occupied territories, thus requesting return to the 1949 Armistice lines. But this has not happened because of relentless Israeli settlement expansion beyond the Armistice lines. So the frontiers are contested, although even here the principle of territorial compensation for deviation from the pre-1967 lines is generally admitted as a matter for negotiation, including by Israel.

What are the consequences of the degree of uncertainty over the frontier lines? If it is put as an argument against granting statehood, then it should apply to other states that have contested frontiers, which include China, India, Morocco, Cyprus, and many others. But above all it includes Israel as the other side of the same coin. If Palestine has to be a non-state, then so should Israel. This means that the status quo is *reductio ad absurdum*.

On the third criterion, having government, there is general recognition that under President Abbas and Prime Minister Sayed the Palestinian Authority has made great strides of progress functionally, and in terms of the workings of democratic processes. The Palestinians in fact receives the highest democracy grading of all Arab states in various independent sources. Compare that with the failing or failed statehood of other internationally recognised states, such as Somalia or the Congo (DRC). Yet Gaza remains largely controlled by Hamas, outside the reach of Ramallah. There are talks of a unity government, which have not yet fructified. Recognition of statehood would be a boost for the Ramallah government, a political if not legal argument.

As regards the fourth criterion, the capacity to enter into international relations, the Palestinian Authority has been doing this for years, with many contractual relationships, including the EU on a large scale.

There are three other arguments which can be discussed. One is that there should not be statehood granted to a party which contains fundamentalist political factions that declare their commitment to the destruction of another state. Israel cites Hamas, which according to doctrine would like to see all the Jews pushed back into the Mediterranean Sea. But this argument is also a two-edged sword. The Israeli political landscape and governing coalition includes fundamentalist parties committed by doctrine to the Greater Israel, which means pushing all Palestinians to the other side of the River Jordan. If this were a criterion to deny statehood, it should apply equally to Israel as to the Palestinians. And then who else should

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apply equally to Israel as to the Palestinians. And then who else should not be recognised? Iran for example. Again *reduction ad absurdum*.

The second argument is that the status change would not change anything for real. Prime Minister Netanyahu said in his speech at the General Assembly following President Abbas, that the Palestinians want 'a state without peace', as an argument for denying them statehood. But then Israel is itself 'a state without peace'.

The argument that it doesn't change anything also implies that pure principles and legal status don't matter. Take a couple of other examples. Does it matter whether the individual is a citizen with full legal rights or a non-citizen? Does it change anything when a couple who may have been living together for years, finally decide to get married. In both cases the change, the act of recognising citizenship or marital status, may not change anything concretely or immediately. But tell the individuals in question that they should not do this because it does not change anything immediately. That would be an insult, and counter to all that is most valued about the rule of law.

This argument is most importantly used by the United States to justify its threatened veto at the UN Security Council. Why is the US the virtually only state in the world making this argument? Weakness of the administration facing the political power of Israeli lobby in an election season seems to be relevant, but this is hardly an argument that merits support in the rest of the world. It is hard to imagine another simple move of US diplomacy could do more to wipe out President Obama's diplomatic advances towards the Arab world, beginning with his fine speech in Cairo in June 2009, and continuing since the onset of the Arab Spring; or as a move to reinvigorate Islamic fundamentalist tendencies in the Muslim world at large.

The final argument can be about equality and equity, as enshrined in Article 4 of the Montevideo Convention about the equality of rights of states before international law irrespective of power. The inequality and inequity of the status quo is precisely that, while Israel is a recognised state, Palestine is not. Why should this be addressed now? Of course it should have been addressed over half a century ago. But today's context makes it the moment to act. The Arab Spring at its best sees convergence of this vital region on internationally respected norms of democracy and the rule of law. The West in particular sees this convergence as a matter of strategic political priority. Regularisation of Palestinian statehood in international law should be part of this process. To deny it would fill with justification the Arab world's harshest critiques of Western double standards and hypocrisy. If the US insists on going this way, the EU should not follow, but endorse Palestinian statehood. Then maybe the US will find its own way out of its absurd position

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Middle East Quartet StatementNew York, 23 September 2011. [Link](#)

Annex:

Extracts from the Montevideo Convention, 1933, on the rights and duties of states

Article 1 The state as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications: (a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) government; and (d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states.

Article 3 The political existence of the state is independent of recognition by the other states. Even before recognition the state has the right to defend its integrity and independence, to provide for its conservation and prosperity, and consequently to organize itself as it sees fit, to legislate upon its interests, administer its services, and to define the jurisdiction and competence of its courts. ...

Article 4 States are juridically equal, enjoy the same rights, and have equal capacity in their exercise. The rights of each one do not depend upon the power which it possesses to assure its exercise, but upon the simple fact of its existence as a person under international law.

Article 11 The contracting states definitely establish as the rule of their conduct the precise obligation not to recognize territorial acquisitions or special advantages which have been obtained by force whether this consists in the employment of arms, in threatening diplomatic representations, or in any other effective coercive measure.

The Quartet – U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union Catherine Ashton— met in New York on 23rd September 2011. They were joined by Quartet Representative Tony Blair.

The Quartet takes note of the application submitted by President Abbas on 23rd September 2011 which is now before the Security Council.

The Quartet reaffirmed its statement of 20th May 2011, including its strong support for the vision of Israeli-Palestinian peace outlined by United States President Barack Obama.

The Quartet recalled its previous statements, and affirmed its determination to actively and vigorously seek a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1397, 1515, 1850, the Madrid principles including land for peace, the Roadmap, and the agreements previously reached between the parties.

The Quartet reiterated its commitment to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and to seek a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and reaffirms the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative.

The Quartet reiterated its urgent appeal to the parties to overcome the current obstacles and resume direct bilateral Israeli -Palestinian negotiations without delay or preconditions. But it accepts that meeting, in itself, will not re-establish the trust necessary for such a negotiation to succeed. It therefore proposes the following steps:

1. Within a month there will be a preparatory meeting between the parties to agree an agenda and method of proceeding in the negotiation.
2. At that meeting there will be a commitment by both sides that the objective of any negotiation is to reach an agreement within a timeframe agreed to by the parties but not longer than the end of 2012.

The Quartet expects the parties to come forward with comprehensive proposals within three months on territory and security, and to have made substantial progress within six months. To that end, the Quartet will convene an international conference in Moscow, in consultation with the parties, at the appropriate time.

3. There will be a Donors Conference at which the international community will give full and sustained support to the Palestinian Authority state-building actions developed by Prime Minister Fayyad under the leadership of President Abbas.

4. The Quartet recognizes the achievements of the Palestinian Authority in preparing institutions for statehood as evidenced in reports to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, and stresses the need to preserve and build on them. In this regard, the members of the Quartet will consult to identify

additional steps they can actively support towards Palestinian statehood individually and together, to secure in accordance with existing procedures significantly greater independence and sovereignty for the Palestinian Authority over its affairs.

5. The Quartet calls upon the parties to refrain from provocative actions if negotiations are to be effective. The Quartet reiterated the obligations of both parties under the Roadmap.

6. The Quartet committed to remain actively involved and to encourage and review progress. The Quartet agreed to meet regularly and to task the envoys and the Quartet Representative to intensify their cooperation, including by meeting prior to the parties' preparatory meeting, and to formulate recommendations for Quartet action.

EU HRVP following the Middle East Quartet meeting

New York, 23 September 2011. [Link](#)

As you know, there has been a lot of work going on over the last weeks and months to try and achieve the objective of finding a way to get the parties back into negotiations.

You know from the perspective of the European Union and the work that I have done, that this has been my primary objective. The belief that, through negotiations, we would be able to end this conflict and move to peace and security for the people of Palestine and the people of Israel. And I remain committed to that objective.

The Quartet has been working over these last years and, intensively, through our envoys, over these last weeks, to see how best we can support that objective, to work with the parties to bring them together. Within 3 months, we would want to see significant progress on borders and security.

Anyone listening to the speeches today and indeed the comments made many times by President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu will be fully aware of the significance of these two issues. And we believe it's very important that progress is made. And that within 6 months, we begin to see the progress turned into reality. So a comprehensive approach set out as quickly as possible. And that these negotiations should be completed within a 12-month timeframe.

Again, as I began, I want to pay tribute to those who have worked extremely hard to bring all this work to fruition. Our objective is to help the parties reach the negotiations for peace and security that their peoples both deserve.

EU contributes EURO 12 million to improve the living conditions of Palestine refugees in Lebanon

Beirut, 16 September 2011. [Link](#)

The European Union will further support UNRWA in its endeavours to alleviate the dire living conditions of Palestine refugees in Lebanon through a new programme for a total budget of euro 12 million. This programme, which will be implemented by UNRWA, aims at providing adequate shelter to the most vulnerable Palestine refugee families living in Lebanon, by securing funds for the rehabilitation of shelters in Palestinian camps throughout Lebanon and by paying cash rental subsidies in 2011 and 2012 to the families waiting to return to their reconstructed houses in Nahr el-Bared Camp (NBC).

The programme will benefit over 3 000 families displaced from NBC in addition to an estimated 736 families residing in the other 11 Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon. A socio-economic survey conducted last year confirmed that dire housing conditions affect the majority of Palestine refugees in Lebanon and contribute to the prevalence of chronic illnesses among the refugees.

Over 4 000 shelters across Lebanon are in need of rehabilitation. The same study found that 66% of the refugees live in poverty.

The proposed action will be financed by the Instrument for Stability (IfS), which is the EU mechanism to respond to crises, facilitate recovery processes and pre-empt further relapses. In 2008 and 2009, the EU already mobilised the IfS to support UNRWA operations in North Lebanon to create the pre-conditions for the re-construction of NBC and the revival of the decimated local economy.

EU's continuing support to UNRWA is an essential element of the EU strategy for the Middle East Peace Process to alleviate the hardship of the refugee population in Lebanon and, therefore, contribute to the stability of the region. The EU and its Member States are the biggest donors to UNRWA. Together with humanitarian aid, support from the IfS and from the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI), the EU has disbursed more than euro 64 million in support of Palestine refugees in Lebanon over the last four years.

On this occasion, EU Ambassador Angelina Eichhorst, said "It is our duty to provide the most vulnerable and neglected groups in society with the minimum standards of dignity, and support to Palestine refugees in Lebanon is therefore of importance to the EU." She added that "the EU reiterates the need to make further progress in order to improve the Lebanese legislative framework in order to guarantee proper living conditions for the Palestinian population that has been forced to live away from their homeland for more than 60 years."

Thanking the European Union for its long-standing support, the Director of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon,

Salvatore Lombardo, said: “This is an immensely important contribution. It will enable us to improve the lives of vulnerable families living in unhealthy or unsafe housing conditions throughout the country. The families from Nahr el Bared who will benefit from the rental subsidies lost their homes in the camp’s destruction four years ago. They are waiting for their homes to be rebuilt as part of the camp’s reconstruction.”

UNRWA provides assistance, protection and advocacy for some 5 million Palestine refugees in the Middle East registered with the Agency in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and the Occupied Territories. The Agency’s services encompass education, health care, relief, camp infrastructure and improvement, community support, microfinance and emergency response, including in times of armed conflict.

EU response to the Arab Spring: new package

Brussels, 27 September 2011. [Link](#)

The European Commission has adopted four new decisions for its Neighbourhood. The programmes will include support for areas like democracy, growth, job creation, microfinance and higher education.

“The European Union was the first to offer a serious response to the Arab Spring. This new set of decisions is the result of the new and ambitious European Neighbourhood Policy launched in May and it confirms that the EU has made it one of its main priorities to support ‘deep’ and sustainable democracy, but also economic recovery, in North Africa and the Middle East,” said Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission.

Štefan Füle Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy added: “These decisions prove our strong commitment to our neighbouring partners. Through job creation, improved living conditions, university partnerships and promoting a stronger voice for civil society, this support demonstrates Europe’s full engagement in ensuring the desired transition to democracy in the region.”

Today, the SPRING programme (Support for Partnership, Reform and Inclusive Growth) was adopted. Under this flagship initiative, the Commission will provide support for the Southern Neighbourhood countries for democratic transformation, institution building and economic growth in the wake of the Arab Spring. Support provided through SPRING will be tailored to the needs of each country. The total value of this initiative is €350 million to cover the years 2011 and 2012.

The second decision concerns a Special Measure designed to support poorer areas in Tunisia in the aftermath of the events of the Arab Spring. €20 million has also been allocated in order to foster employment and job creation in the country and to improve living conditions for inhabitants

of urban areas in the most impoverished regions, as well as to improve access to microfinance.

The third of these decisions, adopted on 23 September 2011, is the Erasmus Mundus programme. This will go towards achieving better understanding and mutual enrichment between the EU and neighbouring countries by creating possibilities for student and academic staff mobility (for example, the opportunity to study in universities in EU Member States) and exchange of knowledge and skills. The overall budget for this programme is €66 million.

The fourth decision, adopted on 20 September 2011, is the Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility, designed to strengthen the capacity of civil society to promote reform and increase public accountability in their countries. With a total budget of €22 million, the programme will also support regional and country projects led by non-state actors. Similar amounts are envisaged for 2012 and 2013.

The four decisions come in response to actions outlined in the Commission’s recent Communication entitled “A new response to a changing Neighbourhood”.

HRVP Address to the European Parliament on the United Nations General Assembly

Strasbourg, 27 September 2011. [Link](#)

Mr President, Honourable Members of the European Parliament

This year’s UN General Assembly took place at a time of huge change and growing tension in the world. The combination of the economic crisis, the Arab spring and the stalled Middle East peace process creates a volatile mix. Europe must respond to the challenge - both at home and abroad.

Today - at your request - I will focus on two issues Middle East peace process and the Arab spring. However I would just notify honourable members that during the week in NY I met with ministers from our strategic partners - Russia, China, USA, Brazil, India, Mexico and participated in a number of key events - counter terrorism forum and jointly with UN women an event highlighting the role of women, led by the President of Brazil.

Turning first to the Middle East peace process

I have visited the region 7 times this year, each time with a single purpose - to promote a negotiated settlement of the conflict and to demonstrate the importance of Europe’s role. Over the summer period I have worked with quartet envoys, with the Arab League and been in discussion with the Prime Minister of Israel and President of the Palestinian Authority together with Prime Minister Fayyad.

It is clear, honourable members that these efforts have succeeded in demonstrating the EU role - a player and a payer. Our financial commitment matched by our political strength - For too long the EU has been on the sidelines of

the Peace Process. I have worked to achieve a greater EU role as I believe we are ideally placed as a friend of both parties.

I've said before that my vision of the European External Action Service is a conflict prevention and resolution approach – we need now to put this vision into practice. The dividends of peace are crucial for the future stability and prosperity of our neighbourhood.

Prior to the UN discussions I had participated in Cairo in the Arab League follow up committee discussions as we considered how best to support our objective - two states - peace and security for all.

Exploratory talks with Palestinian, Israeli and Jordanian leaders at the end of August led me to believe that the way forward was to put together a package of various actions with the objective of getting Israelis and Palestinians together in talks. During my September visit in the region it became clear that a Quartet statement and possibly a GA resolution in addition to what President Abbas is seeking to do would be part of such a package.

In my meetings with many Arab leaders I was impressed by the stated desire to end the conflict and the wish to bring stability and normality against the backdrop of potential unrest sparked by a lack of progress. I believe this is also understood by the Israeli leaders who see their country surrounded by uncertainty, and fear for their country's security.

I have impressed on all those I have met in the region that now is the time to seek peace between Israelis and Palestinians on the basis of a negotiated agreement that will lead to the establishment of a Palestinian State as a core element of the peace agreement, and will end the occupation that is so detrimental to the development of both peoples.

The UN speeches of President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu differed in rhetoric but shared a desire for peace. Both speeches focused on the need to go to negotiations and the wish to end the conflict.

At my instigation, the Quartet responded to this immediately by calling on both parties to enter into negotiations within four weeks, to agree on the issues of territory and security within three months, to have made substantial progress within six months, and to reach an agreement by the end of next year.

We expect both sides to agree to come to negotiations within four weeks. I believe that the EU, including this Parliament, should play a central role in that process. We are well placed and I will stay personally involved.

The Quartet has called the parties to refrain from provocative actions if negotiations are to resume and be effective. It is therefore with deep regret that I have learnt today about the decision to advance settlement expansion in East Jerusalem with new housing units in Gilo. This plan should be reversed. Settlement activity threatens the viability of an agreed two-state solution and runs contrary to the Israeli stated commitment to resume negotiations.

We have also called for a Donors Conference to support further the impressive achievements of the Palestinian Authority's state-building, and will consult on additional steps that will quickly lead to greater independence and sovereignty for the Palestinians over their affairs. Facilitating Palestinian trade is essential to support state-building and develop the Palestinian economy. We have proposed concrete action to open our markets to Palestinian agricultural and fishery products and I am glad that earlier today the European Parliament voted in favour of this important agreement.

Gaza also remains a priority. As I have always said, the crossings must be opened to allow the flow of humanitarian aid, imports, exports and people. We need to enable children to go to school and ordinary people, and the younger generation in particular, to get on with and build their lives.

I will continue to work to allow the economic recovery of Gaza while addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns.

My second issue today is the Arab Spring.

Since the popular demonstrations in Tunisia, the Arab Spring has touched every Arab state in the region. It is an event of truly historic proportions that will shape not only the future of the Arab World but our own future too. It is a revolution based on values: justice, dignity, freedom. Europe's response to these events will speak more than any form of rhetoric about its real commitment to democratic principles.

We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to build deep and lasting democracy and prosperity in the Southern Mediterranean – doing so will require vision, perseverance and a team effort from all of Europe's institutions. We need to stay focussed and committed. The scale of the challenge requires a joined-up EU response – what we do on trade and mobility are as important to the overall success of our strategy as what we do on election monitoring and supporting development.

Six months on we still need to match words with delivery. That is why I believe it is time to re-energise the process.

Last May, I set out here my vision for North Africa and the Middle East – a vision of deep-rooted democracy, and the benefits of the development which will come with it.

My priority is delivery. After the revolutions we face a growing sense of impatience and uncertainty. It is vital that we translate our good intentions into results and assistance on the ground. The process of change was never going to be easy or fast. Real change takes time and will be measured in years, not seasons. Our response – which began in our Commission Communication of 8 March – is built on the need to acknowledge past mistakes and listen without imposing. We are doing exactly that and it requires perseverance and sustained commitment. Success should translate into what I have called "deep Democracy".

Political transformation will only succeed with economic opportunity. In the short term, the uprisings were motivated by economic hardship and have made those hardships more

severe. There is no single template for our support, no one size fits all approach.

We have to develop tailor made policies in response to the needs identified by each country. Engagement with Arab partners (and the Arab League in particular) is essential – “we are working with them, not at them” which is why I was a prime mover in the establishment of the Cairo Group.

But we are in a new era where dialogue between governments is not enough: success requires engagement with and between societies. Here the European Parliament is unique in what it can offer to those in search of democracy, in Tunisia and beyond, particularly now that Constituent assemblies will become the key institutional actors. Building and sustaining political parties is essential – the experience in the EP is unmatched.

In New York I participated in a high level event on women in politics. I firmly believe that the continued central role of women in the Arab Spring is a key test of the strength and extent of the changes.

Women, as well as the younger generation, were instrumental in the protests that toppled the repressive regimes in Tunisia and Egypt and they must remain central to shaping the reforms that follow. Deep and lasting democracy must be for all of the people – not just one gender.

We had an encouraging signal on Sunday from the most unexpected place, Saudi Arabia, when King Abdullah announced that women, as from next year, will be appointed to the Shura Council. They will also be able to vote and stand as candidates in municipal elections in four years' time.

Many of us would have hoped to see women voting in this Thursday's ballot. But this decision – if properly implemented – marks an initial step in advancing women's participation in the political, economic and social life of the country.

The future of the Arab Spring depends on Tunisia and Egypt becoming success stories. What happens there as they move to elections and build a system of civil rights and democratic values, will send vital messages elsewhere.

Time is of the essence: expectations are high, and we need to see visible results.

Tomorrow I travel to Tunisia, to set up a new EU task force for that country – It takes place in a key moment to show our support, just three weeks ahead of the first truly democratic elections of 23 October. An EU Election Observation Mission is already deployed on the ground. Given the highly political nature of the event and the key contribution from the EP to support the countries in transition, I have invited a delegation from this House to join me in Tunis. I hope this will be a model for the future.

The Task-Force will focus on some of the key issues which will have a direct impact on the lives of Tunisians: business, investment and the economy; social development and democracy.

The Task-Force is unique in bringing around the table not only our Tunisian partners but also the international financing institutions and private sector representatives. It will be the occasion to send a very strong political message with the opening of negotiations for a new privileged partnership that reflects our shared ambitions. It will be also an opportunity to better coordinate European and international efforts to focus on faster and more effective support. This tailor made approach, based on decentralized and coordinated use of all our instruments, will be then used with other countries in transition to better identify needs and accelerate support.

In Egypt, where we expect that the interim authorities will confirm soon the date for the elections, it is urgent that the ruling military council continues to engage with political representatives and civil society to get a new electoral law for the new democratic era.

The Egyptian authorities have declined European and other international offers of involvement in direct election observation, but we will be working with them on other urgent measures, through the Instrument for Stability, to enhance the capacity of Egypt's High Electoral Commission (HEC), and help judges and poll workers to manage and effectively oversee these first free and fair democratic elections in Egypt, as well as laying the basis for the organisation of future elections. I know many in this House are working to support the strengthening of political parties in Egypt and I pay tribute to their work.

In some other countries in the region, the authorities have sought to respond to calls for greater freedoms by intensifying reform processes which were already underway before the Arab Spring.

In Morocco a new Constitution was developed and approved overwhelmingly by referendum. This promises increased separation of powers and greater public accountability as well as improved respect for human rights. Now fast and sustained implementation is key.

In Jordan the Lower House endorsed on 24th September, numerous (41) constitutional amendments which included the establishment of a constitutional court and the creation of an independent commission overseeing elections. The new elections law and the political parties' law, which should ensure genuine political pluralism, will be debated by the Parliament in October.

Implementation is essential to keep the momentum and credibility of the process: these reforms should lead to the consolidation of the institutions safeguarding democracy and the rule of law, the enhancement of the independence of the judiciary and the empowerment of the political parties.

In the case of Morocco and Jordan we will continue to build on the Advanced Status. In Morocco we are developing a new Action Plan focusing on the reform agenda. We will shortly launch a Mobility Partnership. And we will step up technical

and financial cooperation. We also look to Parliament to play its part.

We want to accelerate ongoing trade negotiations and prepare mandates for deep and comprehensive free trade agreements with Morocco, Jordan, Egypt and Tunisia.

Approval by Parliament of the EU-Morocco Agreement on Liberalization Measures on Agricultural Products, Fish and Fishery Products, will send a signal of our desire to deepen our relationship in practical ways to the benefit of both the Moroccan people and EU citizens.

Fighting continues in Sirte, Bani Walid and a few other pockets of resistance, but Libya is transitioning fast from a crisis situation to the creation of a democracy. Last week I took part in a Friends of Libya meeting in New York, where we were able to deliver a message of strong continuing commitment to the new Libya.

President Jalil has pledged to build a society based on tolerance and reconciliation and to uphold the principles of human rights. The NTC and the international community must also establish control over the large stocks of weapons amassed by the previous regime to prevent them falling into the wrong hands. All this is essential for a successful transition.

In addition to our office in Benghazi, our new EU office in Tripoli is working closely with other partners, under UN coordination, to determine the needs there.

Libya is a rich country: our know-how and technical assistance matters more than the size of our cooperation programmes. This is, I believe, also the recommendation from those of you who have visited Tripoli. Libyans want to improve trade links with Europe, and need our help to develop a civil society that deserves that name. We are already preparing projects to support civil society and women in particular.

I have also taken note of Ana Gomes' excellent suggestion to organise a visit of Libyan officials and civil society to the upcoming Spanish elections.

In Syria and Yemen we still face crisis situations.

In Syria, a brutal regime remains unwilling to listen to its people and to change. We are pursuing a double track approach: by stepping up measures designed to undermine the regime's support and by achieving a further isolation of the Syrian leadership.

Since the beginning of unrest in mid-March, and in view of the continuing fierce campaign by the Syrian regime against its own population, we suspended our cooperation and have progressively ratcheted up sanctions including an embargo on any Syrian oil coming into the EU. Our message to the Syrian people is clear - and so was your resolution adopted last 15 September: our sanctions are designed to have maximum impact on those supporting the Syrian regime, while minimizing any potential negative impact on the Syrian population.

In Yemen, too, we have strongly supported the initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which has worked tirelessly in support of political agreement. This weekend saw a carefully coordinated sequence of diplomatic responses and action on the ground to President Saleh's unexpected return on Friday, with the GCC, Arab League, EU, US and now the UN Security Council all calling for cessation of violence, and a very rapid and concrete transfer of power. No-one will be satisfied with just another open-ended promise.

We will continue to work together. I look forward to your resolution. I continue to thank the European Parliament for its support, its constructive criticism and its advice, as the EU moves forward, armed with a clear strategy in uncertain times, and hoping for real and sustained progress both in Israel and Palestine, and across North Africa and the wider Middle East. Further steps were taken in New York last week: we must work together so that we will have real cause for celebration when the UN General Assembly next convenes in September 2012.

Council bans investment in Syrian oil industry

Brussels, 23 September 2011. [Link](#)

In view of the gravity of the situation in Syria, the Council today reinforced EU sanctions against the country's regime and banned investment in key sectors of the Syrian oil industry.

The interdiction aims at investment in Syrian enterprises engaged in exploration, production and refining crude oil, both in their country and abroad. EU-based operators may no more acquire a participation in such companies nor create joint ventures with them.

Credits and financial loans to such enterprises are also covered by the ban.

The Council also banned the delivery of Syrian-denominated bank notes and coinage produced in the EU to the Syrian Central Bank.

In addition, the Council added two more persons and six entities to the list of those targeted by an asset freeze and travel ban pursuant to decision 2011/273/CFSP¹ and regulation 442/2011².

Today's decisions were adopted by written procedure. Together with the list of the additional designations, they will be published in the Official Journal on 24 September 2011.

Related Document:

COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) No 950/2011 of 23 September 2011 amending Regulation (EU) No 442/2011 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria

[Download here.](#)

Syria's Assad must go, and Libya's resources must benefit all Libyans, say MEPs

15 September 2011. [Link](#)

MEPs called for a halt to the use of force against peaceful protesters in Syria, and said President Bashar al Assad should step down immediately, in a resolution passed on Thursday. In a separate resolution, also passed on Thursday, Parliament called on Libya's National Transitional Council to manage its national resources for the benefit of all Libyans.

The escalating use of force against peaceful protesters in Syria, including mass arrests, extrajudicial killings, torture and the brutal and systematic persecution of pro-democracy activists, human rights defenders and journalists were strongly condemned by MEPs.

Crackdowns must stop, Assad must step down

MEPs demanded an immediate halt to violent crackdowns against peaceful demonstrators, expressing their condolences to the victims' families and their solidarity with Syrian people fighting for their rights, whose courage and determination Parliament "commended".

Parliament called on President Bashar al Assad and his regime to relinquish power immediately, and demanded an independent, transparent and effective investigation into killings, arrests, and torture by the Syrian security forces, so as to bring the perpetrators to account.

Targeted sanctions

Parliament welcomed new EU measures against the Syrian regime, including a ban on crude oil imports from Syria to the EU. However, MEPs insisted that further sanctions should target the regime and avoid worsening the living conditions of the people.

MEPs urged UN Security Council members, and in particular Russia and China, to condemn the use of lethal force in Syria and to impose sanctions should the regime fail to put an end to violence.

Finally, MEPs welcomed the humanitarian assistance provided to Syrian refugees by neighbouring countries, in particular Turkey.

On developments in Syria, President Jerzy Buzek said: "We cannot allow the Syrian regime to continue killing the Syrian people. Authorities in Damascus have lost all remaining

legitimacy and must step aside immediately. I hope the Syrian opposition will unite and offer a credible alternative for a political transition. We Europeans must assume our responsibility to protect civilians and our responsibility to protect democracy."

Unified, democratic Libya

In a separate resolution, also passed on Thursday, MEPs congratulated the Libyan people on their courage and determination, and welcomed the fall of the 42-year autocratic regime of Muammar Gaddafi.

Parliament expressed full support for the National Transitional Council (NTC), and urged the EU to assist the new Libyan authorities in building a unified, democratic and pluralist Libya that guarantees human rights and fundamental freedoms.

MEPs called on EU Member States to seek UN Security Council authorisation to release frozen Libyan assets to help the NTC to deliver the governance Libya needs.

Parliament also called for an effective and credible common EU strategy for Libya, and asked Member States to refrain from taking unilateral actions or initiatives that might weaken it.

Gaddafi must be brought to justice

MEPs urged all countries, and especially Libya's neighbours, to co-operate with the NTC and the International Criminal Court, to ensure that Gaddafi and his inner circle are brought to justice.

Demobilise fighters, protect sub-Saharan migrants

EU assistance is needed in reforming the Libyan police and armed forces, as well as disarming, demobilising and reintegrating former combatants, said the resolution.

Parliament urged the NTC to protect the rights of minority and vulnerable groups, including thousands of sub-Saharan African migrants who face harassment solely due to their skin colour.

Manage natural resources for all

Finally, MEPs stressed that the NTC should impose high standards of transparency in domestic strategic economic sectors, so as to ensure that Libya's natural resources benefit the whole population.

Related Documents:

EP resolution of 15 September 2011 on the situation in Libya, Strasbourg. [Download here.](#)

EP resolution of 15 September 2011 on the situation in Syria, Strasbourg. [Download here.](#)

HRVP on the attack on the Israeli Embassy in CairoBrussels, 10 September 2011. [Link](#)

I condemn the attack on the Israeli Embassy in Cairo, the invasion of diplomatic premises and the destruction of embassy property. I regret the loss of life and express my sympathy with the families of the dead and the injured.

The Egyptian authorities have in the past fulfilled their responsibilities under the Vienna convention on diplomatic immunities. We trust that this regrettable incident is an isolated event and that the authorities will take the necessary measures to normalise the situation.

Tunisia: EU to observe the Constituent Assembly ElectionsBrussels, 21 September 2011. [Link](#)

Upon invitation of the Tunisian authorities, the European Union is deploying an Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) for the Constituent Assembly elections in Tunisia, scheduled for 23 October 2011. The mission will be led by Michael Gahler, Member of the European Parliament.

“These elections represent an historical moment in the transition process of Tunisia towards democracy. For the first time, Tunisian citizens will have the opportunity to freely choose their representatives; the elected Assembly will have the fundamental task of writing the new Constitution of the country.

Since the revolution in January, the EU has been extending its full support to the Tunisian people’s aspiration for freedom, democracy and dignity. The EU will continue to support the Tunisian authorities and society, in their path to democracy, in full respect of universal values.

I wish to Michael Gahler and his team all success in their independent assessment of these important elections,” said Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission.

130 observers will assess pre-election preparations and campaign all over Tunisia, voting, counting and tabulation processes, as well as the post-election period. The first experts arrived in the country on 8 September. This team will be gradually joined 120 observers. A delegation of 15 Members of the European Parliament will reinforce the mission for the election period.

The EOM will issue a preliminary statement after the election day. A comprehensive assessment including recommendations based on factual outcome of the observation will be issued when the electoral process is completed.

Related Document:

Tunisia: European support of €110 million for economic recovery.

[Download here.](#)

Jordan requests membership of EBRD – Country seeks Bank support in driving reform process forward21 September 2011. [Link](#)

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has requested membership of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development with a view to receiving EBRD funding and the Bank’s support for its democratic reforms.

In a letter to EBRD President Thomas Mirow, Jordan’s Acting Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Mohammed Najjar, said that over the last year Jordan had sought to accelerate measures to strengthen the country’s democratic governance.

“The Government believes that the EBRD can play an important role in promoting and sustaining this important process,” Mr Najjar added.

Jordan has now joined Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia in seeking to become a country in which the EBRD invests.

Those four countries are the target of support under the “Deauville Partnership”, launched under the French presidency of the G-8 in May this year to help promote the historic changes under way in some countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

The EBRD’s shareholders are currently considering an extension of the EBRD’s geographic mandate to include the southern and eastern Mediterranean region.

If shareholders agree to this move – a step that would need unanimous approval by all EBRD shareholders – the Bank would aim especially to help promote the development of the private sector, the area where it traditionally provides the bulk of its investments.

After an initial build up period, the EBRD would have the capital capacity to invest up to €2.5 billion a year to emerging Arab democracies without seeking additional funds from shareholders.

It has also stressed that any investment undertaken in the new region would not detract in any way from its commitments to its existing countries of operations, primarily former communist countries in eastern Europe.

New investment would be carried out in close cooperation with other international financial institutions, with each organisation bringing its own individual expertise and skills

Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit

Warsaw, 29-30 September 2011. [Link](#)

The Heads of State or Government and representatives of the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, the representatives of the European Union and the Heads of State and Government and representatives of its Member States have met in Warsaw on 29-30 September 2011 to renew their commitment to the objectives and continued implementation of the Eastern Partnership. The President of the European Parliament and the representatives of the Committee of the Regions, the Economic and Social Committee, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development were also present at the Summit.

The Prague Summit in May 2009 launched a strategic and ambitious Eastern Partnership as a specific dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy, to further support Eastern European countries' sustainable reform processes with a view to accelerating their political association and economic integration with the European Union. The agenda agreed in Prague contains the guiding principles of the Eastern Partnership, and the participants of the Warsaw Summit reaffirm their commitment to implement them fully.

The Warsaw Summit recognises that reinforced reform efforts serve a common interest, and need therefore to be applied in a spirit of shared ownership and mutual accountability. The Eastern Partnership is based on a community of values and principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. All countries participating in the Eastern Partnership are committed to these values through the relevant international instruments. Any European Union Member State is also committed to them through the Treaty on European Union. The participants of the Warsaw Summit acknowledge the European aspirations and the European choice of some partners and their commitment to build deep and sustainable democracy. They highlighted the particular role for the Eastern Partnership to support those who seek an ever closer relationship with the EU.

Much has been achieved already. Political and economic reforms have been implemented in partner countries and relations between the EU and its Eastern European partners have deepened significantly. There is more trade and economic interaction between the EU and its Eastern European partners than ever before. In order to consolidate this trend, the EU and most of its partners are engaged in negotiations on Association Agreements which will also lead to Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas as soon as the conditions are met. At the same time, they are engaged in progressing towards increased mobility across the continent. Dialogues on visa-free regimes have been launched with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. Visa-facilitation and readmission agreements are being implemented with Georgia and similar agreements will be sought with the

Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Belarus.

It is part of the essence of the Eastern Partnership to engage with all strands of societies, beyond governments. The Warsaw Summit welcomes the establishment of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, as well as the increased role of civil society, through the Civil Society Forum. It welcomes the creation of an Eastern Partnership Business Forum and of the Conference of Regional and Local Authorities of the Eastern Partnership.

Recognising and welcoming the progress made so far, the participants of the Warsaw Summit underlined that much remains to be done to reach the goals of the Eastern Partnership, including by adapting existing instruments of co-operation. In this regard, they welcomed the publication of the Communication of the High Representative and the Commission on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy 1. Greater differentiation and mutual accountability will allow individual partners to better meet their aspirations, needs, and capacities. According to these principles, the pace of reforms will determine the intensity of the cooperation, and partners most engaged in reforms will benefit more from their relationship with the European Union, including closer political association, deeper gradual economic integration in the EU Internal Market and increased EU support. This entails support for civil society and social and economic development, as well as comprehensive institution-building, strengthening respect for human rights and the rule of law, greater market access, increased EIB financing in support of investments and greater facilitation of mobility in a well-managed and secure environment. The resolution of conflicts, building trust and good neighbourly relations are essential to economic and social development and cooperation in the region.

The participants agree that the Eastern Partnership must be significantly strengthened and commit to stepping up its implementation, with the objective of building a common area of democracy, prosperity, stability and increased interactions and exchanges. They also agree that the achievements and the progress of the Eastern Partnership must bring direct and clearly perceived benefits to the citizens of partner countries, and they commit to enhancing their efforts to make the Eastern Partnership visible to all.

* * *

The Heads of State or Government and representatives of the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, the representatives of the European Union and the Heads of State or Government and

representatives of its Member States, are committed to the success and the development of the Eastern Partnership, and have therefore agreed to the following:

A deeper bilateral engagement: Political association, Socio-Economic integration and mobility

1. The Eastern Partnership aims to create the necessary conditions to accelerate political association and further economic integration between the European Union and interested partner countries, recognising the economic benefits of enhancing trade in goods and services, the potential for increased investment flows and the importance of progressive economic integration with the EU Internal Market. The Eastern Partnership will seek to further support political and socio-economic reforms in the partner countries, facilitating comprehensive approximation towards the European Union, leading progressively to economic integration in the EU Internal Market, and therefore to the creation of an economic area between the EU and partner countries.

2. Progressive approximation with EU rules and practices require a high degree of commitment from partner countries to complex and broad-ranging reforms, underpinned by strong institutional capacity. This will necessitate sustained commitment and support by the EU to help partner countries engaged in undertaking challenging reforms, according to the principle of mutual accountability and differentiation.

3. The Association Agreements with comprehensive reform agendas and, where appropriate, with Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) as an integral part, are the cornerstones of relations under the Eastern Partnership. Productive negotiations have taken place with Ukraine. In this context, the participants of the Warsaw Summit look forward to the possible finalisation of negotiations by the time of the EU-Ukraine Summit in December 2011. Good progress has been made in the Association Agreement negotiations with the Republic of Moldova, and significant progress were made in the negotiations with the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, and Georgia. As far as the DCFTA part of Association Agreements with Georgia and the Republic of Moldova are concerned, it is envisaged that such negotiations could start by the end of this year, provided sufficient progress has been made in fulfilling a number of remaining key recommendations. Building on the substantial work accomplished, Armenia is pursuing its efforts to become ready for DCFTA negotiations as soon as possible.

4. In order to facilitate the implementation of Association Agreements, Eastern Partnership Association Agendas will progressively be established. A limited number of priority areas for cooperation will be jointly identified and accompanied by measurable benchmarks. Monitoring of progress and assistance to partner countries will focus more particularly on these benchmarks and priorities.

5. The participants of the Warsaw Summit welcome the launch of an Eastern Partnership Business Forum on 30 September in Sopot and the support it can provide to accompany in particular negotiations on Association Agreements and DCFTAs and establish a competitive and inclusive market economy. In this regard, the promotion of investment and a vibrant and innovative SME sector is of significant importance.

6. The participants of the Warsaw Summit welcome the Macro-Financial Assistance provided by the EU to some

partner countries during the recent economic crisis. The EU macro-financial assistance instrument may also be mobilised in the future to assist partner countries to address short-term balance-of-payments difficulties when the pre-conditions are met and when the programmes are linked to a meaningful reform agenda.

7. The participants of the Warsaw Summit agree to strengthen cooperation in areas related to freedom, security and justice, and coordination between the relevant frameworks, both at the bilateral and regional levels. Further cooperation and coordination will include in particular the prevention of and the fight against illegal migration, the promotion of secure and well managed migration and mobility and integrated border management, the fight against drugs, organised crime, trafficking in human beings and money-laundering, the fight against terrorism as well as the fight against corruption and further work towards a fully independent judiciary. Convening meetings at ministerial level will help to ensure appropriate political guidance and coordination. Moreover, bringing the Söderköping Process under the aegis of the Eastern Partnership multilateral track will allow enhancing the dialogue and cooperation on the broader migration agenda. The participants of the Warsaw Summit encourage the cooperation of the EU specialised agencies active in the areas related to freedom, security and justice with interested partner countries.

8. It remains a core objective of the Eastern Partnership to enhance mobility of citizens in a secure and well-managed environment. This objective entails visa facilitation and readmission agreements as a first step. Once these agreements are concluded and effectively implemented, the EU and the partner countries will take gradual steps towards visa-free regimes in due course on a case-by-case basis provided that conditions for well managed and secure mobility set out in two-phase action plans for visa liberalisation are in place. In this context, the participants of the Warsaw Summit take stock of progress made by the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in the implementation of their respective Action Plans on visa liberalisation. These Plans could serve as models for other partner countries bearing in mind the specificity and progress of each country.

9. The participants of the Warsaw Summit also welcome the effective implementation to date of the visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Georgia. They look forward to the launch of negotiations of such agreements with the Republic of Belarus for the benefit of the population at large, the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan. They underline the opportunities opened by the EU Visa Code for improving visa delivery for bona fide travellers, in particular for students, researchers and businesspeople. They welcome the establishment of Mobility Partnerships, in line with the global approach to migration, with the Republic of Moldova and Georgia and good progress made by the Republic of Armenia in this respect, and look forward to establishing similar frameworks with other partners.

10. The participants of the Warsaw Summit welcome the launch of Comprehensive Institution Building programmes to support the implementation of the future Association Agreements including DCFTAs as well as to

support the implementation of the action plans towards visa liberalisation. They also welcome Pilot Regional Development Programmes which will assist partners in addressing economic, social and regional imbalances.

Participation in EU programmes and Agencies and enhanced sector cooperation

11. The participants of the Warsaw Summit agree to facilitate, including through continued co-financing, participation by partner countries in EU programmes and agencies. They also look forward to the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding on the association of the Republic of Moldova to the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. The participants of the Warsaw Summit welcome the entry into force of a protocol enabling the participation of the Republic of Moldova in EU programmes and the recent signature by Ukraine of a similar protocol and look forward to other partner countries' concluding such protocols. They also welcome the increased interaction of partner countries in EU agencies in various areas, including aviation safety, food safety and the fight against drugs. They agree to establish a priority list to facilitate participation of partner countries in programmes and agencies.

12. The participants of the Warsaw Summit welcome the fact that since the launch of the Eastern Partnership, sector cooperation has increased in a wide range of sectors. They call for enhancing sector cooperation and dialogue including through ministerial or senior officials meetings, as appropriate.

13. Recalling their energy interdependence, the participants of the Warsaw Summit agree to strengthen their energy partnership. They welcome the existing bilateral and multilateral cooperation on energy. They will promote an inclusive and open policy on energy security, transportation and supply. The participants of the Warsaw Summit agree to work further towards integrating their energy markets, including by closer involvement of the interested Eastern Partnership countries in the Energy Community Treaty. They welcome the recent membership of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in the Energy Community Treaty, and encourage other partner countries to join it. The participants of the Warsaw Summit agree to further strengthen long term energy security, including through cooperation on stable and secure energy supply and transit, nuclear safety, competitive energy markets, and through enhancement of physical infrastructure according to market principles, to enhance energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources and welcome the launch of the Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership with Ukraine and agree to work toward extending its membership to other interested partners. With regard to the development of strategically important infrastructure to ensure the diversification of the routes of the supply of energy to the European market from the Caspian Sea, the EU and partners concerned take note of the concrete steps taken towards the realisation of the Southern Corridor. Underlining the importance of nuclear safety, also as concerns the possible construction of new nuclear plants, they welcome the increased cooperation in this area and encourage transparency, accessibility of

information and full compliance with international nuclear safety and environmental agreements, and take note of the recent endorsement of the Declaration on stress tests.

14. In the transport sector, the infrastructure network of EU and partner countries should be linked more tightly in order to facilitate exchanges of people and goods. This can be achieved through closer market integration and improved infrastructure links.

The participants of the Warsaw Summit further agree to enhance cooperation on transport, in particular in the framework of the Eastern Partnership multilateral track. The participants of the Warsaw Summit take note of the good progress being made in developing a wider European Common Aviation Area. They welcome the signature of the Common Aviation Area Agreement between the EU and Georgia and the recent start of negotiations with the Republic of Moldova and look forward to finalising negotiations with Ukraine. They encourage other interested partners to negotiate similar agreements.

15. The participants of the Warsaw Summit recognise that progress towards a Green Economy which is environmentally sustainable and efficiently uses resource and energy is a key shared objective. They remain committed to comply with international environmental law standards. They agree to take urgent action to address climate change and combat environmental degradation, including caused by obsolete pesticides and other hazardous chemicals. They also agree to promote climate change dialogue and sharing of best practices, which should help implement international climate agreements and enable partner countries to actively use fast-start and long-term support to reach their climate policy aims. They welcome the on-going development of a Shared Environment Information System.

16. The participants of the Warsaw Summit agree to develop cooperation on agriculture and rural development including in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD). They welcome the conclusion of the Agreement on protection of geographical indications of agricultural products and foodstuff with Georgia, they look forward to the signature of a similar agreement with the Republic of Moldova, and encourage other partners to conclude such agreements.

17. In the light of the increasing role of information and communication technologies in the democratization of societies, the participants of the Warsaw Summit agree to enhance the liberalisation of electronic communications and welcome the work toward a network of Eastern Partnership electronic regulators.

18. Co-operation and policy dialogue under the Eastern Partnership on education, research, youth and culture should be further enhanced, including through the launch of an Eastern Partnership Youth Programme, the continuation of the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme and expanding participation in relevant programmes, including the successor of the Lifelong Learning, Culture and Youth in Action programmes. A Common Knowledge and Innovation

Space linked to Smart Growth and the EU innovation agenda will be established in order to give the policy more impact and visibility.

Strengthening of multilateral co-operation

19. The participants of the Warsaw Summit welcome the progress made in the multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership. The multilateral Platforms will further help advance partner countries' legislative and regulatory approximation to the EU acquis by allowing exchanges of experiences and best practices. The work programme of the platforms and panels will be reviewed to allow flexibility in responding to the needs of partner countries and to take into account new areas of cooperation. The participants of the Warsaw Summit further agree to focus on a swift implementation of the five Eastern Partnership Flagship Initiatives which support concrete cooperation projects between the EU and partner countries. They welcome and look forward to complementary and reinforcing national programmes, such as the Estonian Centre of Eastern Partnership focused on administrative capacity, as well as the Eastern Partnership Academy of Public Administration in Warsaw.

20. The participants of the Warsaw Summit acknowledge the significance of multilateral cooperation which is being enhanced through the Eastern Partnership and stress the importance to ensure coherence between various relevant regional initiatives and networks. They recall that the Eastern Partnership could help to develop closer ties among the partner countries themselves.

21. The participants of the Warsaw Summit welcome the establishment of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly which will play an important role in supporting progress towards the realisation of the objectives of the Eastern Partnership. They welcome the launch of a yearly Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of the Eastern Partnership held under the auspices of the Committee of the Regions. They call upon the Committee of the Regions to work with the local and regional authorities from Eastern partners to establish a permanent institutional framework of cooperation.

22. The participants of the Warsaw Summit underline the important role civil society plays in pursuing the goals of the Eastern Partnership. They commit themselves to fully support the work of civil society and promote the development of civil society's role in support of democracy, sustainable socio-economic development, good governance and the rule of law. The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and its National Platforms are essential to promote democratic values on which the Eastern Partnership is based. The Forum's involvement in the implementation of the Eastern Partnership should be strengthened, including through reinforced capacity and enhanced participation in the Eastern Partnership multilateral track. Targeted support has been, and will strongly continue to be, provided to civil society in partner countries in full coherence with existing instruments and structures, and possibly through the establishment of a Civil Society Facility and a European Endowment for Democracy.

23. The participants of the Warsaw Summit welcome the EIB and EBRD financial contributions to the Eastern Partnership, including through the EIB Eastern Partners Facility. They also welcome the establishment of the Eastern Partnership SME Facility to support the development of the SME sector and the contributions made through the Neighbourhood Investment Facility to support infrastructure projects which help connect the EU with Eastern partners, implemented in cooperation with European Financial Institutions.

The European Union has allocated considerable financial resources of up to EUR 1900 million in the period 2010-2013 in order to advance the implementation of the Eastern Partnership in the framework of bilateral and regional programmes. Risk capital and guarantee schemes are important financing instruments to promote economic development, in particular to support SME which are key drivers for job creation and innovation. Building on the success of previous experiences both in the Mediterranean region and in the Eastern partner countries, the participants of the Warsaw Summit stress the need to explore possible options to further support risk capital operations in the Eastern Neighbourhood.

As stipulated in the conclusions of the EU Foreign Affairs Council of the 20 June 2011, the allocation of additional resources from the European Union will be decided for the period 2012-2013 to support the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Review and, in this framework, the follow-up of the Warsaw Summit, for the benefit of partners committed to reforms. The participants of the Warsaw Summit look forward to the European Commission's proposal to establish under the next multi-annual financial framework a new European Neighbourhood Instrument which will, inter alia, reflect the new level of ambition of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

24. The participants of the Warsaw Summit take note of the cooperation with IFIs and third countries interested in donor coordination and more generally in the development of the Eastern Partnership, including through the informal Information and Coordination Group, without prejudice to the principles of cooperation with third states, as defined in the Prague Declaration.

25. The participants of the Warsaw Summit agree to develop political cooperation and dialogue between the EU and partner countries, including as regards governance reforms, joint efforts to enhance regional security and resolve conflicts, as well as relevant global and regional foreign and security issues of common interest.

26. The participants of the Warsaw Summit reaffirm that the Eastern Partnership should further promote stability and multilateral confidence building and that conflicts impede cooperation efforts. They therefore emphasise the need for their earliest peaceful settlement on the basis of the principles and norms of international law and the decisions and documents approved in this framework. They welcome the EU's strengthened role in conflict resolution and confidence building efforts in the framework or in support of existing agreed formats and processes, including through field presence when appropriate. They also welcome the

appointment of the new EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia. They stress the importance of the presence on the ground of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia. They also welcome the recent decision to resume official negotiations in the “5+2” format aiming at a viable and comprehensive political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict.

27. Stronger dialogue and cooperation on international security issues will be sought, including with a view to partners’ possible participation in civilian and military EU-led operations. Cooperation between the EU and partner countries, as well as regional cooperation projects and EU assistance programmes, will place greater emphasis on peaceful conflict resolution and confidence building measures.

28. The participants of the Warsaw Summit emphasize the need to promote and disseminate the key principles and activities of the Eastern Partnership among the public, and agree to take additional action to increase its visibility including by using the Eastern Partnership label widely to identify relations and activities between the EU and the partner countries.

29. The participants of the Warsaw Summit welcome the intention of the High Representative and the European Commission to propose by the end of this year a roadmap, in consultation with partners, that would list the objectives, instruments and actions and guide and monitor their implementation until the next Summit in the second half of 2013.

Declaration on the situation in Belarus adopted on the occasion of the Eastern Partnership Summit, Warsaw on 30 September 2011

The Heads of State and Government and representatives of the EU and its member states express their deep concern at the deteriorating human rights, democracy and rule of law situation in Belarus, deplore the continuing deterioration of media freedom in Belarus and call for the immediate release and rehabilitation of all political prisoners, an end to the repression of civil society and media and the start of a political dialogue with the opposition. The EU is also deeply concerned about reports that prisoners are denied access to their families and lawyers as well as to medical care while being put under

psychological and physical pressure. The European Union has consistently offered to deepen its relations with Belarus and, while reaffirming its policy of critical engagement, reiterates that such a deepening is conditional on progress towards respect by the Belarusian authorities for democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

The Commission makes headway in its cooperation in the area of Justice and Home Affairs within the Eastern Partnership
Brussels, 27 September 2011. [Link](#)

The European Commission decided to step up cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries in the area of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA). EU action in the external dimension of JHA has been growing steadily in the recent years. Cooperation on issues such as visa policy, asylum, border management, fighting organised crime and judiciary reform has helped improve security and stability both for citizens and for businesses in Eastern Partner countries and in the EU. The European Commission has published a Communication that seeks to build on this progress by further developing the dialogue and cooperation with the Eastern Partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine).

“The Commission is committed to supporting the rule of law in cooperation with our Eastern Partners,” said EU Justice Commissioner Viviane Reding. “An effective judiciary is not only a fundamental right but it is an important factor in building confidence and supporting economic growth. I encourage all Eastern Partnership countries to participate in the established multilateral frameworks in order to enhance our cooperation in civil and criminal justice matters.”

“We are sending an important signal that the EU is committed to active cooperation on well-managed and secure mobility with our Eastern Partners. Our engagement to enhance mobility and people-to-people contacts with the countries concerned is guided by the principles of human rights, respect of democracy and the rule of law. Continuous cooperation based on trust and respect within the Eastern Partnership is crucial if we are to increase mobility whilst at the same time addressing the challenges, such as trafficking in human beings, organised crime and corruption”, said Cecilia Malmström, EU Commissioner for Home Affairs.

“The vision of the Eastern Partnership is that of a common space based on freedom, democracy, rule of law and justice. A space where political co-operation is as close, economic integration is as deep and people-to-people contacts are as intense as possible. I am pleased to announce a new set of important measures which will strengthen our co-operation in promoting human rights, fighting corruption and organised crime, and enhancing mobility. This forms part of a renewed engagement of the European Union towards its Eastern neighbours in deepening cooperation in the area of justice and home affairs,” said Štefan Füle, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy.

Drawing from experience gained during the first years of cooperation within the Eastern Partnership, the Communication details concrete proposals that will further enhance and strengthen political and operational cooperation with our Eastern Partners. The Commission aims to move closer towards the establishment of a common

Justice and Home Affairs space notably by streamlining and consolidating the existing framework for cooperation.

Background

Justice and Home Affairs have had a prominent and long-standing place on the agenda of the dialogue and cooperation between the EU and the Eastern Partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), both at the bilateral and multilateral level. In particular, experience has shown that implementing measures to facilitate people-to-people contact, while promoting fundamental rights and rule of law, is an important prerequisite for maintaining peace and stability and has beneficial effects on the economic, cultural and social development of all the countries involved. This has been one of the guiding principles of the Eastern Partnership established at the Prague Summit in 2009 by the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

In the Stockholm Programme, the European Council invited the Commission to present a plan on how to take cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs forward within the Eastern Partnership. The need to actively cooperate in particular in the JHA area with our partners countries in the Eastern neighbourhood has been further highlighted in the Commission and High Representative's Joint Communication of 25 May 2011 on "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood" and the conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council on 20 June 2011, as well as in the context of the ongoing revision of the Global Approach to Migration. The Commission's Communication is a response to these calls. It reinforces the existing cooperation framework.

Reinforcing the structures for cooperation at bilateral, regional and multilateral level

- Making the framework for regional and multilateral cooperation more efficient and granting a more prominent place to JHA issues on the agenda of the Eastern Partnership multilateral structures, both at the technical (e.g. the creation of a new Panel on Migration and Asylum, incorporating main activities of the Söderköping Process) and political level (JHA Ministerial Meeting)

- Bringing greater coherence to bilateral relations by better articulating Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (and future Association Agreements) structure

- Mobility Partnerships should continue to serve as the framework for the dialogue and operational cooperation on legal migration, irregular migration, and migration and development. Offering the possibility of signing a mobility partnership to all Eastern Partners, depending of course on the progress made and the migration situation in the country in question

- Further strengthening the cooperation between the JHA agencies (FRONTEX, Europol, Eurojust, CEPOL, European Asylum Support Office and the Fundamental Rights Agency) and the Eastern Partners.

- Strengthening cooperation in a number of areas, including in the fight against corruption, the rule of law, migration, mobility and border management, asylum and international protection, the fight against organised crime and terrorism, and data protection.

- Introducing a light monitoring mechanism of the actions taken in order to improve cooperation between different operations implemented by the EU and its Member States

Main principles of cooperation with Eastern Partners

Cooperation with Eastern Partners should be based on four main principles:

- Differentiation – advancement of the cooperation depends on the individual progress made by the partner country on its JHA reform agenda

- Conditionality – further enhancement of the cooperation with Eastern Partners should be gradual and conditional on the progress made and successful cooperation in agreed areas

- Policy coherence – JHA cooperation with Eastern Partners will be considered in the context of the overall EU external policy and other relevant policies.

- Regional cooperation between the Eastern Partners is crucial for responding to cross border challenges in the JHA area and should be further encouraged.

- Promoting greater involvement of civil society in creating and following the JHA cooperation agenda, especially with regard to people-to-people contacts.

Nominations for 2011 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought
12 September 2011. [Link](#)

Among this year's five nominees for one of the world's most prestigious human rights awards is the Arab Spring movement, represented by activists from Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria. Other nominees include Palestinian doctor and peace activist Izzeldin Abuelaish, Belarusian journalist Dzimistry Bandarenko, writer and concentration camp survivor Boris Pahor and a community of Colombian peasants dedicated to peace and reconciliation. In alphabetical order they are:

Izzeldin Abuelaish: a Palestinian doctor and founder of the Daughters for Life Foundation is nominated by members of the European Conservatives and Reformists group (ECR). He has dedicated his life to peace in the conflict between Israel and Palestine. He is referred to as a "magical, secret bridge" between the two peoples.

Arab Spring: nominated by four EP political groups in Parliament (EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens) is represented by activists from across the Arab world. In the nomination statement, members write:

“The ‘Arab Spring’ is a symbol for all those willing dignity, democracy and fundamental rights in the Arab world. The award of the Sakharov Prize to the five nominees - Mohamed Bouazizi (Tunisia), Asmaa Mahfouz (Egypt), Ahmed al-Zubair Ahmed al-Sanusi (Libya), and Razan Zeitouneh and Ali Farzat (Syria) - who contribute to radical political changes in their respective countries would reaffirm the Parliament’s solidarity and firm support for their struggle for freedom, democracy and the end of authoritarian regimes.”

Dzmitry Bandarenka: nominated by members of the ECR group, Bandarenko is a Belarusian civil activist and member of the Belarusian Association of Journalists. He is one of the co-founders of the Charter’97 civil initiative for democratic change and co-ordinator of the European Belarus civil campaign that Belarus to join the EU.

Boris Pahor: a Slovene writer from Italy, he is known as a fighter for freedom of thought and a strong opponent of totalitarian regimes. He first gained prominence writing about his time in Nazi concentration camps. Writing in Slovene but living in his native town of Trieste, he is an advocate of minority rights and minority languages. Pahor was nominated by Milan Zver (EPP, Slovenia) and 51 other MEPs.

The San José de Apartadó Peace Community: nomination is supported by the Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left. They say: this “Colombian community of ‘campesinos’, peasant farmers, has become an internationally recognized symbol of courage, resilience and dedication to the high values of peace and justice, in an environment of brutality and destruction.” In a country plagued by decades of civil war and conflict, this community rejects affiliation to any of the armed groups and demands freedom and liberty for normal people.

About the prize

The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought is named in honour of the Soviet physicist and political dissident Andrei Sakharov. It has been awarded annually by the European Parliament since 1988 to individuals or organisations that have made an important contribution to the fight for human rights or democracy.

Former winners

Cuban dissident Guillermo Fariñas, last year’s laureate, has been on hunger strike over several years to protest against censorship in Cuba. He ended his latest hunger strike in July 2011 after Cuban officials agreed to free political prisoners.

Former laureates include Nobel Prize laureates Nelson Mandela (1988), Aung Sang Suu Kyi (1990) and the UN, represented by Secretary General Kofi Annan (2003).

What’s next

The winner will receive €50,000. Nominations come from a political group or at least 40 MEPs.

The short list of three finalists will be decided 20 October by the Foreign Affairs and Development Committees and the group leaders will choose this year’s laureate on 27 October.. The prize will be awarded 14 December during a ceremony at the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

The Commission proposes to open negotiations on Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements with Armenia
Brussels, 19 September 2011. [Link](#)

Today the Commission proposed to open negotiations on agreements to facilitate the procedures for issuing short-stay visas as well as on the readmission of irregular migrants between the European Union and Armenia.

“Easier access to visas will improve cooperation and exchanges between the EU and Armenia. Visa facilitation and readmission agreements are very tangible results of the Eastern partnership and I know how much this means to the citizens of these countries”, said Cecilia Malmström, EU Commissioner for Home Affairs.

“The human dimension of the Eastern Partnership is one of its most important ones. Fostering mobility and people-to-people contacts through visa facilitation is fundamental in order to promote social and economic development and mutual understanding between the people. The proposals to open negotiations on visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Armenia are an important step in this direction.” said Štefan Füle Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy.

The Commission proposes to open negotiations on a visa facilitation agreement between the EU and Armenia. The agreements will be based on reciprocity and provide visa facilitations for Armenian citizens. The list of suggested visa facilitations include the simplification of documentary evidence to be submitted in support of the visa application, the possibility of issuing multiple-entry visas with a long period of validity, the waiving/reducing of the handling fees for specific categories of travellers, set deadlines for processing visa applications, as well as a possible exemption from the visa obligation for holders of diplomatic passports.

At the same time, the Commission proposes to combine the easing of visa requirements for travellers from Armenia with agreed mechanisms for the readmission of irregular migrants. The negotiation of readmission agreements will provide for the speedy return of nationals staying without authorisation on the territory of the EU or Armenia.

Background

The visa facilitation and readmission negotiations with Armenia follow the political commitment taken at the

Prague Eastern Partnership Summit in May 2009 regarding the improvement of people-to-people contacts. This approach was reaffirmed more recently by the Eastern Partnership Foreign Ministers' conclusions in December 2010. Once negotiated, the agreements on visa facilitation and readmission can only enter into force simultaneously.

The Commission proposes to open negotiations on Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements with Azerbaijan
Brussels, 19 September 2011. [Link](#)

Today the Commission proposed to open negotiations on agreements to facilitate the procedures for issuing short-stay visas as well as on the readmission of irregular migrants between the European Union and Azerbaijan.

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Partnership Foreign Ministers' conclusions in December 2010. Once negotiated, the agreements on visa facilitation and readmission can only enter into force simultaneously.

Russian MFA Comments on the Deployment of a US Missile Defense Base
Moscow, 13 September 2011. [Link](#)

An agreement was signed on September 13 between the United States of America and Romania to deploy a base of American SM-3 missile interceptors in the country.

Scheduled for deployment in Romania by 2015, regardless of the evolution of real missile challenges, the missile defense base is another link in a strategic infrastructure of global missile defense being arrayed by the United States.

The agreement with Romania to deploy ground-based SM-3 interceptors and an Aegis system within the former Romanian Air Base at Deveselu, as well as the recent announcement of the impending deployment of the US forward based AN/TPY-2 radar in Turkey, suggests that the implementation of US antimissile plans in Europe is proceeding quickly and smoothly. It takes place amid a lack of progress in the Russian-NATO and Russian-American dialogue on the subject of missile defense.

We note that this course of events only increases the urgency of getting firm, legally binding assurances from the United States and NATO that the missile defense systems being deployed by them in Europe are not directed at the strategic nuclear forces of Russia. It is also necessary to have effective and substantive decisions worked out in the Russia-NATO Council regarding the missile defense concept and architecture being deployed in the region.

EU starts negotiations on Caspian pipeline
Brussels, 12 September 2011. [Link](#)

Today the European Union has adopted a mandate to negotiate a legally binding treaty between the EU, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan to build a Trans Caspian Pipeline System. This is the first time that the European Union has proposed a treaty in support of an infrastructure project. The treaty will be concluded by the EU after decision by all 27 Member States that the European Commission should lead the negotiations on behalf of them all.

This decision is a direct follow-up of the visit of President José Manuel Barroso and Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger to Baku and Ashgabat in January 2011 and their meetings with Presidents Aliyev and Berdimuhamedov. It constitutes a milestone in the realisation of the Southern Corridor and is the first operational decision as part of a coordinated and united external energy strategy, as proposed

in the European Commission's Communication on security of energy supply and international cooperation - "The EU Energy Policy: Engaging with Partners beyond Our Borders" - adopted on 7 September.

Energy Commissioner Oettinger stated that: "Europe is now speaking with one voice. The trans-Caspian pipeline is a major project in the Southern Corridor to bring new sources of gas to Europe. We have the intention of achieving this as soon as possible."

The Trans-Caspian Pipeline agreement will set the basis for the construction of a submarine pipeline connecting Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan, and in turn link this pipeline to infrastructure that will bring gas from Central Asia to the EU.

Discussions with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan will focus on inter alia a treaty setting out legal commitments between the European Union, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, the bilateral arrangements necessary for Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan to achieve the commissioning, building, and operation of the trans-Caspian pipeline itself, and the legal framework that will apply to filling the pipeline with gas from Turkmenistan, including an appropriate recognition of commercial arrangements

Background

Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan have expressed the availability of substantial gas volumes and a clear willingness to sell it to Europe. The European Union is ready to give the political and legal support for the gas deliveries to take place.

The Southern Corridor aims at supplying Europe with gas coming directly from the Caspian basin and the Middle East. It intends to increase security of supply for European households and industry by diversifying gas sources and routes, thus minimising dependence on few suppliers and potential gas cuts.

Over the last months, the EU has engaged in a regular dialogue with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, which figure among the key potential gas suppliers for Nabucco, ITGI (Interconnector Turkey- Greece-Italy) and TAP (Trans-Adriatic Pipeline).

In January 2011, President Barroso signed a Joint Declaration with President Aliyev which supports the swift allocation of available gas resources in Azerbaijan.

Commission for tripartite EU-Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan talks to sign a legally binding agreement for the realization of a Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline (TCGP) project. How do you assess this fact?

Answer: The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expresses regret over this decision of the EU Council. It was, by all appearances, made without taking into account the actually existing international legal and geopolitical situation in the Caspian Basin today.

As is known, the five Caspian Sea littoral states have agreed that all major issues of Caspian Sea-related activity can only be tackled by these countries themselves. This principle is enshrined in the politically binding Declaration, signed on October 16, 2007 by their Heads of State at the end of the Second Caspian Summit in Tehran. It is also confirmed in the Presidents' Joint Statement issued at the conclusion of the Third Caspian Summit in Baku on November 18, 2010.

It is clear that plans for laying the main trans-Caspian pipeline in a closed basin with high seismic activity and considerable sea-floor tectonics belong to just this kind of issues. The consequences of the construction and operation of the TCGP, even more so of any accident on it can affect all coastal states, not just those whose shores it will link. Such a pipeline is a completely new quality, a different structure in scale and potential risks that is incommensurable with the required fields-to-shore technological pipelines in subsea mineral extraction in the Caspian Sea. As far as we know, for the EU this is also the first such experiment, and we are surprised that they contemplate making it precisely in the Caspian Sea, to which none of the EU states has an outlet.

A system of cooperation agreements and mechanisms worked out by years of efforts of the littoral states operates with respect to the Caspian Sea today. Attempts to interfere in Caspian affairs from the outside, especially on issues that are sensitive to members of the Caspian Five, can very seriously complicate the situation in the region, and adversely affect the ongoing five-party talks on a new legal status of the Caspian Sea. Decisions on such large-scale projects should be taken with the participation of all littoral states.

We hope that the European Union Council will duly pay heed to the position of Russia and other Caspian Sea states and refrain from actions that have not been endorsed in an appropriate format.

MFA Spokesman Answers a Media Question about Russia's Attitude to EU Council Decision on Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline Project
Moscow, 13 September 2011. [Link](#)

Question: By its decision on September 12, the Council of the European Union has approved the mandate of the European

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