

Yerevan Declaration

2nd European People's Party Eastern Partnership Leaders' Summit
30 November 2012



The European People's Party Eastern Partnership Leaders assembled in Yerevan,

1. Whereas the Eastern Partnership countries have committed themselves to respect and promote international law and fundamental values, including democracy, rule of law, human-rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as good governance,
2. Whereas article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union states: "The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail",
3. Whereas every country has the sovereign right to join any international organisation or alliance and to define its own future,
4. Whereas the Eastern Partnership countries are not just neighbours but the European neighbours of the European Union,
5. Whereas the European People's Party Eastern Partnership Leaders adopted the Batumi Declaration on the 10 July 2012 asking for more content for the Eastern Partnership and stating the need to entrench in its scope the offer of a clear European perspective to the Eastern Partners who are willing and acting accordingly,
6. Whereas the respect for fundamental values, rights and freedoms is the cornerstone for the relations the European Union is willing to establish with nonEU states,

Fundamental values and Human Rights

7. Reaffirm their commitment to further European integration, which derives inter alia from the European People's Party's basic principles,
8. Acknowledge that only stable institutions guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities,
9. Underline that further advances in the fields of human rights, justice, security, mobility and migration are essential to address national and regional challenges and will contribute to strengthening and developing the cooperation on the European continent,
10. Commit to ensure the respect for the rule of law, including the establishment of an independent and efficient judiciary, and the prevention and deterrence of corruption in both private and public sectors, which is essential for the protection of democratic values,
11. Share the view that an effective, tangible and concrete assistance from the European Union in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms, rule of law, justice and security makes progress in the Eastern Partnership countries more sustainable,
12. Call, therefore, for a holistic approach, corroborating the track record of delivered reforms to be ensured by the Eastern partners with enhanced, adequate and efficient advice and financial assistance granted by the European Union for the establishment of genuine democracy and rule of law governance,

13. Consider that such a screening exercise will contribute both to enhancing the European Union's monitoring capabilities in timely identifying the existing gaps and subsequently tailored, country based solutions, and improving targeted deliveries of the Eastern partners in reforming the respective areas,

14. Underline that fair conditionality based on the differentiation and more-for-more principles should be the guiding lines of this renewed and strengthened approach to reforms in the areas of democracy, justice, freedom and security,

15. Share the view that, alongside the more-for-more principle, the less-for-less principle should be applied when an Eastern partner commits serious and sustainable backward steps breaching the above mentioned values and principles, particularly when the fairness of the electoral process is threatened or when selective justice is implemented,

16. Welcome the recently conducted parliamentary elections in Armenia and Georgia and the progress made by these two countries since the previous elections in terms of freedom, competitiveness and fairness of the electoral process,

17. Call on the Government of Georgia, after the first ever peaceful and democratic transfer of power in the country, to pursue, until the October 2013 Presidential elections, peaceful and effective cohabitation in line with the provisions of the Georgian Constitution in order to maintain the democratic institutions and the reform process,

18. Acknowledge the role of the Visa Dialogues launched with Eastern partners in mainstreaming the EU's standards in the reforms of the justice and home affairs area,

19. Underline that the Human Rights Dialogues play an equally important role in promoting and strengthening human rights standards in the Eastern Partnership countries,

20. Encourage, therefore, all the Eastern partners to actively engage in this framework of dialogue,

Civil society

21. Affirm that the Eastern Partnership is a partnership between peoples and not merely a partnership between the European Union and the Eastern partners,

22. Underline that in view of ensuring the prominence of democratic governance and rule of law, a developed and empowered civil society is paramount to the irreversibility of the pursued reforms in the area of human rights and fundamental values,

23. Undertake to ensure a favourable environment for a pluralistic and independent civil society, Highlight the role of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum in streamlining a more structured and meaningful participation of the Eastern Partnership countries civil societies in the achievement of the Eastern Partnership's objectives,

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25. Encourage the European Commission to support National Platforms of the Civil Society Forum to hold elections of its representatives at the country level; therefore, increasing their legitimacy and representation,

26. Note with satisfaction that for the first time the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum to be held in 2013 in Moldova will be hosted by an Eastern partner,

27. Welcome the role of the Civil Society Facility to support the establishment of a pluralistic, independent and vibrant civil society as a key element of genuine democratic governance,

Eastern Partnership Parliamentary dimension

28. Acknowledge the progress of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly and note with satisfaction the co-signatories countries active result-oriented engagement in this Parliamentary Assembly,

29. Underline that the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly is a key instrument in order to develop the democratic dimension of the Eastern Partnership and to implement the best practices in the field of parliamentary working methods in the Eastern Partnership countries,

30. Welcome the creation of the EPP Group in the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, which held its first meeting in Tbilisi in April 2012 and its second meeting in Chisinau in October 2012,

31. Call, therefore, for more regular meetings of the plenary session of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, which could be held twice a year instead of once a year,

Towards the 2013 Eastern Partnership Vilnius Summit

32. Reaffirm the wish expressed in the Batumi Declaration that the 2013 Eastern Partnership Vilnius Summit will be of significant importance for the European perspective of the Eastern partners,

33. Underline the excellent pace of progress of the negotiations of the Association Agreements between the European Union and Armenia, Georgia and Moldova,

34. Call on the Ukrainian authorities to pave the way for the signature of the Association Agreement taking the adequate initiatives in order to fulfil the necessary conditions,

35. Reiterate the wish that the negotiations on Association Agreements, Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas of the European Union with Armenia, Georgia and Moldova will be completed before the 2013 Eastern Partnership Vilnius Summit,

36. Express the hope that the Visa Dialogues aiming at visa free travel between the European Union and the above mentioned three Eastern partners will be in their terminal phase, if not completed in the most advanced cases, before the 2013 Vilnius Summit,

37. Welcome the EU Foreign Affairs Council's decision on launching the assessment of the benchmarks set out under the second phase of the Action Plan on Visa Liberalisation based on the fulfilment of all the benchmarks under the first phase of the Visa Dialogue with the Republic of Moldova,

38. Highlight the importance of an effective implementation of the "Eastern Partnership: Roadmap 2012-2013" and particularly its bilateral dimension, which should lead subsequently to more ambitious decisions to be taken at the 2013 Eastern Partnership Vilnius Summit, based on the principles of differentiation and more-for-more,

39. Welcome the European Commission's readiness to conduct a donor conference with Armenia and the international financial institutions, once the conditions are met,

40. Call, therefore, on all relevant stakeholders to support the organisation of the conference and to contribute to its success,

Resolution of the conflicts

41. Reaffirm the importance of regional stability and security for a full realisation of the Eastern Partnership's potential,

42. Stress the importance of finding peaceful and negotiated settlements to the conflicts in the region and call for a strong commitment by all the concerned parties in this regard,

43. Believe that the relations between the European Union and the countries of the region have opened new avenues and opportunities for an increased role for the EU in peaceful conflict settlement efforts in support of existing agreed formats and processes of negotiation, inter alia, through the EU field-presence when appropriate and deemed necessary,

44. Consider that the EU Special representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia should continue to play a significant role in this regard,

45. Underline the importance of enhanced support for confidence building measures concurring to on-going negotiations within existing formats, with a view to creating a conducive environment for the peaceful settlement of the conflicts, Stress that the practice of closed borders is inconsistent with the aims and purposes of the

46. Eastern Partnership and the European aspirations and that it impedes full scale regional economic cooperation and European integration,

47. Suggest that the European Union promotes unhindered movements of people and goods throughout all borders in the EU Neighbourhood area, and in particular among EasternPartner countries,

EPP activities

48. Acknowledge the importance of improved political steering of the Eastern Partnership development and praise the EPP's initiative to enhance the political dimension of the Eastern Partnership by establishing institutionalised platforms for dialogue and cooperation,

49. Welcome the 2nd European People's Party Eastern Partnership Leaders' Summit,

50. Confirm, as decided in Batumi in July 2012, that the 3rd European People's Party Eastern Partnership Leaders' Summit will take place in Batumi in July 2013,

51. Agree to hold the 4th European People's Party Eastern Partnership Leaders' Summit in Chisinau in December 2013,

52. Note that the next meeting of the EPP Group in the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly will take place in Brussels in Spring 2013,

53. Confirm that an EPP Foreign Affairs Ministers meeting (EU and non-EU) will be organised in Chisinau in September 2013 to prepare the 2013 Eastern Partnership Vilnius Summit,

54. Propose to invite, at least once per year, relevant representatives of the Eastern Partnership countries to attend the different EPP ministerial meetings.

Wilfried MARTENS

*President of the European People's Party
Former Prime Minister of Belgium*

Serzh SARGSYAN

*President of the Republican Party of Armenia
President of Armenia*

Mikheil SAKASHVILI

*President of the United National Movement of Georgia
President of Georgia*

Vlad FILAT

*President of the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova
Prime Minister of Moldova*

**If you have any question
you would like to ask
please contact us.**

Rue du Commerce 10
1000 Brussels

T +32-2-2854140

E connect@epp.eu