



**EU High Representative/
Vice President**

Brussels, 13 December 2010

Eastern Partnership Foreign Ministers Meeting Chair's conclusions

1. On 13 December 2010 the second Foreign Ministers' meeting within the framework of the Eastern Partnership was held in Brussels.
2. The meeting drew high level participation from the EU, including 27 EU Member States, the EU Council, the European Commission, the six Eastern European Partner countries (hereinafter the Partner countries), the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee (EESC), the Committee of the Regions (COR), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The meeting was chaired by the HR/VP Catherine Ashton, joined by Commissioner Stefan Füle. The Partner countries were represented by Foreign Ministers Edward Nalbandian of Armenia, Sergei Martynov of Belarus, Gregory Vashadze of Georgia, Iurile Leanca of the Republic of Moldova, Konstantin Gryshchenko of Ukraine and by Deputy Minister Mahmud Mammad-Guliyev of Azerbaijan. Further participants were Staffan Nilsson, President of the EESC, Mercedes Bresso, President of the COR, Horst Reichenbach, Vice President of EBRD and Claudio Cortese, Deputy DG for EIB.
3. Recalling the Eastern Partnership Declaration, adopted at the Summit on 7 May 2009 in Prague, Ministers underlined that the Partnership is based on commitments to the principles of international law and to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to market economy, sustainable development and good governance. They also underlined the importance of the principles of inclusiveness, differentiation and conditionality, as well as joint ownership. Ministers expressed the need for a strong link between the ongoing review of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the further development of the EaP.
4. The Ministers also emphasized the strategic importance of the Eastern Partnership as a way to deepen and strengthen relations between the EU and the Partner countries, to accelerate political association, further economic integration and approximation towards the European Union and to support political and socio-economic reforms of the Partner countries.

P R E S S

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5. The Ministers discussed **the state of play** of the Partnership on the basis of the implementation report from European Commission. They took note of the substantive implementation achieved since the last ministerial conference of December 2009, and welcomed the intensification in the EU's **bilateral relations** with a number of Partners, demonstrated by progress in the negotiation of Association Agreements and steps towards greater mobility of persons.
6. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the progress made in implementing the **multilateral track** of the Eastern Partnership. They welcomed the work done under the guidance of four thematic Platforms one year after the adoption of their work programmes.
7. The Ministers expressed the need to advance further in implementing Flagship initiatives and expressed their wish that other financial sources be found to complement the EU budget contribution to the EaP.
8. The ministers noted with satisfaction improved coordination of the work of **International Financial Institutions** and other donors in trying to achieve a more coherent and holistic approach to the EaP. In this vein, the ministers invited the Commission to further explore the potential of the informal Information and Coordination group which flanks the Eastern Partnership.
9. The Ministers expressed support for increased involvement of **civil society** in the technical work of the multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership in cooperation with the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum. During the Ministerial meeting, representative of the Civil Society Forum, presented the Ministers with the conclusions and recommendations of the meeting in Berlin on 18-19 November 2010. More structured dialogue between the EU and the civil society in the Partner countries on national level was mentioned.
10. During the discussion on the **priorities for the coming period** of implementation, Ministers stressed the need to make further progress particularly in negotiations on Association Agreements, including Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas, where appropriate or Institutional Reform Plans linked to the Comprehensive Institution-Building Programmes. Better use of the existing agreements and the Visa Code was stressed.
11. Ministers held an initial discussion on **possible areas where more could be done** within the Eastern Partnership, notably: improving sectoral cooperation; facilitating the participation of the Partners to the EU programmes; strengthening cooperation in the area conflict prevention and resolution; consolidating the role of civil society. Particular emphasis should be given to easing the mobility of certain categories of people such as students, researchers, academics or business operators.
12. They looked forward to a strategic debate on the future of the Eastern Partnership at the upcoming **Summit** in Budapest in May 2011. The priorities for further implementation agreed at this meeting shall serve as a basis for the Summit preparation.
13. The Ministers agreed to hold the next Eastern Partnership Foreign Ministers Meeting during the second half of 2011.