



**Euronest Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire Euronest
Parlamentarische Versammlung Euronest
Парламентская Ассамблея Евронест**

28.05.2013

RESOLUTION

on regional security challenges in Eastern European partner countries

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The EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly,

- having regard to the Constituent Act of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly of 3 May 2011,
- having regard to the Conclusions of the Eastern Partnership Summits held in Prague on 7 May 2009, and in Warsaw on 29-30 September 2011,
- having regard to Article 8 and Article 49 of Treaty of the European Union,
- having regard to the European Neighbourhood Policy package of 20 March 2013 including Progress in 2012 Reports and recommendations for actions for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine,
- having regard to the Council conclusions on the Eastern Partnership of 18 February 2013,
- having regard to the European Parliament's resolution of 17 November 2011 containing the European Parliament's recommendations to the EU Council, the Commission and the EEAS on the negotiations of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement,
- having regard to the European Parliament's resolution of 22 October 2009 on democracy building in the EU's external relations,
- having regard to the European Parliament's resolutions on the Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy and on the EU relations with the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine,
- having regard to the Joint Communications of 25 May 2011 by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission entitled 'A new response to a changing Neighbourhood', as well as of 20 March 2013 entitled "European Neighbourhood Policy: Working towards a Stronger Partnership",
- having regard to the European Security Strategy and the national security strategies of the Eastern European partners,
- having regard to the OSCE Astana Commemorative Declaration of December 2010, entitled 'Towards a Security Community' and the OSCE Ministerial Council's Decision of 7 December 2012 on the "OSCE Helsinki +40 process",

¹ As adopted in Brussels, Belgium on 28 May 2013

- having regard to the Multi-annual Indicative Programme 2012-2013 of the EU Instrument for Stability,
 - having regard to the preparations for signing the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine, as well as the good progress in bilateral negotiations for new Association Agreements between the EU and the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova,
 - having regard to its resolution on "Challenges for the future of democracy, including the question of free and independent media in Eastern Partnership and EU countries", adopted at the meeting of the EURONEST PA held in Baku on 3 April 2012,
- A. whereas the EU and the Eastern European partners share a common vital interest in ensuring peace and greater security in Europe's Eastern neighbourhood as the primary conditions for development, prosperity and long-term stability in the region;
 - B. whereas the Eastern Partnership was established as a common endeavour of the European Union and its Eastern European partners with the main goal of accelerating political association and furthering economic integration, on the basis of differentiation, responsibility and joint ownership; whereas the EU and Eastern European partners currently manifest various levels of aspiration for closer relations with the EU, ranging from aspiration for EU Membership to strengthened cooperation; whereas, in this regard, the EU recognizes the aspirations of Eastern European partners based on their ambitions and ability to comply with the resulting commitments, including those founded on Article 49 of the Treaty of the European Union;
 - C. whereas the EU and the Eastern European partners recognise failure in democratic transition processes, regional conflicts, the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the illicit trafficking of arms and people, terrorism and organised crime as major threats and regional challenges for security although their perception on these issues may differ;
 - D. whereas the goals of democracy, respect for human rights, good governance and security are intertwined; whereas social discontent, poverty, inequality, conflict of interests, corruption and short-sighted populism may give rise to political turmoil;
 - E. whereas, although the cold-war lines dividing Europe no longer exist, new lines of fractures dividing the Eastern European region have emerged mainly resulting from unresolved conflicts due to separatism instigated from abroad;
 - F. whereas a general feature of the military situation in the Eastern European region is an increasing imbalance in military capacities;
 - G. whereas widespread smuggling and detention of illegal weapons undermine the security of some Eastern European countries and territories with regard, in particular,

to the ones involved in unresolved conflicts;

- H. whereas unresolved conflicts hamper the economic, social and political development of the countries concerned, as well as regional cooperation, stability and security, undermine the state of democracy in the countries concerned and represent an obstacle to the full development of the Eastern Partnership; whereas, in particular, existing conflicts between founding members of the Eastern Partnership must be resolved peacefully and constructively in a spirit of good neighbourly relations with a view to paving the way for a genuine process of closer European cooperation; whereas, in this regard, the possible role of the multilateral dimension of the Eastern Partnership could be an additional format to step up efforts in mediation, mutual understanding, confidence building and conflict settlement;
- I. whereas political developments within the EU's Southern Neighbourhood in the aftermath of the Arab Spring have drawn the most attention from EU leaders, with less priority being given to responses to security concerns in the Eastern European Neighbourhood;
- J. whereas, although Eastern European partners have a common historical heritage and share the aspirations to establish mutually beneficial relationships based on trust with their neighbours, some of them faced closely interconnected conflicts rooted in distrust, linguistic and cultural divides or political rivalries, which were exacerbated during the soviet era; whereas these conflicts are a source of instability and insecurity, as well as an obstacle to political reform and economic development of the whole region;
- K. whereas the emergence of the unresolved conflicts within the Eastern European region following the collapse of the Soviet Union has led to the closure of borders, preventing populations from benefiting economically and socially from external exchange and hampering attempts to develop intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding between peoples;
- L. whereas the EU is active in seeking to resolve unresolved conflicts in the Eastern European region by co-chairing the 'Geneva talks' directed at peace and security in Georgia and participating as an observer in the '5+2 format negotiations' on the Transnistrian conflict while France is one of the three co-chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict; whereas in the Joint Communication of 25 May 2011, entitled 'A new response to a changing neighbourhood', the EU stated its ambition to enhance its involvement in solving unresolved conflicts, in particular by stepping up its support for the existing negotiation formats; whereas the European Endowment for Democracy was set up last year with the aim to provide rapid and flexible support to those that work for democratic changes;
- M. whereas the Russian Federation is a major stakeholder in protracted conflicts due to its occupation of Tskhinvali and Abkhazia regions of Georgia and its military presence in separatist regions of the Republic of Moldova and its political and economic influence in the whole Eastern European region; whereas in contrast, the EU is engaged in the field through two civilian missions deployed under the EU Common Defence and Security Policy (CSDP), namely the EU Border Assistance Mission to

Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) and the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM);

- N. whereas Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova have engaged in partnerships with the EU under the EU CSDP; whereas Ukraine is the only Eastern European partner which has so far contributed to the EU CSDP missions and operations, under a framework agreement with the EU, facilitating the speedy involvement of their military forces; whereas the EU and the Republic of Moldova are in the process of ratifying a similar framework agreement;
- O. whereas some countries have benefited from the application of the "more for more" principle in terms of increased financial assistance, reflecting systematic application of increased policy conditionality and the pace of reforms in the three Eastern European partner countries;
- P. whereas the Eastern European partners have established long-lasting cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) on the basis of common interests; whereas NATO relations with the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine have contributed to democratic, institutional and defence reforms at national level as well as participation in NATO-led peace support operations;
- Q. whereas the threats from chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials (CBRN), the illicit spread of weapons and organized crime remain an important concern for regional security due the abundance of stocks of arms and ammunition left over from the Cold War;
- R. whereas the persistence of unresolved territorial conflicts, the lack of impartiality and independence, as well as the inefficiency of the judiciary and of law enforcement bodies, internal political disputes and interference between private interests and public affairs are a breeding ground for organised crime;
- S. whereas within the Eastern Neighbourhood framework, there should be the huge potential of interconnection between the EU and Eastern European partners, as well as mutual beneficial outlooks, by facilitating and developing of important activities and projects especially in the field of energy security, diversification of supplies and routes of energy resources (Southern Corridor), trade and economic integration, what should be one of the instruments guaranteeing the enhancement of security and peace;
- T. whereas natural and man-made disasters are recognised as a general threat throughout the Eastern European region, given its exposure to the risks of seism, extreme meteorological conditions, hydro-geological events, such as floods and droughts, and urban and industrial disasters;
- 1. Stresses its conviction that the EU and the Eastern European partners have a common political responsibility to promote peace and security throughout the European continent, overcoming long lasting historic divisions and focusing on

common values;

2. Considers that security challenges in the Eastern European region stem from unbalanced and incomplete democratic transitions, internal separatism and external threats which require a concerted response and further cooperation between the countries of the region and the neighbouring major powers on the basis of mutual respect and the protection of their national interests;
3. Stresses that the Eastern Partnership offers a unique multilateral forum for enhancing dialogue and cooperation on regional security issues within a group of states committed to the values and principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, as set out in the Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit held in Warsaw in September 2011;
4. Emphasizes that the forthcoming Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius offers the best opportunity to underline European perspective for the most ambitious Eastern European partners, based on their European aspirations, as well as commitment to promote common European values and principles;

Building up a common space of stability and peace through meeting the challenge of democratic transition and economic and social development

5. Stresses that the strengthening of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, minority rights and fundamental freedoms and a genuine independence and efficiency of the judiciary, the inadmissibility of selective justice, including the banning of fuelling attacks on political opponents through hate speech and other provocative actions, are essential for creating the conditions for sustainable security in the Eastern European region and for building up people's long-term trust in state institutions; calls in this respect on Eastern European partners to increase transparency, accountability and democratic oversight of law enforcement agencies; underlines that the full respect of the rule of law and of the constitutional order is essential in post-electoral contexts;
6. Considers that reforming state institutions on the basis of democratic principles and rule of law, strengthening freedom of expression and opinion, as well as pluralism and independence of media, guaranteeing reliable, free and fair electoral processes, inclusive dialogue with the opposition and proper independent judiciary, preventing abuses of power and fighting against corruption are critical factors in mitigating the risk of outbreak of political conflicts; takes the view that the development of good governance and democratic decision-making processes positively influences political leaders in their dialogue with societies and their choice on security issues;
7. Welcomes the recent constitutional amendments in Georgia aimed at further balancing of the executive and legislative branches;
8. Calls for adoption of a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation; considers that protection of human rights and rights of minorities are fundamental European values and any threats or violations should be prevented as these may also be risk factors for destabilisation and insecurity; emphasizes that free public space is an

essential feature of a responsible society and a precondition to peaceful solution of political conflicts; therefore denounces any attempts to limit the freedom of expression of journalists, dissidents, human rights defenders and civil society;

9. Considers that a strong and vibrant civil society is a key factor allowing for democratic progress and improved protection of human rights; calls on the Eastern European partners to abolish undue legal and administrative restrictions that limit the universal rights of assembly and association and to ensure that human rights defenders enjoy full civil and judicial protection and are not marginalised in society;
10. Calls on the Eastern European partners to initiate or pursue economic reforms aimed at completing the transition into well functioning market economies and growth, as well as establishing conditions for prosperity, sustainable development and social and regional cohesion; stresses that reducing poverty, social exclusion and inequality is essential for achieving success of and increasing confidence in those reforms and for mitigating the risks of social unrest fuelled by extremist and radical groups;
11. Calls on the EU and Eastern European partners to give new momentum to joint efforts for promoting democratic, social and economic reforms in the Eastern European region, at the Eastern Partnership Summit to be held in autumn 2013 in Vilnius; in this connection, expects the EU and the Eastern European partners who have made substantial progress in the negotiations to sign or initialize the Association Agreements, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas, by the time of the Summit; in this regard, calls on all involved partners to engage in early discussions regarding the territorial application of the Association Agreements;
12. Supports the EU's approach to the Eastern European partners, based on mutual accountability and the 'more for more' principle encouraging partners to bring forward the political reforms needed to achieve the Eastern Partnership's common objectives and to ensure political stability and security; notes, that as reaffirmed in the Joint Communication of the European Commission and High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs of 20 March 2013 entitled "European Neighbourhood Policy: Working towards a Stronger Partnership", the principle of "more for more" implies an increasing need for differentiation of EU's policy response based on the ambitions and performance of each partner;
13. Is concerned about the risks of a military build-up in the Eastern European region, diverting resources from support for economic and human development; recommends that the EU Member States and Eastern European partners review their arms export-import policies in the region with a view to reaching agreements on disarmament and demilitarisation of conflict areas, in the light of the progress made by individual partner states on democratic transformation, institution building and respect for human rights;
14. Recognises the particular importance of energy security for the overall stability of the Eastern Partnership region; supports for that reason the development of secure and inclusive energy infrastructure, such as the South Corridor, with a positive impact on

security, economic development and long-term stability of the region.

Engaging in the peaceful settlement of protracted conflicts

15. Stresses that maintaining the status quo in unresolved conflicts within the Eastern European region is not acceptable as this entails the risk of a further escalation in tensions and a resumption of armed hostilities; underlines that an arms race would only further increase the risks to regional security; welcomes EU's engagement which reflects the EU's comprehensive approach in the area, addressing issues of security, the rule of law and civilian crisis management; stresses that ensuring stability and peaceful resolution of conflicts is in the common interests of the EU and the Eastern European partners and urges them to promote and establish an environment conducive to progress in conflict settlement, as well as encourages implementing support related peace-building activities;
16. Underlines the responsibility of the EU in contributing to conflict resolution, by supporting the dialogue between parties and implementing programmes and tools for conflict transformation; stresses the role played by the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia in working towards a peaceful resolution of the protracted conflicts and supports the extension of his mandate beyond 30 June 2013; commends the EUBAM and the EUMM missions for improving security and helping to build confidence across borders within the Republic of Moldova and Georgia; recommends that the EU extend the mandate of the EUBAM and EUMM and enhance their effectiveness; calls on all parties concerned to continue their cooperation under the European Partnership for the Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, which is a EU-funded civil society programme and whose second phase was launched in November 2012;
17. Notes the important role played in the Eastern European region by the Russian Federation due to its political and economic influence and its direct military engagement in all the protracted conflicts; calls on the Russian authorities to exert this influence in a constructive way, fully respecting the sovereignty of the countries of the region and refraining from any actions which would endanger regional stability; reiterates that the already agreed withdrawal of Russian foreign military troops from the breakaway regions of the Republic of Moldova and Georgia would represent a significant step forward in the process towards a peaceful settlement of the conflicts;
18. Calls on the Russian Federation to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognised borders of Georgia; calls, in this regard, on the Russian Federation to ensure the unconditional implementation of the 2008 cease-fire agreement, to retreat its military forces from Georgian territories, to allow unfettered access for the EUMM to Abkhazia, Georgia and the Tskhinvali region, Georgia and to annul its decision to recognise the independence of these regions from Georgia;
19. Calls on the Russian Federation to meet the commitments it made on the occasion of its accession to the Council of Europe in 1996, and then at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in 1999, regarding the Transnistrian region and recommends that the existing peacekeeping forces based on the territory of the Republic of Moldova

be replaced by an international civilian mission whose legitimacy will be recognised by the parties to the Transnistrian conflict; urges the Russian authorities to refrain from all political and diplomatic measures that would disturb the settlement process and hinder positive, result oriented agreements;

20. Believes that there can be no alternative to the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and expresses its full support for the set of the Madrid Principles; regrets that the work of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, based on the principles of international law enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the OSCE Framework has so far yielded no concrete results and calls for a more effective and stronger engagement of the EU; urges all parties concerned to step up their efforts and commitment, since a decisive progress is still to be achieved by the OSCE Minsk Group more than two decades after its set-up; calls on the conflict parties - Armenia and Azerbaijan - to be constructive in the negotiations;
21. Calls on the EU to increase efforts and to closely take part in the mediation processes for the peaceful settlement of protracted conflicts in formats in which the EU is already present; underlines that the EU pro-active mediation in conflict resolution is essential for the security and the long-term stability of the Eastern European region and a prerequisite for the success of the European Neighbourhood Policy; calls on the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia to contribute more to the resolution of the conflicts in South Caucasus through practical measures such as capacity building, facilitating consensus among parties, strengthening public support and enhancing civil society participation;
22. Urges all relevant sides to engage pro-actively with the Transnistrian side in view of promoting a mutually acceptable vision for a common future, and to agree accordingly on the basic parameters for the settlement; welcomes, in this respect, the agreement of January 2012 on a "small steps" approach to tackle practical issues of primary importance for ordinary citizens;
23. Highlights the European Parliament's current intention to encourage the definition of a European Maritime Security Strategy and notes that such a strategy can be useful for the resolution of the protracted conflicts, provided it includes an ambitious agenda for the Black Sea;
24. Calls on the EU, the Eastern European partners and the relevant regional actors to enhance their policy dialogue by proposing a set of confidence-building measures in the Eastern European region with a view to establishing shared principles and an agenda for strengthening security and progressing towards conflict resolution; calls, in this regard, on Ukraine's chairmanship of the OSCE in 2013 to implement an ambitious agenda and assure the participation of all Eastern European partners in EU dialogue forums, including Human Rights Dialogue for making progress in peaceful settlement processes for the unresolved conflicts;
25. Calls on the EU and the Eastern European partners to further develop regional multilateral programmes, set up incentives for regional cooperation and step up cross-border projects for building confidence and promoting trust between populations, paying special attention to conflict transformation measures and

contributing to reconstruction and economic and social development in conflict-affected regions by encouraging trade, travel and investment;

26. Underlines the need for bilateral development of trade, economic integration and infrastructure between the Eastern European partners;
27. Urges the Eastern European partners to implement quality education programmes that will help eradicate ethnic, territorial and religious hatred and enmity, and strengthen the respect for the rights of minorities; considers that intercultural and inter-religious dialogues should be further enhanced in order to favour mutual understanding, respect and tolerance among the Eastern European partners; stresses, in this regard, the importance of strong and active civil societies which can strengthen such dialogues and develop people-to-people contacts across borders and conflict lines; calls on the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum to further engage in the implementation of the Eastern Partnership multilateral and bilateral activities pursuing this objective;
28. Recommends to the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum to initiate media training programmes with professional European journalist organizations which would combat mutual animosity and hate speech and ensure professional standards when covering inter ethnic relations and call for support to independent think tanks cooperating on the development of models to ensure security, conflict resolution and prevention;
29. Acknowledges that feelings of injustice and frustration among populations may arise from the unresolved conflicts; recommends that state officials and political leaders in the Eastern European partners refrain from exploiting such trends in public opinion by using it as an instrument for internal political campaigns, as this can only fuel antagonisms and lead to further tensions;

Strengthening political and military cooperation for tackling regional security risks

30. Underlines the critical role of international organisations and partnerships in addressing regional security challenges and establishing a cooperative approach to security that encompasses its political and military dimensions; in this regard calls for a more intense political cooperation with the Russian Federation in order to identify sustainable solutions to regional security challenges, including the protracted conflicts;
31. Calls on the EU Member States and Eastern European partners concerned to intensify their dialogue on security issues under the existing formats of the EU, the NATO Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the OSCE and the Council of Europe and recommends that they coordinate their cooperation in order to work more efficiently on the ground, save resources and establish programmes which are tailored to the individual needs of participating countries; considers, in particular, that the member states of both the EU and NATO should pool resources to consolidate cooperation with the Eastern European partners under the CSDP format and the NATO Partnership for Peace programme;
32. Recognises the value and achievements of cooperation between the EU, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova under the EU CSDP, which has helped to establish security agreements and frameworks for EU-led missions and crisis management

- operations; calls on the EU Member States to take due account of the aspirations of the Eastern European partners wishing to enhance their capacities for increasing their level of cooperation under the CSDP format and recommends closer cooperation through initiatives in support of capacity building and training for national personnel in the security and defence sectors;
33. Welcomes the OSCE Ministerial Council's Decision of 7 December 2012 to launch the 'Helsinki +40 process' as a means of providing political impetus to advance work towards a security community and a strategic roadmap for strengthening cooperation in the OSCE up to 2015, which will mark the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act;
 34. Encourages the EU together with the relevant international organisations and key partners to develop the post-conflict reconstruction scenarios which could act as a further incentive in the resolution of conflicts by showing the tangible benefits of peaceful settlements;
 35. Emphasises the need to revitalise and extend cooperation on disarmament, arms trade regulation, conventional arms control and the fight against illicit trafficking in arms; to this aim, recommends that the EU and the Eastern European partner countries review compliance with international agreements, in particular the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, further support a universal Arms Trade Treaty and engage in a dialogue to develop further cooperation on disarmament and arms control; highlights the vital importance of curbing the arms race;
 36. Calls on the EU to strengthen cooperation programmes targeting the Eastern European partners and to increase their funding under the EU Instrument for Stability in order to mitigate the risks arising from CBRN materials and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related technological expertise;
 37. Stresses that reforming public administration, the judiciary and law enforcement authorities in the Eastern European partner countries is essential for making progress in combating organised crime, corruption, cyber crime, money laundering and terrorism; calls on the Eastern European partners to engage in or to continue implementing an ambitious agenda to ensure the independence of the judiciary and to further cooperate with the EU in the fields of law enforcement and customs administration with the aim of increasing public trust in these institutions;
 38. Calls on the EU and the Eastern European partners to build on, and extend beyond 2014, the Eastern Partnership Flagship Initiative for the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Man-Made and Natural Disasters, the overall objective of which is to contribute to the peace, stability, security and prosperity of the Eastern Partnership Countries and to protect the environment, the population, the cultural heritage, the resources and the infrastructures of the region by strengthening the countries' resilience, preparedness and response to man-made and natural disasters;
 39. Stresses the importance of energy security in shaping the security environment in the region; urges to work further towards integrating energy markets of the EU and Eastern European partners, reiterates the importance of the Southern

Energy Corridor and its flagship - trans-Caspian-Black-Sea energy projects within the Southern Energy Corridor initiative for achieving the reduction of dependence on energy imports from market-dominant suppliers and calls on the EU to facilitate and promote diversification of gas supply, which will bring the EU and Eastern European partners to deeper cooperation and linkage;

40. Calls for fostering regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations and helping to develop regional synergies and responses to the specific geographic, economic, security, environmental and social challenges of the Eastern Neighbourhood countries also in their relationship with the EU; calls, in this respect, for deeper cooperation on sectoral policies such as education, youth, migration, healthcare and transport;
41. Recommends that the Eastern European partners step up cooperation in managing borders and migration flows in the region, by approximating or developing common standards with the EU and combating human trafficking while guaranteeing respect for the rights of migrants;
42. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the President of the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, the European External Action Service, the governments and parliaments of the EU Member States, the Eastern European partners and the Russian Federation.