



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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*Mr Milan ŠTĚCH
President of the Senát
Valdštejnské náměstí 17/4
CZ – 118 01 PRAGUE 1*

Dear President,

The Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion on the Joint Report to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy Review {JOIN(2017) 18 final}.

We welcome the Senát's interest in the European Neighbourhood Policy and its Review. Strengthening relations with partners in the neighbourhood in order to expand the zone of stability and prosperity in our region is a strategic priority and a fundamental interest for the European Union.

The Commission and the High Representative take note of the Senát's position on the European perspective of the partner countries. As regards the "more for more" principle, we would like to recall that, in line with the incentive-based approach embedded in the Regulation establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument¹, yearly Umbrella programmes continue to support partners who make progress towards deep and sustainable democracy and the implementation of agreed reform objectives contributing to the attainment of that goal. Furthermore, striking a balance between the Eastern and Southern dimensions of the European Neighbourhood Policy remains the Commission's objective.

The Commission and the High Representative note the Senát's recommendation to ensure the coordination of various initiatives involving the European Union's partner countries with the overarching objectives and activities of the European Neighbourhood Policy; we would like to reassure the Senát that all such activities are designed and implemented within the overall framework of the reviewed European Neighbourhood Policy.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 232/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument, OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 27.

The Commission and the High Representative hope that these comments address the issues raised by the Sénat and look forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future. We remain ready to provide further clarifications should they be needed.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Federica Mogherini
High Representative/Vice-President*