



Parlamentul României
Senat

Bucharest, 25th of May 2015

Courtesy translation

OPINION of the ROMANIAN SENATE,
on the Joint Consultation Paper
Towards a New European Neighbourhood Policy
JOIN (2015) 6 final

The Senate of Romania has examined the **Joint Consultation Paper Towards a New European Neighbourhood Policy** according to the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon (Protocol no.1). Taking into account the report of our permanent Committee on European Affairs, **the Plenum of the Senate**, during its session on the 19 May 2015, decided, as follows:

- (1) The Senate welcomes the broad consultation "Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy" proposed by the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy; welcomes the evaluation on the Neighbourhood Policy made by Commissioner Johannes Hahn, considers that the new approach is more than necessary, evaluating 12 years of experience and expresses confidence in concrete and more pragmatic results of this consultation and the following steps.
- (2) Supports the strategic approach to the ENP, the new policy will have to overcome the conceptual frame by establishing concrete objectives. From the same strategic perspective, the Romanian Senate supported the ratification of the Association Agreements with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, the Romanian Parliament being the first of the parliaments of the Member States which completed the ratification process.
- (3) Congratulates these countries for their considerable efforts and supports their European path, based on the progress of each one of them, towards opening negotiations for the accession to the European Union. At the same time, supports the efforts of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in implementing reforms and strengthening the rule of law opening them, based on their own developments, the path to EU integration.
- (4) Notes the extremely deep reforms, which were extremely ambitiously required from Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia through the Association Agreements, even at this stage of association, without these countries even having the candidate status. Notes that some of these reforms have been previously made by the present Central European states, by the time they have already been candidates, during their negotiation process. However, Member States called for deep reforms to be made by eastern neighbours even before being candidates or even before being associate partners. Points out the risk of applying a double standard, so that it is correct to provide a corresponding offer to the higher standards demand imposed to the three states. It is necessary for the member states and the European Union to adopt an adequate attitude, to offer the perspective for the European path; if they meet the criteria, those countries which have a

ENP objectives adapted to the current geopolitical framework. In the context of an overall balance of the two ENP dimensions - south and east, we emphasize the need for a specific focus on the Eastern dimension in view of the developments in the region. A new neighbourhood policy can be adapted to the realities on the eastern border, providing Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine new perspectives towards the European Union, with a deeper integration, as candidate states, with a strategic geographic position.

We support the need to strengthen the strategic profile of the European Neighbourhood Policy. At the same time, we support the idea of concentrating the cooperation with ENP partner countries with the concrete objectives supported in this document, able to bring tangible results and tangible added value for the benefit of these countries.

It is necessary to truly become "United States of Europe", the reconfiguration of the relations between states imposing on all EU policies, especially in the case of the neighbourhood policy. The Union must speak with one voice, without integration-friendly states and states which have reservations, as long as the provisions of the EU Treaty are met and there are common interests of both the Member States and partners. We are advocates for "unity in diversity".

What could be done better to ensure greater coherence between the ENP and the EU's relations with Russia

There is a need for a proper coordination between the CFSP and the neighbourhood policy and also for strengthening the cooperation between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries in terms of relations with "its neighbours' neighbours." The new neighbourhood policy should integrate, fair and realistic the security situation in the area, in a much more ambitious and articulated vision in terms of security and defence. The conflict in Ukraine, the situation in Georgia in 2008 marked a certain segregation of the EU-Russia relations. The Union's security and a strengthen cooperation with neighbourhood partners can be achieved through a common approach, unique to all Member States, coordinated by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. More than ever, coordination with states that have cooperative relations, or are in the vicinity of Eurasia is needed not only for the eastern border security, but even for the security of citizens across Europe.

We accept dialogue with "the neighbours of its neighbours" on a case by case basis. But note that it is the sovereign right of states in the eastern neighbourhood who want to engage in deeper cooperation to become associated states to the European Union or even those who make progress towards European integration, as decided by Member States own interests and respect Article 49 TEU, without the need of another agreement, but only on a case by case analysis.

Although there is some consistency in terms of the future neighbourhood policy the difficulty of generating a uniform position at EU and Member States level relative to Russia must be overcome. The EU-Russia bilateral dialogue will be maintained as generic objective depending on developments in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea Basin, which will have a significant impact on the architecture of the new eastern neighbourhood policy, but there must be special attention given to the new influences in Eurasia and frozen conflicts in the said region.

We strongly support the need for a more integrated neighbourhood policy which would incorporate elements of the security policy and will ensure stability at the East border. The safety of the EU borders is essential and also a safe and secure environment can enable the promotion of democratic values in the neighbourhood, of the rule of law and economic development in partner countries. Given the development of the security situation in the Eastern Neighbourhood, the EU must have a more ambitious and better articulated vision towards this space, which is essential for the security and development of the region. We support a strong concentration of

extent the aspirations of each PEV Member State. ENP and the Eastern dimension represent a single framework for the Union's action. In order to reach the final end, each state partner is leading to in compliance with the ambitions, the concrete performance in implementing these expected reforms should be backed up by a genuine and real support from the EU and by acknowledgement that Eastern partners have an European vocation as to EU Treaties,. It is a duty of the Union and the Member States to sustain Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine in this direction. The application of the provisions of the Accession Agreement is essential, since they are not the final end of cooperation with EU. Based on the engagements undertaken by EU, we express our support to those partners with a view to this target, depending on each of them is aiming at as well as the responsibilities taken by the European vocation states further on. Moreover, if the Eastern countries have taken commitment to achieve important advancements represent an issue that Members States should finalize by ratifying the Association Agreements, as a factor giving impetus to the efforts of states which have an European vocation on the path to the reforms. Within this strategic regional framework, Romania has assumed full support for Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, on the European perspective, especially at a political level and, at the same time, offering all the expertise acquired, not long ago, on the path towards the EU accession. The agreement of the decisional Romania institutions on the European perspective of these countries occurred at the level of all political institutions and is founded on a single approach both at the Union and member states level.

We support the strengthening of the parliamentary cooperation and a new approach at this level giving a clear European perspective to Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine, and also the relation with other partners under the ENP, the pragmatic and permanent expertise transfer of the Romania Parliament with Republic of Moldova, towards which it has constantly undertaken a strong strategic interest, is achieved in the Joint Commission for the European integration of Republic of Moldova.

We welcome the current cooperation instrument of ENP/ political association and economic integration was added with alternate cooperation instruments.

We welcome the cooperation antiparliamentary Initiatives between Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine according to the Joint Declaration signed by the three countries in the perspective of the Eastern Partnership Riga Summit focusing on issues as transposition of the acquires communautaires, cooperation in the economic field and free trade areas, energy and security.

We underline the need of clearer answers to partner states by giving a clear perspective of liberalisation of visas. The Association Agreements signed with Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine offer stability in the region, but this stage must not be viewed as a final point of the European aspirations without the integration perspective.

Which priorities do partners see in terms of their relations with the EU? How can ENP better respond to their interests and aspirations?

The reconfiguration of the ENP—especially the Eastern dimension, is and has to be considered as a key priority for Romania. While some states are closely looking at the relation with EU from a political and economical point of view, materialised among others things through the Association Agreements, other states are interested in cooperating with EU. The principle of individualisation of the applications and the grants on individual performance and interests, formulated by the partner states. This principle should be strengthened and, simultaneously, as the consultation divorcement underlines, we have to consult our partners on the new ENP reconfiguration