



**Parliament of Romania
Senate**

Bucharest, 2nd March 2016

**OPINION
of the ROMANIAN SENATE
on the
JOINT COMMUNICATION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL,
THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE
OF THE REGIONS**

Review of the European Neighborhood Policy

The Senate of Romania has examined the Joint Communication of the High Representative and the Commission on the Review of the European Neighborhood according to the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon (Protocol no.1).

Taking into account the report of the Committees on European Affairs and Foreign Affairs, the Plenum of the Senate, during its session on the 29 February 2016, adopted the following recommendations;

The Senate has noted:

- a. The importance of the Joint Communication proposed by the European Commission and the EU High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission.
- b. The emphasis put on the differentiation and responsibility principles as regards the relationships between the EU and ENP policy; the more specific approach of the cooperation relationships with the ENP states, adapted to their goals and ambitions; the stress on the cooperation with the ENP partners by identifying priority mutual fields; the impetus towards an increased involvement of the Member States linked to the ENP's cooperation exercise; the flexibility and the enhanced coherence regarding the ENP's available instruments and resources, financial means included, by taking into account the assistance of the partners confronted to crisis situations;
- c. The urge towards the issues in conjunction with the promotion of the regional cooperation, especially the strengthening of the Eastern Partnership, and the development of the projects focusing the Black Sea Synergy - as an initiative of regional cooperation and a dialogue forum. In the context of the securization of the EU Eastern border, it is worthy to take into consideration the overall costs for Union. Notwithstanding, the senators reminded that, although over the last period of time,

they have constantly been insisted on the importance of the Black Sea region, this issue was put aside by the Commission with major economic and strategic costs.

The Senate also welcomed

a. Some essential elements that Romania has already brought about in the Joint Communication *Towards a New Neighbouring Policy* JOIN 6 final (2015) transmitted to the Commission on 25 May 2015.

b. The idea of establishing some dialogue and cooperation with the neighbours of neighbours under – “Thematic - framework” , a concept promoting the dialogue and the cooperation in various cross interest fields. The identified key issues, for example migration, energy, security, etc. respond to the current challenges in the neighborhood vicinity of the Union. We believe as far as this Chapter is concerned, EU has the duty to remain strong and unite while respecting its values and goals.

The Senate agreed on

- a. The proposals regarding the development of the security issue, the stress of the key elements related to the security sector reform as the main pillar in preventing and fighting against terrorist networks and counteracting the violent radicalism; .
- b. The importance of the enhanced cooperation with the partner states on aspects related to security and as well as the consecration of the Neighborhood stability concept as the main new ENP priority and the most pressing challenge for the Union over the next years. At this point, the Romanian Senate supports the efforts made by the Republic of Moldova towards its European route map, while considering that a joint action is needed at the European level in order to have a clear approach regarding the states which fully respect the guidance lines recommended by the Commission;
- c. The stress put on the measures package on the partner states young people, considered as relevant topic in the perspective of the future enlargement and strengthened cooperation relationships between EU and partner states at medium and long time term; .
- d. The emphasis on security, migration and young people dimensions, following the matters of interest revealed by the recent developments; .
- e. The fact that the security of the EU borders is crucial while a secure and stable environment allows the promotion of the democratic values, the rule of law and the economic development of the partner states.
- f. The efforts of the member States towards a sustainable economic and social development. The Senate supports an intensive cooperation between partners – EU – member states, aiming at a common goal and encourages the cooperation through adapted instruments under the European territorial cooperation programmes: Joint Operational Program Romania – Republic of Moldova 2014 – 2020, Joint Operational Program Romania-Ukraine 2014 – 2020, Joint operational Programme Black Sea basin 2014 – 2020, the Program Hungary,- Slovakia – Romania – Ukraine 2014 – 2020.

Finally, the Senate made the following recommendations:

- a. The new EPP should go beyond its original framework by setting up precise objectives. From a strategic point of view, it is appreciated that a rapid and whole implementation of all above mentioned points is intended to confer stability and security to the whole Union.
- b. Having in mind that the developments of the security state of play at the Eastern vicinity are in a perpetual change, the Union should have a more ambitious and better articulated vision in respect to this area which represent an essential challenge for the the security and the development in the whole region.
- c. A solid focus of the partnerships under the the ENP framework on common objectives and concerns assumed by both parts, including the relationship with Russia included; .

The Senate expressed its concern regarding some structural elements focusing on Eastern Partnership as a whole, indicating some external interventions which risk to put in an unfavorable light the gains and the perspectives of the Association Agreements. Therefore, a Commission's vision on this issue is more than necessary.

The Senate was of the opinion that several states as Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, which initially had a strong pan-european vision, are acting now reluctantly as regards the values and principles of the European Union. In this context, it was appreciated that Ukraine, despite its problems caused by its geopolitical situation, decided to take up its own European route,. For this reason, the Senate considered that the European Union should promote a new approach adapted to the current regional issues.

- d. The promotion of the unity concept at the EU level, both by the Member States as well as their partners. As far as it is concerned, Romania is a promotor and unconditionally pleader of the European values and principles. A strong Europe is an united Europe, capable to sustain its own interests, to generate stability, and also to confer seriousness and credibility to its partners.

p. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE



Ioan CHELARU