



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Riksdag for its Opinion concerning the Joint Communication of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy {JOIN(2015) 50 final}.

The Commission would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Riksdag once more for the contribution it made in June last year to the consultation on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) which it studied with interest. The Commission welcomes the Riksdag's support for the ambitions and principles of the review, which proposes how the EU and its neighbours can build more effective partnerships. A democratic, stable and prosperous neighbourhood is a strategic priority and a fundamental interest for the EU.

As the Riksdag points out, the review reiterates a strong commitment to the respect for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law; and gender-related issues are emphasised in particular. In addition, the Commission agrees that certain areas should be given priority for cooperation, such as migration, security, and energy. Regional cooperation efforts, such as those channelled through the ENP's Eastern dimension, the Eastern Partnership, will be strengthened further.

As regards the Riksdag's call that partner countries which are geographically located in Europe and which carry out political and economic reforms should be given a more explicit membership perspective, the Commission would like to refer to the Joint Communication which states that '[w]here a partner wishes to pursue deeper relations with the EU based on shared values, work will develop on the existing basis. The EU will work with those partners to further develop their relations and to maximise the benefits for both parties to those agreements.'

*Mr Kenneth G FORSLUND
Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs
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*cc.: Mr Urban AHLIN
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According to the proposals made by the Joint Communication referred to above, work is ongoing on the implementation of the review of the ENP and further discussions will take place with Member States and partner countries, for instance on the proposal to discuss new partnership priorities.

The Commission would once again like to thank the Riksdag for its continued interest in the ENP and looks forward to further exchanges of view on this important policy in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Federica Mogherini
High Representative/Vice-President*