

P7_TA(2011)0153

Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy – Eastern Dimension

European Parliament resolution of 7 April 2011 on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy - Eastern Dimension

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the conclusions of the Eastern Partnership Foreign Ministers meeting of 13 December 2010,
- having regard to its previous resolutions of 19 January 2006 on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)¹, 15 November 2007 on strengthening the ENP², 6 July 2006 on the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)³, 5 June 2008 on the annual report from the Council to the European Parliament on the main aspects and basic choices of the CFSP⁴, 19 February 2009 on the review of the ENPI⁵, 17 January 2008 on a Black Sea Regional Policy Approach⁶ and 20 January 2011 on an EU Strategy for the Black Sea⁷,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2010 on the Need for an EU Strategy for the South Caucasus⁸,
- having regard to the development of the ENP since 2004, and in particular to the Commission's progress reports on its implementation,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, as well as to the recommendations of the parliamentary cooperation committees for those countries, with the exception of Belarus,
- having regard to paragraph 41 of the above resolution of 15 November 2007, which calls for the setting-up of an EU-Neighbourhood East Parliamentary Assembly (EURONEST),
- having regard to the Action Plans adopted jointly with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova, and to the Association Agenda with Ukraine,
- having regard to the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 26 July 2010 on the ENP,
- having regard to the Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit of 7 May 2009,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 12 May 2010 entitled 'Taking Stock of

¹ OJ C 287 E, 24.11.2006, p. 312.

² OJ C 282 E, 6.11.2008, p. 443.

³ OJ C 303 E, 13.12.2006, p. 760.

⁴ OJ C 285 E, 26.11.2009, p. 11.

⁵ OJ C 76 E, 25.3.2010, p. 83.

⁶ OJ C 41 E, 19.2.2009, p. 64.

⁷ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0025.

⁸ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2010)0193.

the European Neighbourhood Policy (COM(2010)0207),

- having regard to the Commission communication of 3 December 2008 on Eastern Partnership (COM(2008)0823),
 - having regard to the Commission communications of 5 December 2007 entitled ‘A Strong European Neighbourhood Policy’ (COM(2007)0774), 4 December 2006 on strengthening the ENP (COM(2006)0726), 12 May 2004 entitled ‘European Neighbourhood Policy - Strategy Paper’ (COM(2004)0373) and 11 March 2003 entitled ‘Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours’ (COM(2003)0104),
 - having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument¹,
 - having regard to the European Court of Auditors Special Report No 13/2010, entitled ‘Is the new European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument successfully launched and achieving results in the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia)?’,
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Lisbon Treaty has created the conditions required for the EU to improve the effectiveness and coherence of its relations with all actors and partners, particularly its neighbours,
- B. whereas under Article 8 of the Treaty on European Union the Union must develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterised by close and peaceful relations based on cooperation,
- C. whereas, since it was launched, the ENP has led to a strengthening of relations with partner countries and brought some tangible benefits; whereas challenges still remain and the focus should now be on implementation, with clearly defined priorities for action, clear benchmarking and performance-based differentiation,
- D. whereas the Eastern Partnership (EaP) is a meaningful political framework for deepening relations with and among partner countries, based on principles of shared ownership and responsibility, as well as conditionality; whereas strengthened relations require an enhanced joint commitment and tangible progress towards good governance and democratic standards,
- E. whereas the EaP focuses on four thematic cooperation platforms, namely: democracy, good governance and stability; economic integration and convergence with EU policies; environment, climate change and energy security; and contacts between people,
- F. whereas cooperation within the framework of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly seeks to bring positive effects by serving as a platform for exchanging views, finding common positions on global challenges of our times with respect to democracy, politics,

¹ OJ L 310, 9.11.2006, p. 1.

economics, energy security and social affairs, and strengthening ties between the countries of the region and the EU and among the EaP countries themselves,

- G. whereas the EU should promote and significantly strengthen a bottom-up approach, increasing its economic support to civil societies and promoting freedom of the press and freedom of assembly in order to sustain the democratisation processes, which are a precondition for long-term stabilisation,
- H. whereas unresolved regional conflicts in the EU's neighbourhood undermine the sustainable economic, social and political development of the countries concerned and present a serious obstacle to regional cooperation, stability and security; whereas they are also a serious impediment to the development of the ENP's full potential and priorities; whereas these conflicts are undermining the development of a genuine and effective multilateral dimension to the ENP; whereas the role that civil society could play in the countries concerned continues to be underestimated,
- I. whereas the recent demonstrations by people in Belarus, Tunisia and Egypt against repressive regimes clearly expressed their legitimate aspirations to democracy,
- J. whereas the EU's and Member States' policy of supporting and cooperating with undemocratic regimes in Tunisia and Egypt failed and should prove a lesson learned for EU relations with Belarus, and whereas the EU's overall ENP policy should be value-based,
- K. whereas the ENPI has helped to simplify the financing of the ENP; whereas the process of designing its successor instrument should reflect the conclusions of the ENP strategic review and should involve wide-ranging consultations,

ENP review – General

1. Welcomes the progress in relations between the EU and neighbouring countries within the ENP and reaffirms the values, principles and commitments upon which the ENP has been built, which include democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, a market economy, sustainable development and good governance; considers that the ENP is still a framework of strategic importance for deepening and strengthening relations with our closest partners so as to support their political, social and economic reforms, and underlines the importance of maintaining the principle of joint ownership in the design and implementation of programmes and actions;
2. Welcomes the ongoing review of the ENP and stresses that this process should lead to a further enhancement of the EU's ties with neighbouring countries and that, while the aspirations and goals of those countries may differ, all of them have the potential to be the closest of political allies for the EU;
3. Notes that the two dimensions (southern and eastern) of the ENP should be perceived as integral parts of the same priority policy; stresses the need for flexibility and to differentiate our approach more vis-à-vis individual partners and spend better;
4. Emphasises that the strategic review of the ENP should reflect an increased political commitment from all partners and should strengthen performance-based differentiation based on clearly defined benchmarks;

5. Considers it particularly worthwhile to continuously evaluate and assess not only the results that have been achieved to date through the programmes implemented but also the adequacy of the resources used within the framework of the partnership; is of the opinion that this procedure will provide an opportunity to correct any deficiencies and unfortunate choices in the future;
6. Stresses the need to acknowledge the changes brought by the Lisbon Treaty, in particular the reinforced role of the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS), the appointment of a Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy and new powers for the European Parliament, in order to give greater coherence to EU foreign policy and to increase the efficiency and legitimacy of its external dimension and action; expects the Member States not to undertake bilateral initiatives with ENP countries that could undermine the effectiveness of the EU action;
7. Calls on the EEAS and the EU delegations around the world to contribute greatly to ensuring that human rights and political principles are more strongly integrated into the analysis of the political situation in third countries and fed into possible 'transformation' policies via aid projects;

ENP-East

8. Welcomes the launch of the EaP as a political framework for the advancement of the eastern dimension of the ENP, which seeks to deepen and strengthen the relations between the EU and its eastern neighbours, furthering political association, economic integration and legislative approximation while supporting political and socio-economic reforms in the partner countries; calls on the Council, the Commission and the EEAS to devise clear benchmarks for monitoring such reforms, noting that the benchmarks should take into consideration the specificities of each partner, including its specific goals and potential; calls on the Council, the Commission and the EEAS to involve Parliament in devising these benchmarks; stresses that economic reforms must go hand-in-hand with political reforms and that good governance can only be achieved through an open and transparent decision-making process based on democratic institutions;
9. Underlines the importance of further promoting stability and multilateral confidence building in the framework of the EaP, as agreed in the Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit;
10. Stresses that a European perspective including Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union could constitute a driving force for reforms in these countries and further strengthen their commitment to shared values and principles such as democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and good governance;
11. Recalls that the shared fundamental values – including democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, independence of the judiciary, combating corruption, upholding media freedoms and promoting NGOs – which are the basis upon which the ENP and the EaP have been established should remain the main yardstick against which to evaluate the performance of our partner countries; calls, to this end, on all ENP partners to take concrete steps in this direction; encourages, therefore, the Commission and the EEAS to take a more ambitious approach to implementing the annual action programmes in this field;

12. Notes that, since the ENP's launch in 2004, mixed results have been recorded, with positive developments concerning human rights and democratisation in some partner countries and some negative developments in others, particularly in Belarus;
13. Notes that Belarus remains the only eastern partner country with limited participation in the ENP and EaP bilateral track and that its further engagement in these programmes will depend on its readiness to adhere to commonly shared values and basic principles; considers that the recent developments in Belarus were an affront to the EU's vision of respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law; welcomes the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on Belarus of 31 January 2011; calls on the EU to take all necessary steps to fully implement these conclusions, including by attempting to engage ordinary Belarusians in the idea of reform by cutting the red tape and cost involved in obtaining Schengen visas and by facilitating people-to-people contacts; calls in this respect on Member States to make use of all of the flexibility available within the EU visa code when issuing Schengen visas; urges the Commission and other donors to support the development of democratically oriented political parties in Belarus and the creation of larger NGOs and civil-society organisations, as well as to support community and civic initiatives in the Belarusian regions;
14. Stresses that in a number of countries the legal framework for and conduct of elections have not been consistent with international standards; insists on the importance of free and fair elections in line with international standards and commitments;
15. Stresses that combating corruption, in particular in the judiciary and the police, should be a top priority for the EU in the development of its relations with the eastern partners and that this should be reflected in the comprehensive institution-building framework; stresses, as well, the importance of stepping up the fight against international organised crime networks and calls for increased police and judicial cooperation with EU agencies;
16. Underlines the importance of complementing the EU's bilateral relations with EaP countries with a multilateral dimension by increasing the number of activities and initiatives included in the thematic platforms, paying particular attention to strengthening cross-border projects, stepping up people-to-people programmes, developing incentives for regional cooperation and further enhancing the active dialogue with civil society in order to promote the necessary establishment of open non-governmental institutions and strengthen social cohesion; notes, however, that the bilateral dimension remains prominent, and calls for a clearer and more rigorous differentiation and conditionality, where ambition and commitments are followed by implementation and real progress is followed by concrete steps towards a European perspective; firmly believes that the intensification of ties with the best-performing partners will have a positive effect on the others and could enhance multilateral cooperation;
17. Urges the European Council and the Commission to ensure that the visa liberalisation offer made to Eastern Partnership countries is, in terms of its timetable and content, at least as generous as those proposed to other countries with which they share a border, so as to avoid creating incentives to grant foreign passports to citizens of Eastern Partnership countries, which – as in the case of Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova – may have the effect of destabilising those countries, and may thus be contrary to the security and interests of the EU itself;
18. Stresses the importance of further fostering regional cooperation in the Black Sea space and

enhancing EU policies towards the Black Sea region, in particular by launching a fully-fledged EU Strategy for the Black Sea and ensuring that there are the necessary financial and human resources for its effective implementation; highlights the complementarity between EU Black Sea policies and the EaP, and calls on the Commission and the EEAS to make positive use of the differing approaches of the two initiatives and to clarify, at all levels, how this substantial degree of complementarity is to be put to good use;

19. Encourages the countries in the region to cooperate more closely with each other and to engage in an enhanced and prolonged dialogue, at all relevant levels, regarding areas such as freedom, security and justice, and in particular border management, migration and asylum, the fight against organised crime, trafficking in human beings, illegal immigration, terrorism, money laundering and drugs trafficking, as well as police and judicial cooperation; recalls that good-neighbourly relations are one of the most important preconditions for progress by ENP countries towards EU membership;
20. Stresses that there are still serious problems in numerous countries as regards freedom of expression, especially in the media, and freedom of association and assembly, and that the space available to civil society actors and human rights defenders remains unreasonably restricted;
21. Welcomes the active role of civil society organisations in promoting the values on which the ENP is founded, notably human rights, freedom of the media and democratisation; stresses that this role, together with involvement in implementation and monitoring of projects under ENPI and ENP Action Plans, needs to be further supported through the allocation of financial and institutional support to them; welcomes the active involvement of civil society organisations, particularly those from partner countries, in the Civil Society Forum; encourages the Civil Society Forum to become involved in official platform meetings and thematic working groups of the EaP;
22. Considers it necessary to make a thorough assessment of the credibility of all civil society organisations which are involved in this process, in order to ensure the legitimacy and efficiency of our actions;
23. Underlines the importance of local authorities in the democratic development of our partner countries and urges the Commission actively to support them with a view to strengthening local democracy and local governance; encourages the expansion of twinning programmes between local authorities in EU and partner countries and the establishment of the Eastern Europe and South Caucasus Local and Regional Assembly;
24. Emphasises the importance of trade unions and social dialogue as part of the democratic development of the eastern partners; stresses that trade union rights are limited and calls on the eastern partners to further enhance labour and trade union rights; recommends stepping up social dialogue and the consultation of social partners;
25. Emphasises the importance of freedom of expression and of free and independent media, including on the internet, for the development of democracies and as a means of promoting exchanges and communication between societies in the region and between those societies and the EU; encourages the EU to continue funding Belsat, Radyo Racyja and the European Radio for Belarus, as well as to support the creation and consolidation of other media outlets, including through financial contributions, *inter alia* as a way of promoting direct channels of communication between societies; stresses the need to withdraw assistance

from state-controlled and -owned media, such as those in Belarus;

26. Recalls its view that the Association Agreements are an important tool for stimulating reform and should include concrete conditions, timetables and performance benchmarks and be accompanied by a regular monitoring process in order to efficiently deepen the bilateral relationship with the EU in a holistic way and to enhance coherence between all of the components of such agreements, i.e. the political, economic, social and cultural components and the human rights obligations; stresses that the Comprehensive Institution-Building Programmes should be launched as swiftly as possible; emphasises that, bearing in mind the ambitious nature of the Association Agreements and their crucial importance for the future of the EaP, the EU should support these countries through the provision of technical and financial assistance, so as to empower them to fulfil the implementation commitments; reminds the Commission of its responsibility to keep Parliament and the relevant rapporteurs duly informed of the negotiating mandates for the Association Agreements and of the negotiations themselves;
27. Welcomes the work of the High-Level EU Advisory Group in Armenia and the launch of a similar group in Moldova; invites the VP/HR and the Commission to discuss the possibility of offering such assistance to other eastern partners;
28. Considers that closer economic integration can be a powerful agent for social and political change; emphasises that the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs) with the EU must only be established once the necessary conditions are fulfilled; stresses that these remain one of the key EaP incentives for the partner countries and a strong incentive for reform, provided that their social and environmental impact is fully assessed in due course; recognises that, in turn, the concept of the DCFTA should be adapted to the changing circumstances of the individual eastern partner countries;
29. Underlines the importance of increased bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation among ENP partners, as this would result in tangible benefits for citizens, would improve the political climate in the region and would contribute to the economic development of the partner countries; encourages, therefore, the establishment of free trade areas between the partner countries;
30. Notes the growing economic presence of China in the Eastern Partnership countries;
31. Stresses the importance of supporting the mobility of citizens, maintaining people-to-people contacts and managing migration flows, particularly through visa facilitation and readmission agreements, with a view to gradually moving towards full visa liberalisation, provided that all relevant conditions are fully met; invites the EU to actively and speedily pursue negotiations to this end, while at the same time ensuring better implementation of the visa facilitation agreements; recommends that bilateral agreements should include provisions on the updating of national migration laws in ENP countries; insists that the implementation of such agreements and policies, in particular the provision of asylum, must be fully in line with international obligations and commitments and with EU standards, especially in the human rights field;
32. Stresses, furthermore, the fact that visa liberalisation can be used as a strong incentive to promote democratisation and human rights reforms in the partner countries, as well as a means of acknowledging concrete steps taken towards political association and economic integration with the EU within the ENP framework;

33. Proposes that the Commission should publish an annual evaluation report concerning the European readmission agreements;
34. Believes enhanced cooperation to be necessary between the ENP countries and FRONTEX;
35. Urges the Commission to pay particular attention to the mobility of students, academics, researchers and businessmen by ensuring that sufficient resources are available and by strengthening and broadening existing scholarship programmes; stresses, in this connection, the importance of developing within the EaP new projects focusing on more structured cooperation in the field of higher education and research that promotes university exchanges and public-private partnerships in the field of research; welcomes the establishment of mobility partnerships with Moldova and Georgia and encourages the conclusion of such partnerships with other eastern partners as part of the EU's Global Approach to Migration; considers, in this connection, that the flexibilities existing within the Schengen Visa Code should be better used and applied in order to facilitate the mobility of these groups;
36. Reaffirms its strong support for the EU-funded project involving the provision of scholarships to the College of Europe for university graduates from the ENP and the EU; believes that this will make it possible to train future discussion partners in EU and neighbouring countries – i.e. personnel for EU-ENP-related jobs – who are fully and professionally acquainted with the substance and spirit of EU policies, laws and institutions;
37. Emphasises the importance of sectoral cooperation, given the growing level of interdependence, particularly in areas such as energy security, environment and climate change, education, information technology, research, transport, social development and inclusion, employment and job creation and health cooperation; stresses that enhanced sectoral cooperation could foster synergies between EU and ENP internal policies; considers, in this context, that more partner countries should be encouraged to conclude protocols with the EU on participation in Community programmes and agencies; welcomes, in this connection, the accession of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to the Energy Community;
38. Considers it necessary to step up energy cooperation, energy efficiency and the promotion of renewable energy, which will constitute key objectives of the cooperation arrangements with the ENP partners; emphasises the strategic significance of the Nabucco project and of its swift implementation, as well as of liquefied natural gas (LNG) transportation under the AGRI project;
39. Underlines the need to provide an adequate level of EU funding for cooperation with the neighbourhood and reiterates the value of the ENPI as the ENP financing instrument, which needs to evolve in such a way as to respond more flexibly to the different needs of the neighbouring countries and regions, ensure that there is a direct linkage between the ENP policy objectives and ENPI programming and reflect the performance-based character of the future ENP; emphasises, however, the need to ensure greater flexibility and crisis-responsiveness, as well as better-targeted assistance, aimed in particular at civil society and local levels, ensuring a bottom-up approach and making sure that the financial assistance is not subject to unjustified state interference; underscores the value of monitoring the management and implementation of the various programmes under the ENPI and emphasises that a fundamental criterion for the funding of projects must be their added value for local economic development, taking into account the actual cost of, and the real contribution made by, each project; calls on the Commission and the EEAS to conduct early

consultations with Parliament and the civil society stakeholders during the upcoming drafting of the successor instrument;

40. Calls for more funding to be provided under, and better use to be made of, the Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights in order to strengthen civil society's capacity to promote human rights and democratic reform, as well as under the Non-State Actors Instrument supporting small-scale local development activities to be implemented by civil society organisations, in particular in Belarus;
41. Stresses the importance of maintaining appropriate levels of financing, and is encouraged by the improved coordination of the work carried out by international financial institutions and other donors with a view to improving efficiency and generating synergies; stresses that the EU should also contribute to better use of existing resources by partner countries through a stronger focus on practical cooperation, so as to better empower those countries' institutions to implement the reforms and meet the commitments stemming from the various agreements concluded with the EU; points out that the direct link between performance and financial assistance (e.g. the Governance Facility within the ENPI) needs to be enhanced, especially in the area of democracy, human rights and the rule of law;
42. Considers that budget support could be discussed as a useful option that could provide real incentives in the future; believes, however, that it should be based on the differentiation principle and should be subject to conditionality, including the adherence of beneficiary countries to shared values and principles, effective budgetary management and control procedures, low levels of corruption, and the ability to use such support in a transparent, effective and accountable manner;
43. Insists that there should be a sizeable increase in the heading 4 ceiling within the overall budget, in particular for the ENPI, given that, despite there having been some progress over the last few years in promoting enhanced cooperation and progressive economic integration between the European Union and the partner countries, more needs to be done as new challenges and areas for cooperation emerge;
44. Calls on the Commission to increase financial support, albeit not at the expense of funding for the Union for the Mediterranean, for the eastern component of the ENP, in order to fulfil the objectives and secure effective implementation of the EaP;
45. Points out that, although aid can act as a lever for ENP countries, it is not enough to guarantee sustainable and lasting development; calls, therefore, on ENP countries to strengthen and mobilise their domestic resources, actively involve the private sector, local governments and civil society in the ENP agenda and ensure greater ownership of ENP projects;
46. Notes that strengthening the Youth dimension of the Eastern Partnership represents a major investment in the future of EU-Eastern Neighbourhood relations, with great potential for the years to come, and in the democratisation of those partners and the harmonisation of their legislation with European standards; reiterates that the additional EUR 1 000 000 allocated to the ENPI for 2011 within the EU budget for 2011 should be spent by the Commission on strengthening the Youth dimension of the Eastern partnership by providing:
 - (a) small grants to be awarded through calls for proposals issued by the Commission or an EU delegation and addressed to EU and EaP countries' youth organisations, for

common projects;

(b) scholarships for students from ENP-East countries;

47. Welcomes the outcome of the donor conference held on 2 February 2011 for Belarus, with some EUR 87 million to be spent on supporting human rights spokespersons and strengthening trade unions, research centres and students organisations;
48. Notes the EU's stronger engagement in security issues in the Eastern Neighbourhood with the establishment of the EUBAM in Moldova and the EUMM in Georgia; calls on the VP/HR and the EEAS to step up their involvement in finding a solution to the protracted conflicts in Transnistria and the South Caucasus based on the principles of international law – in particular non-use of force, self-determination and territorial integrity – through more active policy stances, more active participation and a more prominent role in permanent and *ad hoc* conflict resolution structures, including already existing negotiating formats, particularly those of the OSCE;
49. Calls on the VP/HR and the EEAS to develop more confidence-building measures and programmes, including the launching of new missions and public communication strategies and the consideration of pragmatic initiatives and innovative approaches such as informal contacts and consultations with the societies of the breakaway territories, while conserving the EU's non-recognition policy, in order to support civic culture and community dialogue; underlines the importance of strengthening the principle of good neighbourly relations, as well as developing regional cooperation through the ENP, the EaP and the negotiations on Association Agreements; considers that the EU Special Representatives (EUSRs) still have a significant role to play, particularly where their mandate has a regional dimension, such as in the South Caucasus; considers that more and better measures should be implemented with a view to solving the protracted conflicts in the region, which are hindering the multilateral dimension;
50. Draws attention, in this regard, to the fact that the lack of any progress as regards the resolution of the unsolved conflicts in the South Caucasus has hindered the development of all kinds of cooperation in the region, except for the Regional Environment Centre (REC), and consequently weakened the ENP; takes the view that it is of the utmost importance to identify areas of cooperation in which to involve the three countries with regard, in particular, to the dialogue between civil societies, youth organisations and independent media organs as well as economic interaction and calls on the EEAS to make every effort also to engage the Russian Federation and Turkey in this initiative;
51. Believes that, in order to reduce the workload of EU delegations to these countries and to enhance the EU's involvement in internationally negotiated solutions to protracted conflicts, the appointment of EUSRs can be a useful tool, particularly in the case of Transnistria and the South Caucasus; emphasises that the work of the EUSRs should be coordinated by the VP/HR;
52. Expresses concern at the fact that forcibly displaced persons (both refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs)) are still being denied their rights, including the right to return, property rights and the right to personal security, as a result of armed conflicts in the territories of the partner countries; calls on all parties to unambiguously and unconditionally recognise these rights and the need for their prompt realisation and for a prompt solution to this problem that complies with the principles of international law; calls, in this respect, on

the Commission and the EU Member States to continue and step up the provision of EU assistance and financial support to those EaP countries dealing with this situation, in particular by helping to renovate and construct necessary buildings and roads, water and electricity supply infrastructure, hospitals and schools;

Role of the European Parliament

53. Stresses the key importance of the European Parliament in fostering political debate and in enhancing freedom and democracy in the neighbouring partner countries, including through parliamentary election observation missions; underlines its commitment to increasing coherence among its bodies, strengthening its relations with civil society and the effectiveness of the work of its bodies, including through better use of its delegations to interparliamentary bodies;
54. Reaffirms its strong support for the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly, highlighting that body's role in deepening democracy and democratic institutions and as the parliamentary dimension of the Eastern Partnership; considers that the Assembly will make a useful contribution to the implementation of the strengthened ENP and will confer added value on all the parties interested in reinforcing cooperation, solidarity and mutual trust and promoting best practices; states that Belarusian parliamentarians are welcome to join the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly, but only when the Belarusian Parliament is democratically elected and recognised as such by the European Union;
55. Stresses the role of the European Parliament in all phases and areas of the development of the ENP, both in the making of strategic choices and in scrutinising ENP implementation, and reiterates its commitment to continuing to exercise the right of parliamentary scrutiny of implementation of the ENP, including by holding regular debates with the Commission on the application of the ENPI; regrets, however, the limited consultation and access to documents during the drafting of relevant programming documents; calls for Parliament to be granted access to the negotiating mandates for all international agreements under negotiation with the ENP partner countries, in accordance with Article 218(10) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which states that Parliament shall be immediately and fully informed at all stages of the procedure;
56. Welcomes the Council's decision to convene a second Eastern Partnership Summit during the second half of 2011; calls, in this regard, on EU Member States to make use of this opportunity to take stock of the progress made and to further revise the strategic guidance for the EaP so that it may continue to deliver substantial results in the future;
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57. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Committee of the Regions, the governments and the national parliaments of the ENP countries, the OSCE and the Council of Europe.