



EURONEST PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

THE CO-PRESIDENTS

To the Leaders of the EU Institutions and the Heads of State or Government of the 27 EU Member States and the 6 Eastern Partner countries

Dear Excellencies,

As the Co-Chairs of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, we would like to congratulate you with organising an extraordinary Leaders' videoconference to address the long-term policy objectives of the Eastern Partnership for the next decade. This videoconference is held at the time of our joint efforts to combat the Covid-19 pandemic. We are convinced that together in solidarity with our Eastern Partners we will show our European spirit to overcome the pandemic and we will meet face to face in the Sixth Eastern Partnership Summit as soon as possible early next year.

We would like to bring to your attention the Message of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly Bureau. Under the extraordinary Covid-19 pandemic circumstances we managed to have an ambitious statement agreed on the occasion of this particular Leaders' videoconference.

This Message proposes important benchmarks of the Eastern Partnership agenda for the next decade and asks for a forward-looking EU enhanced cooperation, security and economic resilience strategy for our Eastern Partners, which are willing to pursue the EU integration efforts.

The Message comes from the European Parliament and the Parliaments of the 5 Eastern Partner countries, except Belarus, which has no democratically elected Parliament. It is now the only strategic document agreed by political representatives from both sides of the Eastern Partnership for this videoconference. We hope this Message will contribute as a basis for the Sixth Eastern Partnership Summit to agree on an ambitious strategy of the Eastern Partnership for the next decade.

The EU Eastern Partnership strategy is the only geopolitical instrument at our inventory to promote and expand peace, stability, democracy and prosperity in the Eastern Neighbourhood and European continent as a whole. Since 2009, this strategy helped to achieve a lot and, as a key deliverable, it

has created the EU association process. But we have to move forward and there is much more to be done.

That is why in the Euronest Parliamentary Bureau Message we are proposing to establish the New Flagship Initiative of the Eastern Partnership, the Trio Plus Strategy, to allow the most advanced countries of Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and also Armenia, to receive new tangible opportunities for their European integration in accordance with the principle of “more for more”. In the light of Covid-10 crisis, this flagship initiative will also include economic and investments plan for political and socio-economic resilience of our Eastern Partners, the successful outcome of which will be also instrumental to ensuring security in the region.

May we also use this occasion to express our concern that up till now no visible progress is made in overcoming the security challenges in the Eastern Partnership region. Unfortunately, we do not see clear perspective on their resolution if we will be continuing with the business as usual approach.

Since the last Eastern Partnership Summit in 2017, we did not advance in the area of security. In 2017, the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly Bureau called on the Summit, we quote, *“to address security threats and to find viable solutions to unresolved conflicts in the Eastern Partnership region, in accordance with the fundamental principles of international law and with the support of current - and if necessary additional -EU-led mediation and peacekeeping efforts: In particular, we call for the full and genuine implementation of the Minsk arrangements in Eastern Ukraine and of the 1999 Istanbul OSCE decision as regards the Republic of Moldova, for tangible results in the Geneva International Discussions and a full implementation by Russia of the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement in Georgia’s occupied territories of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, as well as for a breakthrough in the 5+2 negotiations on Transnistria. We further adhere to the EU’s non-recognition policy of the illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. Finally, we call for an immediate end to military hostilities between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces which already claimed too many lives and call on both sides, in the interest of all their citizens, to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict which does not have a military solution, through a re-launch of substantive negotiations in good faith and genuine confidence-building measures and dialogue. We reaffirm our full support to the mediation efforts by the co-chairs of the Minsk Group, including at the level of Presidents, based on the 2009 OSCE Basic Principles, in line with the Helsinki Final Act “.*

Not much has changed, and it makes us simply repeating the same message again and again. This shows that many efforts are needed, first of all from the EU side, to achieve at least some progress in overcoming security challenges, which will protect people’s lives in EU’s immediate neighbourhood.

We are especially concerned with Russia’s policy of creating new and using existing unresolved conflicts in the region for political gains. In this regard, we underline that the EU should remain unwavering in its support to Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova efforts to restore their territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders and be stronger engaged into the peaceful conflict resolution in the region, including through effective implementation of the sanction mechanisms. The EU should demand Russia to withdraw all its military forces from Georgia’s occupied territories and allow unhindered access of the European Union Monitoring Mission to the whole territory of Georgia as envisaged by the Ceasefire Agreement of 2008 mediated by the EU Presidency. We also call for the urgent development of joint mechanisms to withstand hybrid threats originating mainly from Kremlin and undermining the EU unity and security in those Eastern Partnership countries striving for integration to the EU.

Let us assure you that the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly will continue keeping a constant attention to the issues and challenges for security of our Eastern partners. We consider this as an urgent and important task for the Leaders, in order to achieve our dream “Europe - whole, free and at peace” to become a reality.

Sincerely,

Mr Andrius Kubilius, MEP, Co-President of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly
Mr Ivan Krulko, MP, Co-President of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly

Enclosure: Message of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly Bureau of 12 June 2020 submitted on the occasion of the Video Teleconference of the Leaders of the Eastern Partnership to be held on 18 June 2020