



EURONEST PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE EURONEST
PARLAMETARISCHE VERSAMMLUNG EURONEST
ПАРЛАМЕНТСКАЯ АССАМБЛЕЯ ЕВРОНЕСТ

STATEMENT

by Mrs Heidi Hautala and Mr Victor Dolidze,

Co-Chairs of the Euronest PA

Brussels and Tbilisi, 22 September 2016: We welcome the outcome of the meetings held on 19-21 September 2016 in Baku between the EP Delegation and the highest officials of Azerbaijan, including President Aliyev, Speaker Asadov and Mr. Samad Seyidov MP, as well as important Government's representatives; we are, furthermore, particularly pleased with the resumption of direct EP- Azerbaijan interparliamentary talks with the holding of the Parliamentary Cooperation Committee meeting (PCC) on 21 September 2016.

Once again, inter-parliamentary dialogue is proving a powerful instrument to facilitate mutual understanding, deepen the knowledge of geo-political realities and challenges and help shaping together possible solutions. Differences should not impede to continue talking to each other in a positive and forward-looking atmosphere of mutual respect.

The Euronest PA is the parliamentary forum of cooperation in the framework of the Eastern Partnership and Azerbaijan has been among the strongest supporters of this Assembly from the start. EU-Azerbaijan relations can progress further also in this multilateral format, in complement to the bilateral track.

During the last year, Azerbaijan has chosen not to participate in the activities of Euronest. In this respect, we recall that on 6 October 2016 the decision to withdraw will enter into force. We have nonetheless continued to work on the assumption that Azerbaijan is still a fully-fledged member and have conducted our proceedings with due consideration of the interests of all Partners and players of the Partnership, including of course the EP and Azerbaijan.

The co-chairs of the EU-Azerbaijan PCC, Mr Karim and Mr Seyidov, have called upon the Euronest PA to review and reform its procedures to facilitate the Milli Majlis re-engagement on the basis of mutual respect, equality and understanding.

Being convinced of the importance of these principles, we take stock of this call and look forward to receiving a signal of re-engagement from our Azerbaijani Partners in the next few days left. We would be delighted to welcome the representative of the Milli Majlis at the forthcoming meeting of the Bureau of the Euronest PA to be held on 26 October next in Strasbourg. Reform of our procedures is indeed ongoing under the effort called "A new Euronest scenario", aimed at improving the efficiency and inclusiveness of our Assembly, as well as the relevance of our work in the context of the Eastern Partnership. We certainly hope, therefore, that Azerbaijan will actively contribute to this effort.



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