

**Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy**

**European Parliament resolution of 15 November 2007 on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy (2007/2088(INI))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the development of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) since 2004, and in particular to the Commission Progress reports on implementation of the ENP of 4 December 2006 (SEC(2006)1504/2, SEC(2006)1505/2, SEC(2006)1506/2, SEC(2006)1507/2, SEC(2006)1508/2, SEC(2006)1509/2, SEC(2006)1510/2, SEC(2006)1511/2, SEC(2006)1512/2),
- having regard to the Action Plans adopted jointly with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, as well as with Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia,
- having regard to the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), closely linked to the implementation of the jointly adopted Action Plans, which replaces technical assistance hitherto provided by TACIS and MEDA,
- having regard to the Commission Non-Paper entitled "What the EU could bring to Belarus" of 21 November 2006,
- having regard to the European Security Strategy entitled "A Secure Europe in a Better World", approved by the European Council on 12 December 2003,
- having regard to the Commission's Communication to the Council and the European Parliament of 4 December 2006 on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy (COM(2006)0726),
- having regard to the Commission's communication to the Council and the European Parliament of 11 April 2007, entitled "Black Sea Synergy – A New Regional Cooperation Initiative" (COM(2007)0160),
- having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the European Councils of 14-15 December 2006 and 21-22 June 2007, and to the German Presidency Progress Report entitled "Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy" of 15 June 2007,
- having regard to its resolutions on Wider Europe and on the ENP, in particular its resolution of 19 January 2006 on the European Neighbourhood Policy<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to its earlier resolutions on the countries and regions neighbouring the EU,
- having regard to its resolutions on the ENP and the EU's enlargement strategy,
- having regard to its previous resolutions of 16 November 2005 on the future of the

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 287 E, 24.11.2006, p. 312.

Northern Dimension<sup>1</sup> and of 16 November 2006 on a Baltic Sea Strategy for the Northern Dimension<sup>2</sup>,

- taking into account the findings contained in the United Nations Development Programme's Arab Human Development Reports,
  - having regard to the Conference on the ENP, organised by the Commission and held on 3 September 2007,
  - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Regional Development and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (A6-0414/2007),
- A. whereas consolidation of security, democratic stability and prosperity, and the promotion of good governance and respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights in the EU neighbourhood, are crucial for the stability and prosperity of the whole European continent,
- B. whereas the ENP remains a core priority of EU foreign policy,
- C. whereas the ENP should remain distinct from the process of enlargement; whereas participation in the ENP does not preclude, for the eastern neighbours which are clearly identifiable as European countries, any perspective related to possible EU membership in the long term; whereas the ENP is, for all countries involved, an opportunity to integrate closer with the EU,
- D. whereas, despite the successful launch of reform agendas in several neighbouring countries, the ENP has not yet fully met expectations as regards triggering and strengthening the commitment of the governments of the ENP countries to political and economic reforms,
- E. whereas more incentives need to be developed to motivate partners to advance on the path of reforms; whereas the ENP needs to be substantially strengthened to facilitate this process, *inter alia* by being allocated sufficient financial resources to meet its stated ambitions and objectives,
- F. whereas open and frozen conflicts still represent a major obstacle to the fulfilment of the ENP's key purposes; whereas stability can only be achieved through comprehensive and lasting settlements of the existing conflicts,
- G. whereas the specific aspects of EU policy towards the South Caucasus states, and of the EU's Black Sea regional approach, are being dealt with in separate reports prepared by Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs,
1. Fully supports the principal objectives of the ENP, which is aimed at consolidating a ring of prosperity, stability and security, to develop close ties with and between our neighbouring states and to commit them to pursue reforms towards democracy based on

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 280 E, 18.11.2006, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 314 E, 21.12.2006, p. 330.

respect for human rights, the rule of law, better governance and sustainable economic and social development; underlines the need for special attention to be paid to the promotion of equal rights, in particular the improvement of women's rights, but also as regards minorities and the ability of the neighbouring countries to overcome ethnic, religious or social conflicts by peaceful means;

2. Expresses doubts about the meaningfulness of the ENP's geographic scope, as it involves countries which geographically are European together with Mediterranean non-European countries; notes however that it does not currently seem realistic to fundamentally change this overarching policy framework; stresses, therefore, the need for a greater effort to define the multilateral objectives and instruments of this policy so as to enable the EU and its neighbouring states to face shared challenges, and at the same time to respect the different conditions and specific characteristics of the regions and countries involved;
3. Strongly advocates, therefore, that the entire implementation of the policy take as much account as possible of the differing identities of all the countries covered by the ENP, in order to develop the most appropriate and tangible middle- and long-term incentives for reform and to strengthen the commitment of these societies to the process of modernisation and cooperation and integration with the EU;
4. Notes that the conditionality enshrined in the ENP approach draws on the positive experience of enlargement; considers that conditionality can constitute an appropriate incentive for acceleration of reform processes in the ENP countries towards their convergence with the EU if conceived positively and differentiated according to the specific needs and capacities of the country concerned, and accompanied by the development of a vision shared with the partners in its political, institutional and economic aspects;
5. Strongly underlines that respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms is the core principle of EU policy; stresses that, regardless of the degree of willingness of partner countries' governments to cooperate and to share in these values, civil society in all ENP countries must be strongly supported and its participation and core role in the reform and democratisation process encouraged, and the development of free and independent media supported; calls on the Commission to negotiate the setting-up of subcommittees on human rights with all ENP countries so as to ensure an effective political dialogue on this matter;
6. Underlines the importance for the EU of increasing its contacts with the parliaments, political parties, local authorities and other stakeholders in the ENP countries, with a view to their involvement in the development and implementation of the Action Plans; therefore urges that partnership fora be held on a periodic basis;
7. Stresses the utmost importance of a broad civil society dialogue and intensified people-to-people contacts, which contribute to a better understanding between the societies of the EU and the ENP countries and demonstrate the benefits of cooperation to both sides; considers that particular attention should be paid to student, cultural and research exchanges; welcomes in this respect the initiative of the Commission to open Community agencies and programmes to the ENP countries, and supports in particular further involvement of all ENP countries in the Erasmus Mundus programme;
8. Encourages the Commission and national, regional and local authorities to set up city and

region-twinning programmes, and to provide adequate support for such programmes, in order to reinforce local and regional administrative capacity in neighbouring countries, as well as to promote exchange programmes for civil society and micro-project initiatives;

9. Stresses the need for strong political commitment on the part of the EU and the Member States in order to make the ENP a sustainable success; urges EU Member States to align their own policies in ENP countries as much as possible with the priorities set out in the ENP's Country Strategy Papers, in order to guarantee policy compatibility, coherence and complementarity;
10. Advocates the deepening of regular political dialogue between the EU and the ENP countries; welcomes the fact that Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Armenia align themselves with most of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) declarations and positions, and supports the decision to involve in the same way Azerbaijan; is convinced that such alignment with EU foreign policy should be open to all other ENP countries;
11. Welcomes the longer-term aim of establishing a neighbourhood-wide free trade area, as developed in the Commission's above-mentioned communication of 4 December 2006; supports the negotiation of bilateral deep free trade agreements between the EU and the respective ENP country, which should, in line with the implementation of regulatory reforms, go beyond tariffs and encompass services and the protection of investments; stresses that social and environmental impact assessments must be taken into account when these agreements are negotiated; regrets that the EU has not hitherto considered it possible to open up its market to products which the ENP countries are in a particularly good position to supply at competitive prices and which are of a quality that meets EU standards;
12. Supports the development of multilateral cooperation between the EU and its partners on sectoral themes, to be built on existing regional and cross-border ties in areas such as the environment, energy security, culture, transport and border and migration management; supports, wherever possible, the negotiation of legally binding sectoral agreements which facilitate the integration of common policies; stresses in particular the need to leverage investments in extending the trans-European energy and transport networks to the ENP countries;
13. Stresses the need to use existing multilateral organisations to strengthen interaction between the European Union and the ENP countries; underlines in particular the role of the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in monitoring the implementation of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
14. Advocates that visa facilitation and readmission agreements be negotiated with all ENP countries; stresses the need to improve the capacity of ENP countries to manage migration flows, effectively combat illegal migration and ensure that international human rights obligations are respected; calls on the Member States, the EU and all ENP countries to intensify their cooperation in the fight against trans-national organised crime, terrorism, trafficking in human beings and drug trafficking; supports the neighbours' involvement in the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) and the European Police Office (Europol); stresses the need to ensure that the implementation of such readmission agreements fully respects the principle of non-refoulement, and to ensure access to a fair

asylum procedure; urges the Commission to organise effective monitoring of the treatment of persons returned under readmission agreements concluded with ENP countries, in particular with regard to possible 'chain refoulement';

15. Recalls that the ENP provides an excellent framework for regional and sub-regional cooperation; calls for enhanced regional cooperation in the areas of freedom, security and justice, and in particular in 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; considers that regional cooperation and networking on such issues could build on the experience gained, *inter alia*, within the framework of the 'Söderköping Process', which includes Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine and, on the EU side, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Sweden;
16. Urgently asks the Member States to improve the processing of visas in order to facilitate mobility and to make legitimate travel to the EU less burdensome and less costly, particularly for groups such as students, scientists, businessmen and representatives of civil society; calls on the Member States to deal effectively with problems experienced at their consular services; encourages the establishment of common Schengen visa application centres in the ENP countries;
17. Encourages Member States where appropriate to enter into negotiations with a view to the conclusion of bilateral agreements with ENP countries for the purpose of implementing the local border traffic regime established by Regulation (EC) No 1931/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 laying down rules on local border traffic at the external land borders of the Member States and amending the provisions of the Schengen Convention<sup>1</sup>;
18. Welcomes with interest the Commission's proposal to draw up a viability study on a possible 'Neighbourhood Energy Agreement', and to that end encourages the ENP partner countries to respect international law and the commitments entered into on the world markets;
19. Advocates better dialogue and coordination and more joint actions between the EU and the United States in advancing common goals such as the promotion of democracy, the enhancement of energy security and the strengthening of regional security in the EU's neighbourhood;
20. Underlines the need to involve and work together with the EEA countries, (Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein) and Switzerland and to make full use of their experience of working with the European Union;
21. Stresses the need for appropriate levels of funding and close coordination with other financial institutions in order to make the ENP successful, and is of the view that advantage should be taken of the review of the 2007-2013 financial perspective planned for 2008-2009 to increase the budget of the ENPI; welcomes the introduction of the Neighbourhood Investment Facility, which will help to mobilise funds for ENP partners; strongly underlines the need to maintain an overall balance between the eastern and the southern parts of the ENP, reflecting the EU's ambitions and objectives in the regions, the

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 405, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

effectiveness of previous assistance and the size of the population concerned;

22. Calls on the Commission to coordinate its financial resources and policy analysis capabilities with those of the international financial institutions (European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank), so as to generate synergies in conditioning and stimulating reforms along the lines of the ENP action plans;
23. Welcomes the motivating concept of the Governance Facility to provide additional financial support to best-performing countries; insists that it should reward real progress made in terms of objectives related to human rights and democratic governance, be based on transparent allocation criteria, and be used to further support the reform process;
24. Recommends close and constant vigilance in the fight against corruption in the countries themselves, the results of which should be used as the basis for determining levels of assistance;

### ***Eastern European Neighbourhood***

25. Notes that democratic neighbours which are clearly identifiable as European countries and which respect the rule of law may in principle apply, pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, for membership of the EU, and that the pace and depth of a common European process should correspond as closely as possible to the abilities to implement the appropriate reforms and meet conditions (Copenhagen criteria) in the partner countries and in the EU;
26. Reiterates, with this in mind, the view stated in Parliament's recommendation of 12 July 2007 to the Council on a negotiation mandate for a new enhanced agreement between the European Community and its Member States of the one part and Ukraine of the other part<sup>1</sup> that the current negotiations with Ukraine should result in the conclusion of an association agreement which contributes efficiently and credibly to Ukraine's prospects in Europe and initiates the corresponding process, including the possibility of EU membership; is of the view that a corresponding approach should be taken in relations to Moldova, given that the initial period of ten years in force of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with that country is due to expire in June 2008;
27. Takes note of the initiative of the Commission to invite Belarus to attend as an observer at the ENP Conference held on 3 September 2007; is seriously concerned, however, by the lack of a positive response on the part of the government of Belarus to the conditional cooperation offer formulated by the Commission in its above-mentioned non-paper of 21 November 2006; condemns the continued executions carried out in Belarus, the only country in Europe still imposing the death penalty, and other violations by Belarusian authorities of fundamental human rights and freedoms, and calls upon them to release all political prisoners and to stop any oppression of democratic forces, in order to enable the Belarusian people to benefit from freedom, democracy and prosperity and from all the opportunities which stem from closer integration with the EU; underlines that the EU should urgently provide more effective support for civil society, free media and political parties committed to democracy, the rule of law and respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms; strongly urges Belarus to apply a moratorium on the death

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<sup>1</sup> Texts Adopted, P6\_TA(2007)0355.

penalty as a first step towards the abolition of capital punishment, and to ratify the second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the European Convention for the protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its relevant protocols; encourages the Commission to make more effective use of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), and to ensure that the means provided by the EU financial instruments cannot be misused by the Belarusian government against Belarusian citizens and civil society;

28. Calls on the Commission to promote people-to-people contacts by reducing the current cost of visas for Belarusians, especially for students, scholars and representatives of civil society, with a view to bringing such costs into line with those charged in other ENP countries, such as Ukraine, and in Russia;
29. Considers that Belarus has the same European vocation and perspectives as Ukraine and Moldova, once it embraces democracy, respects fundamental human rights and freedoms and enhances the rule of law;
30. Is convinced that a motivating framework with medium-term implementation targets should be established, based on a new generation of association agreements to be negotiated with ENP countries which respect fundamental European values, are willing to integrate more closely with the EU and demonstrate objective performance in terms of ENP action plan implementation;
31. Is of the view that those agreements should envisage the development of the bilateral relationship with the EU in progressive stages, negotiating concrete conditions and timetables to be met, including binding performance benchmarks to be specified in the jointly adopted action plans, and accompanied by a regular monitoring process; reiterates its earlier proposal to develop with those countries clearly identifiable as European deep free trade agreements in the context of a possible 'European Economic Area Plus';
32. Commends the conclusion of the visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Ukraine, as well as the initiation of such a process with Moldova, and urges that similar agreements be negotiated with the South Caucasus countries; is convinced that the prospect of a visa-free regime should be envisaged in the long term, with the steps necessary to achieve it being laid down; stresses that in the case of Georgia the progress of reforms and the unintended negative impact of the visa facilitation agreement between the EU and Russia on the settlement of conflicts in the breakaway Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia necessitate a speedy conclusion of the visa facilitation agreement between Georgia and the EU; urges that efficient monitoring mechanisms be put in place, in particular with regard to respect for the fundamental human rights of persons subject to readmission agreements; stresses the importance of having adequate guarantees of access to a fair asylum procedure for those in need of international protection, in particular when applying 'accelerated readmission procedures' to persons intercepted in border regions, as provided for in the readmission agreement with Ukraine and the proposal for a readmission agreement with Moldova;
33. Stresses the need for intensified implementation of the existing EU-supported transport projects in the region, in particular the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA), fully utilising the transit potential of the countries involved;
34. Believes that the gradual integration of the EU's eastern neighbours into the European

Energy Community should be pursued, and urges that reforms of energy sectors be implemented as a matter of priority, enforcing the principles of an open market economy and transparency, in particular as far as prices, network access and energy efficiency are concerned; welcomes the efforts made to include external energy security in line with the CSFP as one of the cornerstones of the ENP;

35. Underlines the importance of the political dimension of the ENP; advocates stronger EU support for regional political cooperation projects such as the Community of Democratic Choice, GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova) and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) in order to promote democracy, confidence, multilateral cooperation and sustainable development within the region more efficiently;
36. Underlines the need for a stronger involvement on the part of the EU in the resolution of so-called frozen conflicts, *inter alia* through confidence-building programmes, conflict management and projects on education, culture and civil society building in breakaway territories; commends the work of the EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM); calls on the Council and the Commission to make it clear that participation in the ENP commits the countries concerned to good neighbourly relations and that, in order that the potential of the ENP may be fully exploited, it binds the countries concerned to make renewed, fresh and genuine efforts to find lasting and sustainable settlements to the conflicts in the region and to refrain from belligerent statements, threats and actions that could further deteriorate the situation and undermine the efforts of the international community;
37. Encourages Ukraine, within the framework of its alignment with the EU's CFSP declarations and positions, to join in the restrictive measures taken by the EU against the leadership of the Transnistrian region of Moldova, thereby making a further significant contribution to the peaceful settlement of the Transnistrian conflict;
38. Welcomes the assistance afforded under the ENPI to confidence-building measures in Georgia and its breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia; asks the Commission to explore the possibility of providing assistance, in the form of local confidence-building and local economic rehabilitation projects, to Nagorno Karabakh, with a view to helping to resolve the conflict there;
39. Calls on Turkey to establish normal diplomatic relations and to re-open its land border with its neighbour Armenia as part of the confidence-building measures necessary for lasting peace and economic integration in the region; asks Turkey and Armenia to commence a frank discussion on all outstanding issues;
40. Underlines the importance of elaborating a more sophisticated policy for the Black Sea area, complementing the ENP, and emphasises the importance of having Turkey and Russia as partners in the development of a viable strategy for that region;
41. Considers it important to enhance the parliamentary dimension of the political partnership between the European Parliament and the countries involved in the eastern part of the ENP; suggests, therefore, the setting-up of an EU-Neighbourhood-East Parliamentary Assembly (EURO-NEST), following the example of the multilateral parliamentary assemblies already established with the participation of the European Parliament, and involving the Parliaments of Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, as well as pro-democracy observers from Belarus;



42. With a view to reinforcing the parliamentary dimension, encourages the Council, the Commission and the Member States to develop, in cooperation with the governments of countries involved in the eastern part of the ENP, a platform for regional multilateral cooperation at ministerial level, strengthening further the political dimension of the ENP in the East of Europe;
43. Is convinced that such an assembly and ministerial cooperation would usefully contribute to the implementation of the strengthened ENP and would bring added value to the work of bilateral inter-parliamentary delegations, allowing all the parties concerned to reinforce cooperation, solidarity and mutual confidence, to contribute to the settlement of frozen conflicts, and to strengthen regular multilateral dialogue on subjects of common interest with a clear regional dimension such as energy, the environment, the fight against terrorism, migration management, human rights, etc.;
44. Stresses the need to use the strategic partnership between the EU and Russia to insist that fundamental human rights and freedoms, international law, democratic choice and the rule of law be respected as principles governing the approach of both partners to the shared neighbourhood; calls on the Russian authorities to assume their responsibility to help restore the territorial integrity of ENP countries, to comply with Russia's obligation to protect minorities in areas where it is involved in peace-keeping operations, and not to oppose possible European involvement in civilian and military peace-keeping operations in the frozen conflict areas, as requested by some of the parties concerned; regrets the use of energy resources as a tool for the realisation of political objectives; invites Russia to enter into a constructive dialogue with the EU and our common neighbours about possibilities for deepening multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea area;
45. Welcomes the initiative to strategically reinforce relations with neighbours of the Eastern ENP countries, in particular the countries of Central Asia; welcomes, in this regard, the recently adopted Central Asia Strategy; considers, in this framework that distinctive and far-reaching cooperation should be developed between the European Union and the countries of Central Asia; stresses that, given Kazakhstan's key political, economic and energy role in this region, as well as its distinctive and successful secular multi-ethnic structures, this country could be the first example of a reinforced relationship between the countries of Central Asia and the European Union, subject however to Kazakhstan's undertaking extensive political reforms, with special attention being paid to the respecting of human rights and democratic principles;
46. Insists that implementing the ENP should continue to be a common political task for all EU Member States; suggests to the Commission that account should be taken of the unique transition-related reform experiences of those Member States which joined the EU in the 21st century, so as to further develop and refine the new mechanisms currently in operation, which may be beneficial to the ENP countries;

### ***Southern Mediterranean Neighbourhood***

47. Emphasises the strong and long-lasting links between the EU and the southern Mediterranean countries, and stresses that close cooperation is in the interests of both sides;
48. Recalls that the European Union should actively support and encourage the reform processes in the southern ENP countries, as the potential benefits of far-reaching political,

economic and social reforms amply exceed their cost; recalls also that this is a gradual process, which depends partly on the commitment of the partner countries to facilitating the reforms;

49. Calls on the Commission to further explore the various options for the next generation of broad-scope agreements with the southern ENP countries; stresses that those agreements must include provision for arrangements to implement the human rights clause; notes that those bilateral agreements should not be at the expense of furthering multilateral cooperation in the region, and in particular the pursuit of the Barcelona Process goals, including the creation of a free trade area; calls on the Member States to reflect on possible ways of strengthening cooperation, including by means of increased flexibility in opening agricultural and labour markets in the future, in ways compatible with social protection and equity; calls on the Southern ENP countries to redouble their efforts to open economic systems to a greater extent and to harmonise their economic rules with the relevant parts of the EU *acquis*; stresses the need to grant Mediterranean countries the right to control the pace at which their markets are opened up and their national economic and social development strategies; considers that more effective use of the ENPI for regional projects would make it possible to improve the situation so as to promote a genuinely integrated regional economic area;
50. Reiterates that universal human rights are at the core of EU values; regrets that, although, since the beginning of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), substantial progress has been achieved as regards democracy and human rights, this progress has not been sufficient, and urges the Commission to continue working with governments, regional and local authorities and civil society actors in the countries concerned; stresses the importance of freedom of expression in building a democratic culture and strengthening civil society; urges the Commission to establish genuine dialogues in this field and to actively develop joint education policies and programmes to promote mutual understanding, tolerance and women's rights, particularly among the new generations; considers that, to this end, the southern partners should display greater transparency and openness to the contribution of civil society; is convinced, however, that the human rights dialogue should not prevent the EU from indulging in public criticism and taking other measures in the event of serious infringements of fundamental rights;
51. Acknowledges the different circumstances, interests and priorities of each of the southern countries, which are taken into account in the negotiation and implementation of action plans; stresses the utmost importance of an increase in regional cooperation within the EMP framework; underlines that the ENP in no way replaces or competes with the EMP, but that the two policies are complementary, making it possible to combine the multilateral approach of the Barcelona Process with the bilateral perspective; calls on the Commission to strengthen its communication efforts in order to clarify the link between the two policies, both to the partner countries and to the European public;
52. Reiterates the need for stronger political will on the part of the EU institutions and the Member States to engage actively in conflict resolution in the region, whilst preventing the conflicts from standing in the way of the development of the ENP; stresses that the ENP will not reach its full potential without resolving conflicts which make regional cooperation difficult or impossible; reiterates that ENP activities conducive to conflict prevention should be strengthened and focused on confidence-building measures, such as border management, support for reconciliation processes at national, regional and local

levels and support for civil society organisations; stresses the important role of the governance facility instrument in preventing and resolving conflicts; emphasises, in this regard, the need for coherence and complementarity between the ENP and other instruments and policy matters, and the need for structured conflict analysis and conflict sensitivity in the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes;

53. Reiterates that the ENP, together with the EMP, constitutes the framework for all fields of cooperation; is of the opinion that enhanced cooperation between interested parties should be possible and indeed facilitated; observes that the consideration of new initiatives to step up cooperation in the Mediterranean should, at all events, involve imparting fresh impetus to the EMP, which necessitates serious thinking about the limits and difficulties encountered in recent years; insists that the Mediterranean should continue to be a common political concern for all Member States; recalls the importance of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly; stresses its hope that it will be possible for that institution to be involved in assessing the development of Euro-Mediterranean policies;
54. Considers it important to establish closer relations, even through new relationships, with the countries which are neighbours of our neighbours, such as the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council;

#### ***The role of the European Parliament***

55. Reiterates its commitment to continue to scrutinise the implementation of the ENP, in particular by making use of its powers, including, as a last resort, its budgetary powers, and by continuing the dialogue with the Commission concerning the application of the ENPI and the EIDHR, a dialogue which started in 2007 and which is to be continued with a view to the review planned for 2009; intends to examine regularly the ENP progress reports; regrets, however, the fact that it has not been consulted on the ENP Action Plans, the assessment of their implementation or progress in the discussions within the human rights subcommittees;
56. Is aware of its role as a significant opinion-former and as a forum for public debate, and intends to strengthen its cooperation with parliaments and civil societies in the ENP countries; undertakes, therefore, to make more effective use of its delegations to interparliamentary bodies; stresses, in this respect, the importance of the non-governmental dimension, namely the Euro-Mediterranean civil society platform, in strengthening the political dynamic in the southern partner countries;

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57. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, to the governments and parliaments of the Member States and to the governments and parliaments of all ENP countries and of Turkey and the Russian Federation.