



Auswärtiges Amt

Speech by Guido Westerwelle, Member of the German Bundestag and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, at the second Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum

19.11.2010

-- translation of advanced text --

Mr Janning,

Commissioner Füle,

Members of Parliament,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted that you chose Berlin as the venue for your second meeting.

For decades, Berlin stood for the division of Europe. The divide between East and West cut this city in two. For almost 30 years the Berlin Wall stood only a few hundred yards from where you are sitting today. It symbolized the terror that went with the division of Europe and Germany.

I was roughly 14 or 15 years old when my father first took me to Berlin. We went together to the Berlin Wall. Where West Berlin ended, there were wooden platforms from which one could look over the Wall into East Berlin. There were the watchtowers, there was the mined "death strip". The Wall revealed the disregard for humanity exercised by a regime that locked its people in and treated them like prisoners.

But Berlin also proved that one cannot lock freedom away for ever. The Berlin Wall did not fall. It was toppled by the people of the East. Since that day, Berlin has no longer stood only for the division of Europe, but first and foremost for the unification of our continent.

Here you are in the right place to reflect on and discuss how best to prevent new divisions arising in Europe. For that is what the Eastern Partnership is all about. Europe does not end at Poland's or Hungary's eastern borders. The Eastern Partnership promotes cooperation beyond the European Union's external borders as a way of ensuring cohesion. We want to ensure that the era of a divided Europe is over once and for all.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The process of European integration is not yet complete. Completing the integration of the EU members from Central and Eastern Europe is one of the biggest tasks we face. Forging closer links with the EU's neighbours is another major task.

The relationship between France and Germany has shown how long-standing hostility can give way to genuine friendship and partnership between neighbours. Farsighted statesmen played a key role in that process.

But it was precisely contacts between individuals from the two sides, for example through the youth exchanges organized by the Franco-German Youth Office, that fostered genuine links between our peoples.

Over the past 20 years, a partnership has likewise taken shape between Germany and Poland, our largest neighbour to the East, which has now evolved into a genuine friendship.

We work closely with Poland, also on foreign policy issues. A few days ago I travelled to Minsk with my Polish counterpart Radek

Sikorski. Together we issued a clear call for free and fair presidential elections.

Freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights are pan-European values. They bind us together, within the European Union and beyond. It is immaterial whether a state is large or small, an old or new member of our community. All of us in Europe meet as equals. It is in the interest of us all that our neighbours also share these European values.

The aim of the Eastern Partnership is to create a pan-European area of freedom, security, justice and prosperity. The European Union seeks to build on friendship with all its neighbour states.

It is not a question of these states joining the EU. The aim is to support the societies in our immediate neighbourhood as they seek greater freedom, the strengthening of the rule of law, better governance and economic renewal. This is not just in the interest of our neighbours. It is in our pan-European interest.

Germany has always advocated opening the Eastern Partnership to third party involvement. Openness and cooperation have long been the European Union's recipe for success.

That is why I am delighted to see people from Russia and Turkey here with us today. Welcome to Berlin!

Ladies and gentlemen,

A pan-European free-trade area could generate new economic momentum. Why not create a common economic space that covers the EU, the Eastern Partnership countries and Russia?

We must not be afraid of charting new paths. When we enlarged the EU to the east, many people had their misgivings. Some even spoke of the threat it posed to prosperity in Europe. Events have proven these nay-sayers wrong. The eastern enlargement was both a political and an economic success. Both old and new EU members have ultimately gained in economic terms. This should encourage us to push ahead with free trade with the countries to the east of the European Union.

Economic freedom and personal freedom go hand in hand in Europe. Freedom must not remain a vague promise for the distant future. Travel restrictions currently prevent the full realization of the Eastern Partnership countries' social and economic potential. For this reason we need a fresh start in visa policy.

The European Union is an advocate of open, democratic societies with market economies. For us, the unhindered exchange of young people, scientists and business people is an everyday occurrence. Our policies must seek to normalize this freedom in the Eastern Partnership countries, too.

Of course freedom of travel cannot be introduced overnight. Of course we have to take account of security considerations. But security and freedom are not mutually exclusive. I advocate a solution that finds a balance between the two.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The economic and financial crisis has laid bare structural problems in Europe that we must and can resolve. Back in the 1970s Europe was allegedly beset by "eurosclerosis". Many people thought European integration had gone as far as it could. But the intervening years have proven otherwise. The present difficulties will also be overcome if we work together. The European Union members are now more closely linked than ever before. We are not only united by the single market and common standards for goods and services. We have also laid the groundwork for a common foreign policy to ensure that Europe's voice can be better heard.

Cohesion is Europe's answer to the changes wrought by globalization. The world order is in flux. Societies in Asia, Latin America and Africa are on the rise. Their political weight is growing accordingly.

Shaping globalization needs more Europe, not less. The centuries of confrontation in Europe have given way to an era of cooperation and integration. Never before in their history have the peoples and states of Europe lived and worked together as peaceably as today. Europeans have never been more united in their values and norms.

We must not however rest on our laurels. Peace, stability and prosperity in Europe are not gifts from above. Nor are they guaranteed until the end of time. We have to keep on working for them.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Eastern Partnership needs confident stakeholders who advocate freedom and human rights. Change wells up from a society's midst. Charities, churches, environmental groups and human rights organizations drive such changes.

It is up to you to remind politicians of their pledges, to refuse to tolerate corruption, and to demand service and accountability from public authorities and the courts.

The future is in your hands.

I hope that here in Berlin you will be able to establish networks, exchange experience and work together to ensure that the Eastern Partnership strengthens cohesion in Europe.

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* by Commissioner Füle
at the Eastern Partnership
Civil Society Forum
Berlin, 18/11/2010

Speech *

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Participants to the Forum and Guests

Allow me to start my speech by saying that I am very pleased to see that the Forum which has been set up just one year ago, has turned out to be one of the most dynamic elements of the EaP.

I would like to seize this opportunity to congratulate you, and especially the members of the CSF Steering Committee, on your achievements. You have done a lot of work during the last year and today you are seen as an indispensable part of the EaP. Your representatives have been gradually involved in various EaP panels, in such areas as fight against corruption, policy towards small and medium-sized enterprises, environment and climate change. Your recommendations were presented to Foreign Ministers and senior officials from Partner countries and EU Member States. The voice of civil society has been heard. Now, we have to keep momentum and work on how we can include your points of view in the practical aspects of EaP implementation.

We want to engage you more for several reasons. First of all, because civil society involvement is a *conditio sine qua non* for the success of our common endeavour. And this conviction stems not from political correctness but from a deep belief that civil society is a fundamental part of the democratic process. The great events that have changed the face of Europe at the end of the last century would have been impossible without the "Solidarnosc" movement in Poland or the Civic Forum in former

Czechoslovakia. The city in which we meet today would still be divided by the Wall, if not for the strong desire for democracy manifested by German society. Today this experience of peaceful democratic transformation may prove very relevant for you, since the final aim of the Eastern Partnership is to provide tangible support for the transformation of Partner countries towards sustainable democracies and market-oriented economies. Reforms, which are necessary to complete the process of transition and approximation to European standards, cannot be implemented without the backing of the public. Therefore I do hope that the Forum will prove to be instrumental in promoting EaP goals in societies and mobilizing their support for reforms.

We also want to engage with you because civil society acts vis-à-vis governments as an advocate for -- and a watchdog of -- reforms. You can influence domestic political agendas and raise awareness of the importance of the EaP. In this context, let me refer to one of the long term goals of the EaP, which is visa liberalization. Facilitating greater people to people contacts between the EU and our Eastern partners is of paramount importance and certainly here is an area where your advocacy is needed. I am aware that many of you had to wait for visa before coming here and I do believe that we will be able to gradually remove barriers for free movement of people, but this can only be done if it is accompanied by improved security standards in Partner countries. We can provide assistance, for example through the flagship initiative on integrated border management, but the support of civil society organizations is also essential.

Equally, you have an important role to play in encouraging convergence towards EU standards and norms in areas such as environment, climate change, energy efficiency or consumer protection.

Just a few days ago, I visited Belarus and met with many Belarusian NGOs to show my support to Belarusian people in this important moment of the country's political life. I discussed with them the situation of Belarus' civil society and how the EU could help Belarusian civil society organizations to act and to express their views. In countries like Belarus, where people do not have full confidence in the elections and democratic process, cooperation with non-governmental organizations is even more important. This basic fact should be recognized also by EU Member States.. I want to say to Belarusian NGOs that your presence here is precious and I hope that the Forum will help you to increase your visibility and develop ties with NGOs from other Partner countries.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This Forum offers a unique opportunity for CSOs from EaP countries and EU Member States to meet together and build a strong network of Civil Society Organisations, spanning many sectors of public life. When presenting the idea of setting up this Forum, our intention was to provide a platform for cooperation among various civil society players ranging from typical NGOs to trade unions and employers organizations. I hope that this distinctive character of the Forum will be maintained and will help to create added-value.

I am aware that if we are to involve you more in policy formulation and monitoring, then we need also to invest more in strengthening your capacity. I make no apologies for our efforts so far, because we are already doing a lot. In 2010 €9 million is being made available through the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme and €16.5 million is available to CSOs from the EaP countries through various financial instruments supporting actions in areas such as human rights and democracy, migration and asylum, environment, and strengthening civil society capacities.

I am also conscious that if we want civil society organisations to play a more important role in the framework of the Eastern Partnership, we need to provide you with better access to information on our activities.

I have been following your development very closely and I am aware that the Civil Society Forum is a living body that needs our assistance to fully blossom. The Forum will never reach its full potential without a coordination of activities between national platforms, working groups, the Steering Committee and last but not least, the plenary meeting of all participants. Therefore, I am delighted to draw your attention to a new CSF website, which was created in response to one of the recommendations you made last year. While the Commission finances this website, its content and all the tools it offers, are under your control.. I am sure that this will improve your cooperation and address some shortcomings that you had indicated to us last year. It will also help you to develop and promote your positions on relevant issues.

Having said this, I would like to underline that we are going to closely examine the issue of strengthening of CSOs in the context of the ongoing ENP Review. I agree with many of you that we should build a stronger link between programmes aiming at strengthening CSOs and the goals of the Eastern Partnership. We will carefully examine your proposals in this respect and reflect on the possibilities to provide additional grant support to CSOs.

Let me just say a few words on the subject of the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy we have been undertaking. First I believe all have been pleased with the wide-ranging nature of the consultations we have undertaken – with governments and with civil society. All want more political cooperation and deeper economic integration. There are of course important gaps between partners expectations and what the EU may be prepared to offer be it in the field of mobility, market access or financial support. But what seems to be emerging as a way of bridging these gaps is a gradual approach based on clearer differentiation and more rigorous conditionality.

But whatever is the final outcome of the ENP Review, I would like to now call on you to develop concrete proposals on how you can best be involved in the implementation of EaP's goals; in what ways you can add value to it and what you can offer to make it a success. You are already involved in many EaP activities and you should particularly reflect on your possible contribution and input to the work of the Eastern Partnership Panels. You have to prove to representatives of governments that your contributions and proposals can be ambitious but also constructive and attainable.

You can be sure that I will also appeal to the representatives of partner and Member State governments to cooperate closely with the Forum in the implementation of the EaP agenda. We have to elaborate forms of cooperation that will allow us to use civil society's experience to the best possible extent. The first opportunity to discuss this issue will be during the EaP Ministerial Meeting.

Thank you very much for your attention and wish you a very fruitful meeting.



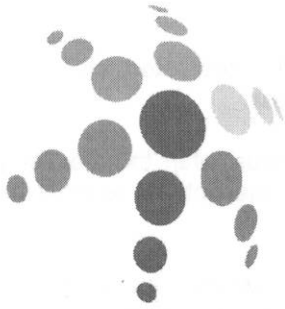
EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

Contacts Between People Working Group 4 Recommendations

Berlin, 18 November 2010

- 1) Build the stronger link between the **EaP Platform 4 and Working Group 4** by increasing the permanent communication, the accessibility to information and the feedback (including through the flagship project).
- 2) Secure funding to mark the **Day of Volunteering** in all 6 EaP countries with participation of EU and national governments, which will educate on values on volunteering and recognize the volunteering, in partnership with EU and domestic governments and civil society.
- 3) Advocate in EaP countries for the implementation of **knowledge based youth policies** and the recognition of the non-formal education based on best EU practices, capacity building for NGOs in this area, and the creation of tools (financial, legal and methodological) to ensure the youth participation for formal and informal groups. (EU, Government and local government).
- 4) Adjusting and implementing the EU standards (including student's self governance) of **formal education** in all EaP countries, based on evaluation of current situation, agreement on the package of standards. Creating financial tools for establishing partnerships between EaP Universities (regional cooperation) and EaP and EU Universities (in addition to Tempus and Erasmus Mundus).
- 5) Improving the **quality of life and employability** for young people in the EaP six through strengthening the social and civil dialogue and social partnership, and equal access to high quality education, lifelong learning and vocational education and training.
- 6) Just as the EaP countries must comply with the technical requirements for safe and secure mobility, so the EU must provide roadmaps for visa liberalization to Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. We hope that talks on **visa facilitation** and readmission agreements with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus will proceed swiftly. Once successfully implemented, constructive dialogue on full **visa liberalization** should begin.
- 7) For the CSF to develop **its planning and engagement mechanisms** in order to draft and implement roadmaps for the achievement of all recommendations effectively.
- 8) Elaboration of **cultural policy development roadmaps** in all six EaP countries, based on dialogue with civil society (also encouraging the involvement of the European Neighbourhood Partnership Network).
- 9) Stimulate the inclusion of the EaP 6 into the European **Research Area** (including under FP7).

10) Map existing initiatives on the **inclusion** in state policies of young people with few opportunities, minorities, people with disabilities, people affected by conflict, young migrants, Roma people (e.g. by using cross-sector approach).



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

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Minsk, 5th of January 2011

The President of the European Parliament
Mr. Jerzy Buzek

External Affairs Commission
Mr. Gabriele Albertini

Ref : Recommendations and Memorandum of the Civil Society Forum for Eastern Partnership – Cooperation with the Council of Europe

Dear Mr. Buzek,
Dear Mr. Albertini,

As you may know, since 2009, a Civil Society Forum for Eastern Partnership is supporting the instances and requests of the Civil Society in the official EaP process. The Second meeting of the Civil Society Forum gathered in November 2010 in Berlin and saw the participation of more than 250 civil society organizations from the Eastern Partnership countries and from Europe. The event, as well as the on going work of the Civil Society Forum, is supported by the European Commission. The Commissioner for Enlargement, Mr. Stefan Fuele, participated actively in the meeting in Berlin and confirmed that the Civil Society Forum is one of the most dynamic elements of the Eastern Partnership. He showed us true commitment to support the participation and contribution of the Civil Society into the official tracks. The Forum in Berlin was also attended by representatives of Czech Republic, Poland and Belgium (in their capacity of Chair of the European Union) as well as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, host of the event, Mr. Guido Westerwelle.

The Civil Society Forum, like in 2009, elaborated a Memorandum and Recommendations issued from the work of the four working groups – which follow the proceedings of the official platforms. The recommendations are specific on a) Democracy and Human Rights (with 6 subgroups) b) Economy and Energy c) Environment d) People to People contacts.

Please see herewith attached the final documents. We strongly stress the need for Civil Society:

- to be informed,
- to be allowed to participate in the elaboration of the policies – with contributions and expertise
- to participate in the implementation of the activities
- to participate in the monitoring process

Between the Forums, a Steering Committee – composed of 17 dedicated civil society organizations, both from EaP and from Europe – is leading the process.

We are also sending you our declaration on the recent facts in Belarus, after the elections, in full support of the civil society leaders heavily aggressed and all the actions against basic human rights and democracy.

In order to create useful synergies and to reach our common goals, I would like to propose you our support and cooperation. In order to open a constructive dialogue, I would be very pleased if you could meet me at your earliest convenience in the upcoming week. I take the liberty to suggest a possible date (1st or 3rd of February 2011), when our first new Steering Committee meets in Brussels.

With my best regards,



Ulad Vialichka

Temporary Speaker of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum

<http://www.eap-csf.eu>

Annexes:

- * Memorandum and 4 working groups' recommendations
- * Speech of Mr. Fuele and Mr. Westerwelle
- * First Steering Committee Report, link <http://www.eap-csf.eu/en/resources/eap-csf-2010-documents>
- * Our Declaration on Belarus facts



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

Civil Society Forum

From: Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Steering Committee

To: Eastern Partnership Ministerial Meeting, EU Council, Brussels,
13 December 2010

Memorandum: **Civil Society expertise can strengthen impact and accountability of Eastern Partnership agreements through effective analysis, monitoring and implementation**

To make this possible, greater access to draft plans and priorities, and “permanent participant” status in official platform meetings and expert panels, are essential, together with the support of a Civil Society Forum Secretariat

Attached: Full recommendations of the Working Groups of the Civil Society Forum

10 December 2010

The past two decades of engagement of the EU with the post-Soviet countries have demonstrated that the shared values and principles underpinning the Eastern Partnership initiative, including democracy, human rights, the rule of law and good governance, can be observed and upheld when:

- *there is open dialogue and co-operation between government and civil society,*
- *policymaking is carried out in an accountable manner so that policies are decided following multi-stakeholder expert consultations, and*
- *subsequent policy implementation is monitored by vigilant civil society organisations.*

The Eastern Partnership initiative opens the doors to the EU's eastern neighbours to embrace these shared values, and to increase engagement and contacts at all levels of society. To this end, the broadening and deepening of civil society is a key process; in order to keep the neighbouring countries on track towards becoming stable democracies, nothing is more effective than a vibrant civil society. To enable civil society to be an active partner at national and international level, the EU needs to equip the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum with effective institutional resources, including a Secretariat in Brussels.

At the second annual gathering of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, which took place in Berlin on 18-19 November 2010, **a clear consensus emerged that the essential values of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights and good governance will be best served by a vigilant civil society that provides “added value” expertise to the Eastern Partnership initiative, contributing to the development and implementation of policies, projects, and programmes.**

The European Union and the EaP countries have to agree on and implement a system of incentives (positive and negative) to bring national developments in line with European standards.

To meet these objectives, it is essential that civil society:

- engages as an active player in the official platform meetings and expert panels of the Eastern Partnership through the granting of "permanent participant" status to the Civil Society Forum;
- monitors the commitments and agreements made by the six EaP countries and the EU – through evaluation and analyses of implementation of EaP agreements;
- prepares practical policy recommendations for EaP countries and the EU, and advocates them within the official EaP Platforms and working groups;
- participates in the implementation phases of EaP policies;
- reinforces its work via national platforms;
- co-operates with EU institutions and international organisations promoting its objectives, e.g. EESC and Council of Europe;
- facilitates stronger engagement of EU civil society in the EaP process.

A wide-ranging consultation will be held by the Civil Society Forum to survey planned in-country projects of civil society across the EaP countries. At the Civil Society Forum event in Berlin, groups already confirmed that current and planned projects include:

- a comparative study to evaluate implementation of the various agreements signed with the EU by the six EaP countries within the framework of the EaP initiative;
- a series of policy projects between civil society from EaP countries and EU member-states designed to foster economic integration and in a number of cases working to assist EaP governments to move towards Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreements with the EU;
- a comparative report monitoring the observation of human rights in all six countries;
- a co-ordinated visa liberalisation project, which will assess the political will and technical preparedness of each EaP country. A first baseline study will be ready by the end of January 2011. Policy recommendations for both the EaP countries and the EU will be ready for the Eastern Partnership summit in Budapest in May 2011;
- a people-to-people initiative strengthening links between civil society in EU member-states and EaP countries.

EXPERT CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS MUST TAKE THEIR SEATS AROUND THE TABLE

In order to be able to maximise the effectiveness of its meetings throughout 2011, and to ensure that the EU and EaP governments benefit from independent input from civil society, **the following steps are essential to the fruition of the efforts of the Civil Society Forum:**

- Establishment of a Brussels-based Secretariat with a robust mandate and sufficient resources;
- "Permanent participant" status of the Civil Society Forum in official platform meetings, thematic working groups, expert panels and flagship initiatives, with prior access to draft policy documents;
- Facilitation via EU delegations of trilateral dialogue at the national level concerning bilateral agreements, including priority-setting in ENPI funding and review of financial perspectives, and prior access to draft plans and priorities that are subjects of the Action Plans and Association Agreements;
- Access at national level to information about overall and sector-by-sector financial flows of EC budget support;
- As in the Western Balkans, establishment of a distinct Civil Society Facility under the ENPI to finance the capacity of CSOs and support dialogue between CSOs and government.

Without the above resources and access, the Civil Society Forum will be like a watchdog condemned to bark outside the room.



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

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From: Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum

To: Government of the Republic of Belarus
Catherine Ashton, Vice-President, European Commission, and High
Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security
Policy
Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European
Neighbourhood Policy

21 December 2010

Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum calls for full access to detainees to be accorded to EU representation in Minsk, for release of prisoners, and an independent, international inquiry into police actions during and after Belarus presidential election

On the evening of 19 December 2010, the hopes of greater respect for human rights and the principles of an open, tolerant democracy emerging in Belarus were shattered by militia and special forces brutality towards ordinary citizens, opposition presidential candidates, human rights defenders, and Belarusian and international media representatives.

The Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum calls upon the Belarusian authorities to provide full access to the EU representation in Minsk and to Belarusian and international human rights organisations to detainees in prison and those with injuries in hospitals, and for the swift release of prisoners – several opposition presidential candidates and also human rights defenders and civil society activists detained on 19 December 2010, the date of the presidential elections in Belarus, and the next day December 20, 2010.

In addition, the Civil Society Forum Steering Committee calls for the organisation by the EU of an independent inquiry into police actions during and after the Belarus presidential election which, according to the OSCE, "failed to give Belarus the new start it needed. The counting process lacked transparency. The people of Belarus deserved better."

In the joint declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership summit, signed on 7 May 2009 by the EU and six neighbouring countries, including the government of the Republic of Belarus, the participants agreed that "the Eastern Partnership will be based on commitments to the principles of international law and to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to, market economy, sustainable development and good governance".

On the evening of 19 December 2010, the Belarusian authorities acted in clear contravention of these principles. Belarusian riot police beat and detained hundreds of persons, including three presidential candidates, the Chairman of the Belarusian Helsinki Committee and coordinator of the "Human Rights Defenders for Free Election" election monitoring campaign as well as many other civil society activists. During the night, the office of Human Rights Centre "Viasna", co-participant of the campaign, was raided by the KGB and ten staff members of the centre were detained. Some Belarusian citizens were also arrested in other cities while heading to the Minsk.

The 2010 presidential elections failed to meet international standards for democratic elections, including equitable access to the media for all candidates, the unfair use of state resources to support the incumbent, and the almost total lack of independent or opposition representatives on the Electoral Commission.

This clear infringement of the rights to peaceful association and freedom of speech comes barely 10 days after UN Human Rights day, on the occasion of which EU High Representative Catherine Ashton reaffirmed that respect for human rights lies at the core of EU values, and pronounced that "the EU calls upon all governments to ensure that laws and practices do not prevent legitimate and peaceful human rights work in line with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders".

The Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum was elected at the meeting of more than 200 representatives of civil society who met in Berlin on 18-19 November 2010. The Civil Society Forum was established by the European Commission in 2009 "to promote contacts among CSOs and facilitate their dialogue with public authorities".

Plans by Civil Society Forum participants for 2011-2012 include a comparative report monitoring the observation of human rights in all six Eastern Partnership countries.

We call the European Union to examine the issue of appropriate sanctions that should cover all those who were responsible for the acts of violence against the peaceful demonstration in Minsk on December 19, 2010.



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

Democracy, Human Rights, Good Governance and Stability

Working Group 1 Recommendations

Berlin, 18 November 2010

Recommendations by working group on Democracy, Human Rights, Good Governance and Stability

In order to be able to deliver relevant input, the partner countries and the European Commission should grant the EaP CSF representatives unlimited access to the intergovernmental platform meetings.

Given their adequate expertise and experience the selected CSOs' experts should be granted full membership status in the expert panels established within the intergovernmental platforms.

EaP CSF representatives should be also included into the programming and implementation of the regional projects designed and approved within the EaP intergovernmental platforms. It has been proven by several expert studies that the international assistance aimed only at governments does not bring the expected results; the most successful projects are overwhelmingly those implemented by NGOs, or in combination of NGOs with governments. (Also following on one of the objectives of the EaP Multilateral Process, i.e. "stronger participation of civil society to enhance oversight of public services and strengthen public confidence in them")

To design roadmaps in order to have benchmarks for monitoring and a tool for the NGOs to be able to involve the partner countries' governments better – *the debate within the WG has not been finished so it probably needs further elaboration.*

The EU and its Member States should introduce a regular independent monitoring of their funding provided to the EaP countries' governments and make the results of such monitoring publicly available.

Project proposal (subgroup on HR, most likely to be funded)

Periodical monitoring of human rights situation and important events from all 6 EaP countries, put together bi-yearly in March and September (roughly one month before the intergovernmental WG1 meetings). This report aims to be a basic set of up-to-date information that should serve both the CSF and the intergovernmental meetings for reference. The report will build on existing reports from the six countries, which will be provided by selected HR subgroup members (1-2 pages plus 3-4 bullet point recommendations from each country) and then put together by group coordinator under one format. The deadline for submissions from each country is January 31, 2010.

The coordinators of the WG1 decided to divide the work of the group into the following subgroups, complete with their respective recommendations :

A. Recommendations by the Fight Against Corruption Subgroup

- 1) Monitoring of and contribution to the EaP activities on fight against corruption, in particular at the current stage:
 - a) screening of the proposal of the Council of Europe-European Commission on a regional project on fight against corruption on whether it offers an effective mechanism to implement the objectives of the EaP Multilateral Process such as inclusion of “governance peer reviews and exchanges of best practices” and “stronger participation of civil society to enhance oversight of public services and strengthen public confidence in them”;
 - b) advocating for an increasing involvement of civil society in project development and implementation of EU assistance to fight against corruption in the Eastern Partnership countries. In particular, the EaP CSF should recommend the EU member states, EU institutions and the Council of Europe to develop a component of support to CSOs capacity building and dialogue with public authorities within the regional CoE-EU project which is currently being designed;
 - c) when the above mentioned project is on track, examining and evaluating its progress, including assessment to what extent the project strengthens CSOs activities.
- 2) Establishment of subgroups on fight against corruption within the framework of the national platforms of EaP countries. Such subgroups should focus on the implementation of anti-corruption policies agreed under the EaP framework in their respective countries (both within the multilateral and bilateral track). The national sub-groups should be inclusive and involve new stakeholders from anti-corruption area (not limited to the Forum and the National Platforms participants). The national subgroups would serve as contact points for EaP-related activities.
- 3) Civil society organisations should make a strong contribution to awareness-raising and education. In this area CSOs should be a major actor. In particular, CSOs should develop an information campaign underpinned by research on threats coming out of corruption in different spheres of public life (to link it with poverty, human security, conflict etc).
- 4) CSOs should develop and implement common initiatives and projects to facilitate exchange of ideas and experience sharing, including success stories from different EaP and new EU member countries. For this purpose, CSOs should use a variety of tools, such as, but not limited to, the EaP CSF website, NGO twinning projects, site visits, and professional exchanges.

For the EU Institutions and Member States:

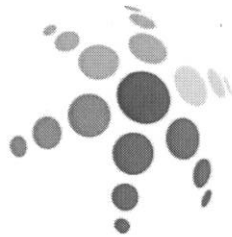
- 1) The EU should rigorously and consistently apply the principle of conditionality towards the EaP governments: the EU and EU Member States should provide financial and technical assistance to the EaP governments only if anti-corruption commitments taken by the EaP governments in relations with the EU and other international bodies have been met. In their turn, CSOs will monitor the compliance by the EU and its Members states with this principle.
- 2) The EU and its Member States should introduce a regular monitoring of their funding provided to the EaP countries government and make the results of such monitoring publicly available.
- 3) The European Commission together with the Council of Europe should include a component of comprehensive support to CSOs capacity building and dialogue with public authorities within the regional CoE-EU project which is currently being designed. Furthermore, CSOs should be invited to consultations on the overall design of the project.

For the EaP countries' governments:

- 1) The EaP governments should fully implement European, international and national commitments

regarding the following issues:

- a) use of public assets,
 - b) public access to information,
 - c) declaration of assets and incomes by public officials,
 - d) provision of free legal aid to citizens,
 - e) transparency of media ownership.
- 2) The EaP governments should reveal and report how they spend money provided by international donors, including the EU (e.g. within ENPI).



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

Civil Society Forum

B. Recommendations by the Human Rights subgroup

At the subgroup meeting, it was stated by its participants that it does not seem needed to formulate an entirely new set of recommendations in the human rights dimension of the EaP, since the one adopted after the 2009 CSF in Brussels remains valid, but not visibly applied in practice.

The subgroup believes that no significant progress in EaP negotiations on the intergovernmental level should be made possible without a clearly demonstrated and accountable progress on the main human rights issues on the side of the EaP governments.

The subgroup would therefore like to re-visit some of the main points of the 2009 recommendations:

- 1) The EU should demonstrate the centrality of international human rights standards in its foreign policy and agreements with third countries by according human rights a distinctive space. Enforcing these human rights standards should be an integral part of the EaP, *and integral part of all EaP negotiations and should be reflected in Association Agreements and related roadmaps and action plans*
- 2) The evaluation of human rights in EaP countries should be treated as a basic criterion for overall assessment of their democratic progress. The EU should assist human rights organizations in the EaP countries to develop and implement effective models and innovative methods for permanent monitoring of human rights. Efficient communication channels and institutional platforms should be established to inform the EU institutions, Council of Europe, OSCE, as well as individual EU Member States, of the results of monitoring.
- 3) The EaP countries should strengthen the implementation of international norms, mechanisms and recommendations at the national level. The EU should support the full implementation of the EU's Guidelines on human rights, in particular the Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders, as well as the relevant recommendations and decisions of the United Nations, Council of Europe, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the European Court of Human Rights.
- 4) The EaP should mainstream human rights in all its programmes, including asylum and immigration policy, economic development, cross-border cooperation, trade and energy policy.
- 5) The EaP should support, through co-operative projects, education in the sphere of political culture of pluralism and democracy based on values of tolerance, ecumenical religious, multicultural and multiethnic cooperation, both within a given country and in cross-border relations.

“Baseline project” – monitoring report:

To provide basis for these recommendations, the human rights subgroup stated that its outcomes should be tied to concrete projects as much as possible, using the legitimacy of the CSF.

With that in mind, the subgroup further developed the idea of a “baseline” product, which was initiated at the subgroup meeting in Brussels in October 2010, and which should be a periodical monitoring of human rights situation and important events from all 6 EaP countries, put together bi-yearly in March and September (roughly one month before the intergovernmental WG1 meetings).

This report aims to be a basic set of up-to-date information that should serve both the CSF and the intergovernmental meetings for reference. The report will build on existing reports from the six countries, which will be provided by selected HR subgroup members (1-2 pages plus 3-4 bulletpoint recommendations from each country) and then put together by group coordinator under one format.

In order to maintain focus, the section on each country should dwell on four core areas, which are provided as rough guidelines:

- 1) Freedom of expression
- 2) Freedom of assembly
- 3) Freedom of association
- 4) And “Other issues” (if there is currently an important topic in a given country that doesn’t fit the basic format, such as imminent elections or other).

The final part of each section will be recommendations to the European Union of what to look into when having talks with each particular country/suggestions for questions.

Within the subgroup, the country contributions will arrive from:

Armenia – Artur Sakunts

Azerbaijan – Anar Mammadli

Belarus - Katerina Przybylska

Georgia – Malkhaz Saldadze

Moldova – Elena Prohnitchi

Ukraine –Volodymyr Yavorsky

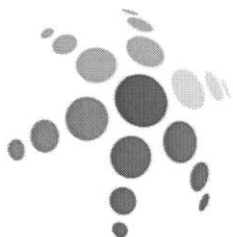
The deadline for submissions from each country is January 31, 2010.

This monitoring report will be a practical basis for to ground recommendations on, at least within human rights sphere.

Events and topics for the upcoming year :

Additionally, the subgroup focused on indentifying key issues concerning human rights and key events related to the EaP process in each country in the upcoming time, in an effort to highlight key windows of opportunity to present human rights issues.

The selection is not exhaustive, but should provide basis for actions and specific projects carried out by CSOs both within their countries and as a part of the CSF agenda. One very important existing entry point for civil society is participation in the hunman rights dialogues which the European Commission currently holds with each EaP country except Belarus.



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

C. Recommendations by the Judiciary reform Subgroup

The Civil Society Forum :

- 1) *Welcomes* the establishment of an Eastern Partnership Panel on Improved Functioning of the Judiciary attached to the Platform “Democracy, Good Governance and Stability.”
- 2) *Believes* that the civil society expertise and vision can support the proper functioning of the Judiciary Panel and implementation of its recommendations in the six partner countries;
- 3) *Express their hope* that CSF representatives having adequate expertise and experience will be granted a membership status in the Judiciary Panel;
- 4) *Asks* the partner countries to engage in consultations with civil society organizations as to the nominees to the Judiciary Panel;
- 5) *Requests* the **EC and the partner countries** to grant unlimited access to the platform meetings related to the judiciary;
- 6) *Remain confident* that the below given recommendations will be duly taken into consideration.

The Civil Society Forum recommends that the following should be added to the agenda of the Judiciary Panel:

1. Introduction of institutional and legislative safeguards to ensure complete independence of judiciary from the political influence and pressure from the executive branch, *including but not limited to:*
 - a) Establishment (where appropriate) and reform of the High Judicial Bodies to guarantee its complete independence from the executive and political interference;
 - b) Transparency of the operation of the High Judicial bodies as regards judicial and non-judicial vacancies, dismissals, promotion;
 - c) Transparent and merit based procedure for promotion of judges by the independent judiciary bodies, including abolishment of the bonus systems for judges;
 - d) Abolishment of subjective criteria in the appointment procedure such as interviews, oral exams;
 - e) Reform of the disciplinary proceedings to ensure full conformity with the Council of Europe Venice Commission recommendations;
 - f) Introduction of constitutional guarantees for immovability of judges during the tenure of appointment;
 - g) Ensuring independence of judges from the pressure from within the courts through abolishing the practice of prior consultation with upper judges (head of the court or High Judicial Bodies) as to the possible outcome of a case;
 - h) Introduction of the depersonalized/random system of case assignment;
 - i) Putting in place adequate salary schemes and social guarantees for judges;

2. Creation of institutional safeguards for ensuring independence of the Legal Aid Systems from the Executive Branch;

In addition, The Civil Society Forum recommends the EU :

- To increase of the transparency of the EU funding of the justice sector in the partner countries;
- To create periodic system for the **joint** (EU, partner country authorities and Civil Society representatives) follow-up with regard to the implementation of the recommendations to the partner countries presented by the EU;
- To support diversification and increase in the level of the funding for the civil society organizations working in the area;
- To increase engagement of the representatives (experts) from the civil society organizations in the activities under the EU support programs diverted towards the authorities of the partner countries;

The Civil Society Forum express the readiness to present more detailed written and oral recommendations to the Platform meetings related to Judiciary.



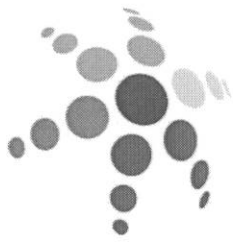
EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

D. Recommendations by the Media Subgroup

The Media subgroup recommends :

- 1) To elaborate the field-focused Road Maps
- 2) To publish them BEFORE the Budapest EaP 2011 Summit
- 3) to create EaP Media Landscape BEFORE the elaboration of Media Road Map
- 4) to summarize the national landscapes into common vision and identify top priorities issues
- 5) Concerning the EAP media landscape to develop a field-based structure:
 - TV and Radio,
 - Print media,
 - New media
 - Legislation
 - Regulation
 - Market Review
 - Access to Information
 - Self-regulation
 - Conditions of journalists' activities
 - International Cooperation
 - NGO Media Activities
 - Journalism Education
- 1) Purpose to held the next MEDIA SUBGROUP MEETING in ISTANBUL, 24-27 JANUARY with the following Agenda:
 - National Media Landscape presentations – country by country
 - Discussion on the Methodology and Structure of Research
 - Digitalization of Broadcasting Media in the Region – Discussion
 - Media Hearings: Media Situation in Georgia and Moldova (with the participation of officials)

Participants: Media Sub-Group Members, Georgian and Moldavian Officials, International Media Experts



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

Civil Society Forum

E. Recommendations by the Public Administration Reform subgroup

Vision

Efficient public administrations should put the citizen into the center of their functioning. Citizens should be seen as the end customers of public administration; the public administration reform must ensure that citizens have easy and equal access to civil services, and that the services are efficient, affordable and timely.

It is essential to ensure the transparency of governance at all levels in order to ensure full accountability and prevent corruption. Decentralization should be a key focus of administrative reform. The development of local communities is the core of sustainable society. The development of the professional and responsible regional and local authorities is a basis for efficient public administration.

For reforms to be successful, they must be implemented with the strongest possible involvement of society. Experience shows that no institution will ever reform itself unless pressure is applied externally. Civil society institutions can provide crucial input and ensure an unbiased approach to the elaboration of reform strategies.

Proposed lines of action

To the governments :

- 1) Encourage governments of EaP countries to adopt and implement National Strategies for Local Self-Government and Public Administration Reform in consultation with civil society organizations;
- 2) Encourage the governments of EaP countries which have joined the European Charter on Local Self-Government and additional protocols to implement it, and Belarus to join it; ensure the implementation of subsidiarity principles;
- 3) Ensure independent monitoring of public administration reforms and European cooperation projects including those funded under budget support and CIB;

To the European Commission :

- 1) Involve civil society in the decision-making process whenever EC negotiates with the partner governments the EU budget support or propose projects and strategies, including twinning programs, in the sphere of public administration reform
- 2) Encourage governments of EaP countries to decrease the administrative burden on taxpayers; reduce bodies with overlapping functions as conditionality for PA budget support programmes
- 3) Create another track within twinning programs that will enable local civil society to manage quick efficient expert exchanges and training for local self-administration; organize training and education

of public officials and local self-government officials based on a set of values and training needs assessment;

To the Civil Society Organizations :

Develop the capacity of the local self-administration to take more of the responsibilities and functions in the proposed administrative reforms.

Create an annual (regular) forum on public administration reform in EaP countries, for the exchange of the best practices. Forum could become a discussion platform and information share point on the state and tendencies of Public Administrations reforms with EP6 countries,

Placing the publication on web site, ongoing research, Forum (annual base) could be a logical event for all-year monitoring activities. Civil society organizations, governments and EC authorities, can meet regularly in one of the participating countries

CSOs from different countries need to pay attention to standardizing the research and papers.

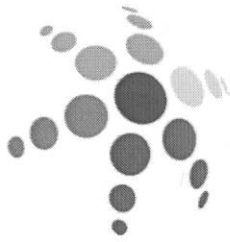
Prepared by: Svyatoslav Pavlyuk, PAUCI, Ukraine;

Nina Iskandaryan, Caucasus Institute, Armenia

During WG1 group meeting on October 6th, 2010-11-30

Amended by participants of WG1 Public Administration subgroup

During 2nd SCF EaP Forum in Berlin on November 18-19, 2010, Berlin.



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

F. Recommendations by the visa liberalisation subgroup

Visa-free travel to the EU for the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries is one of the key components of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). It is difficult to strengthen good neighbourly relations without barrier-free contacts between EU and EaP citizens.

Just as the EaP countries must modernise their own border management and fulfil the technical criteria for visa liberalisation, so the EU must provide a clear commitment to lift visa restrictions upon fulfilment of the criteria.

By the time of the 2011 EaP civil society forum, the results will be available of projects monitoring fulfilment of the criteria by the EaP governments – undertaken by civil society groups represented in the forum. An evaluation and comparative assessment will be presented, along with recommendations targeted at respectively the EaP countries and the European Commission.

We welcome the Council's Conclusions on the Eastern Partnership (25 October 2010), and hope that Ukraine and Moldova will soon receive their own Action Plans leading to a visa-free regime. The signing with Georgia of a Visa Facilitation Agreement (VFA), and the imminent signing of a readmission agreement, mark the first steps on the path to visa-free travel.

We hope that negotiations on VFA and readmission agreements with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus will begin and proceed swiftly. Visa negotiations with all Eastern Partnership countries must have a clear long-term goal, i.e. to bring about visa-free travel. In this regard, visa facilitation can serve as only a stepping-stone towards this goal.

Belarus

We welcome the fact that the EU is ready to start negotiations on VFA/RA with Belarus. Once successfully implemented, **constructive dialogue between the EU and Belarus on full visa liberalisation should begin**, provided that the requirements for safe and secure mobility are met.

Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia

The absence of consulates of some EU member states in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia poses a serious barrier to travel. For example, the small number of consulates in Yerevan (Armenia) has forced Armenian citizens to travel long distances to neighbouring countries or to Russia to apply for Schengen visas, which enormously increases the costs of their travel to the EU. **The EU should support the establishment of common visa application centres (such as in Moldova) or insist on the signing of bilateral arrangements between consulates in order to ease the process of obtaining Schengen visas for citizens of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan.**

Underlying principles:

- **Clear benchmarks :**

A coherent regional approach towards all EaP countries should follow clear benchmarks. *The EU should establish a model of regular (twice a year) assessments of countries' technical preparedness for a visa-free regime. Such an assessment can contribute to a better comparison of progress, which could inspire other countries to catch up.* A regional approach should not mean, however, that the better performing states should wait for those that are lagging behind if sufficient progress has been achieved by the former. **A country reaching all benchmarks should be immediately rewarded with visa-free travel.**

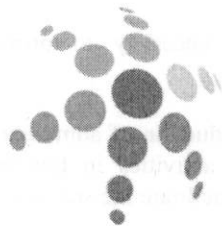
The visa liberalisation process for all EaP countries and Russia should be based on the same, clearly stated criteria.

- **Transparency**

The visa dialogue between the EU and EaP countries should be carried out in a transparent manner and should be subject to monitoring by local civil society. Full access to information is essential: *all key documents including bilateral Action Plans, questionnaires, and evaluation reports of the European Commission should be immediately accessible on the websites of EU institutions.*

- **Apolitical approach**

Implementation of steps leading to visa liberalisation for EaP countries' citizens should be a technical process, not bound by political conditionality.



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

Working Group 2 Recommendations

Berlin, 18 November 2010

A. General Recommendations to the EU and Eastern Partner countries

Working Group 2:

1. Reiterates the demand to include the representatives of civil society as permanent participants in the EaP intergovernmental platforms, panels and other related programs.
2. Recalls that civil society should be included in the monitoring of EaP through existing or future national platforms and insists that these platforms should have balanced representation and include representatives of social partners (employers' organisations and trade unions)
3. Recalls the importance of visa facilitation including the reduction of fees and advancing towards visa free regime to enable mobility and business contacts
4. Recommends, in addition to existing EU financial instruments supporting NGO sector activity to explore possibility of exploiting such institution building programs as TAIEX, TWINNING, CIB, CBC and others, to build capacity of Civil Society organization to contribute effectively to the EaP process.
5. Encourages Eastern Partners governments to support civil society in taking active role in decision making by extending the social and civil dialogue that is already established in most countries in the areas of labour relations as well to other spheres such as employment, education and training.
6. Requests to render financial and technical support to consumer organizations to enable them to defend consumer rights and promote consumer protection especially in the field of product and service safety.
7. Asks EU to encourage innovation driven transformation of Eastern Partner countries and recommends Eastern Partners governments to take inspiration from the Flagship Initiative "Union of Innovations" Strategy Europe 2020. The measures should include support programs for innovative SMEs, promotion of business incubators, technological parks, skills development and technology transfer, participation in research and development framework programmes and clustering mechanism.

8. Brings the attention of Eastern Partner countries to the necessity to promote women entrepreneurship by all possible policy means.
9. Calls on Eastern Partners governments to adopt programs of reduction of administrative burden and better regulation to enable enterprises to develop their activities in favour of growth, employment and decent work. In this respect it is necessary to facilitate the start up of businesses and encourage the spin off development.
10. Calls to contribute to the poverty reduction and reaching social objectives by encouraging social economy and rural development programs in Eastern Partner countries.
11. Emphasizes the necessity to develop and support the Green Business in Eastern Partner countries by exchanging best practices from EU Member States, transfer of appropriate technology and know-how.
12. CSF calls governments of EaP countries to consistently move towards and to facilitate alignment with all DCFTA requirements as preconditions for sound development of their countries. At the same time, CSF calls the EaP governments to find ways to assist those businesses/citizens, which would be negatively affected by relevant changes in laws and regulations in the short term, to overcome the difficulties.
13. Calls on the EC and Georgian government to remove obstacles for opening of DCFTA negotiations and enable civil society to closer monitor the negotiation preparatory process.
14. Asks Eastern Partner countries governments and the EU to support social dialogue, which is substantial basis for European social model; to encourage and support the exchange of experience between Social Partners from EU and Eastern Partner countries. The genuine social dialogue needs the strong and representative employers and trade unions organizations.
15. Recommends to the Eastern Partner countries to use the experience of the European Economic and Social Committee as an institution of the European civil dialogue to promote the dialogue with the civil society of their countries.

B. Recommendations for ongoing work program of the Thematic Platform 2 “Economic Integration and Convergence with EU Policies”

1. Sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures and animal welfare – to involve the representatives of the relevant CSOs (farmers associations, consumer organizations, foodstuff industry) to the training for the officials.
2. Customs cooperation and border control – organize training for the chambers of commerce who issue the certificates of origin and enhance the cooperation between customs offices and business representatives

3. Transport – to make a survey of the problems that business and public face due to the weaknesses in the transport networks and logistic centers between EaP countries themselves and between EaP and the EU neighbouring states and of their proposals for the improvement of the transport networks.
4. B2B meetings – WG 2 suggests to review the form of this meetings and to transform them into Business Forum or Development Forum (as proposed by the Belarus government) that would involve the economic operators, financial institutions and official authorities. The Forum should take inspiration from the transatlantic dialogue, EU-Japan business platform or other platforms existing between EU and third countries and regions.
5. SME
 - 5.1. to include in the goals the transfer of know and to establish and promote the Eastern Partnership Charter of SMEs based on experience of the Mediterranean Small Business Charter and Small Business Act of the EU;
 - 5.2. to organize regularly big matchmaking event for the SMEs from EaP countries and EU in the form of Europartenariats that helped develop business to the SMEs from Eastern European accession countries.
 - 5.3. to promote and support the establishment of clusters as a tool for upstreaming the activities of the SMEs in partnership with the academic and research and development sphere and extend the clusters to involve the partners from the bordering regions between the EU and EaP.
6. Labour market and employment issues – to agree with the DG Employment and with the ETF the CSF participation in the regional learning project 2011-2013, conference on EQF for partner countries and present proposals to the CIS ministers' conference of education ministers of education and VET in Minsk. Involve social partners in these activities. (Initiate a Panel on Labour Market and Employment Policy.
7. Technical Regulations and Standards – to provide mechanism for developing Impact Assessment studies in Eastern Partner countries for the gradual introduction of the Global directives into the national legislation. Intensify exchange of results of such studies among Eastern Partner States. Establish mechanism for communication of results of such studies to wider circles of civil society.
8. Intellectual property rights - to develop a special guide on actions to enforce the IPR legislation in Eastern Partner countries.

C. Suggestions on Future Work of the Thematic Platform 2

1. Assistance to the partner countries to create rules for fair competition and fight against abuse of monopolistic positions, including the assistance to civil society organisations to monitor the implementation of antimonopoly legislation.
2. To use roadmaps where appropriate with clearly defined benchmarks and dates to reach the specific goals in the field of commonly agreed policies.
3. EaP countries are facing the impact of the global crisis and the need to position in the post-crisis period. A regional conference on input of civil society in the search for solutions can provide a sound base for developing a participatory approach for policy-making to address the challenges of economic, social, labour market and employment areas.



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

Environment, Energy and Climate Change Working Group 3 Recommendations

Introduction

WG 3 regards the topics on the agenda of EaP Thematic Platform 3 and the Panel on Environment under Thematic Platform 2 as very relevant. However, CSF participants of WG 3 believe that the process could greatly profit from stronger involvement of the EaP CSF CSOs and from including missing or emphasizing some existing important aspects. WG 3 and some WG2 colleagues interested in sustainability issues have therefore produced 6 discussion papers with detailed proposals and their justifications. These papers are attached to this note and concern the following aspects:

1. Effective Civil Society involvement in EaP matters related to environment, climate change and energy

More effective involvement of CSOs requires a) access to information, including to draft documents; b) providing CSOs with “permanent participant” status; c) frequent opportunities to interact with governmental players of the EaP process on the national, regional and EU levels; d) involving them as experts in studies; e) setting up a regular dialogue with CSOs by EC Delegations in partner countries. More regular regional meetings of WG3 members on specific issues would also be important to exchange information and come up with common positions. (*Discussion Paper 2*)

2. Issues that need be given more attention by the Environment Panel and Thematic Platform 3 :

2.1. Strengthening Environmental Governance in partner countries

Integrating environmental requirements into development policies and developing National Institutional Capacity Building Plans for Ministries of Environment in partner countries on strategic transition towards a green economy would considerably strengthen environmental governance in Eastern partner countries. CSO should be involved in developing indicators for and monitoring the effectiveness of EaP initiatives related to achieving sustainable development in an institutionalised manner and to CSO support. (*Discussion paper 2*)

2.2. Support of ecologically sound renewable energy production

CSO are in support of promoting renewable energy production; however, we are missing the aspect of ensuring that renewable energy is also ecologically sound through integrated policy development and planning. CSOs could play an important role as communicators of this concept and in monitoring implementation. (*Discussion Paper 1*)

2.3. Making energy security strategies in Eastern partner countries transparent and sustainable

Energy security policies would become more ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable if they were developed in more transparent manner, with public consultation, and monitored systematically, with involvement of CSOs. This requires capacity building measures and better regional cooperation, in our opinion. (*Discussion paper 4*)

2.4. Making natural resource management climate resilience

Climate change is already a fact and will stay with us for some time to come, no matter how effective our mitigation measures. We therefore suggest to use the EaP platform for sharing knowledge among governmental

and CSO players and providing support on building ecosystem resilience to climate change through integrated natural resource management. (*Discussion paper 6*)

2.5. Giving a price tag to nature's services

A Green Economy can only be achieved if governments consider costs of ecosystem degradation in their economic policies. The Panel on Environment should help Eastern partner countries to get involved in the EU process of developing and piloting approaches for mainstreaming the conservation of ecosystem services into governmental and economic policies, so that insights gained and first benefits can be shared within the whole partnership right from the start. CSOs, in particular think tanks and NGOs have knowledge to share. (*Discussion paper 3*).

2.6. Increasing resource efficiency through better waste management

Household waste is a tremendous problem in Eastern partner countries. Increasing resource efficiency by separate waste collection and recycling is good for the environment and provide new business opportunities. Knowledge on policy and financing solutions should be shared with Eastern partner countries. CSO involvement would ensure better buy-in to solutions by the public and businesses. (*Discussion paper 2*)

3. Other issues of high importance and to be dealt with in the near future

Climate change mitigation: The EU should advocate and support integrated climate policies in Eastern partner countries aimed at stabilizing and decreasing emissions from the current level, based on the recent national communication as well as the idea of CSO participation in climate summits.

Integration: Environmental integration within the Civil Society Forum can be achieved through targeted meetings of CSO representatives of different working groups, mutual invitations of speakers, development of joint statements across WG "borders" etc

Toxic waste: Toxic waste is a burning environmental problem for which Eastern partner countries need support and would profit from cooperation

The social dimension of EaP energy strategies and policies: It should be recognized that without motivating public for daily energy efficient consumption, sustainable energy targets couldn't be achieved. Technologies will not solve the problem by itself. At the same time, citizens should have access to affordable, cleaner, and safe energy as a component part of sustainable energy development with a clear focus on promoting clean energy technologies and increasing access to financing for energy. The knowledge and resources towards increasing such access should be mobilised.

Conclusions

EaP CSF WG3 members propose to discuss with Thematic Platform 3 and Environment Panel chairs how to introduce and discuss these proposals with all involved countries. We are aware that not all our recommendations can be taken into consideration in the short term, but hope to reach agreement with governmental players on a list of priorities and on an action plan. We would be delighted to participate in Platform and Panel meetings or to jointly organise focussed working meetings, e.g. in cooperation with EC Delegations, where we could explain in more details our ideas and proposals and discuss them with governmental players.