ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ПАРЛАМЕНТ   PARLAMENTO EUROPEO   EVROPSKÝ PARLAMENT   EUROPA-PARLAMENTET
EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT   EUROOPA PARLAMENT   ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ   EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
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Press release

Step up east-west energy cooperation, urge MEPs and eastern neighbourhood MPs

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The EU's new eastern partnership policy should boost cooperation with its eastern neighbourhood countries to reduce both parties' energy dependence on Russia, said MEPs and MPs from eastern partnership countries at the fourth Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, which closed in Yerevan, Armenia, on Wednesday. The Assembly's resolutions also call for more trade coordination, solidarity with Ukraine to counter Russian aggression there and an official recognition of the Armenian genocide 100 years ago.

"Euronest is a unique forum for MEPs and MPs from eastern partner parliaments to discuss and agree even on very sensitive issues, such as Armenian genocide and Russian aggression in Ukraine", said Euronest's EU Co-President Heidi Hautala (Greens/EFA, FI), in her closing remarks.

More energy cooperation needed to counter Russian pressure

A resolution drafted by the Assembly's Energy Security Committee regrets that Russia has used energy trade to exert political pressure, and urges the upcoming Eastern Partnership summit in Riga to deliver more cooperation between the EU and its eastern partners so as to "strengthen mutual energy security and to make them more independent and resilient".

MEPs and MPs stress the need to cooperate on renewable energy production and energy effectiveness in particular.

Trade with Russia or the EU: a tough choice

The need to tackle trade complications for the six eastern European countries "sandwiched between the EU and Russia" was also highlighted by Ms Hautala in her concluding remarks. "The revised European neighbourhood policy should strive to develop our trade and economic relations in a way where choosing would not mean losing", she said.

While condemning Russia for its trade measures against the EU and eastern partners who have chosen to associate themselves with the EU, MEPs and MPs acknowledge in their resolution on trade that for eastern partners, access to the EU market is as important as access to the Russian one. They call for more effort to make the two economic areas - the EU and the Eurasian Economic Union (EUEA) - compatible.

Russian aggression in Ukraine

"All the partner countries except for Belarus are confronted with separatism and territorial disputes in which Russia is directly involved or exerts large influence", MEPs and MPs say in a special resolution on Ukraine. They also ask Russia to compensate Ukraine for the

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material losses that it has caused there.

100 years since Armenian genocide

Finally, commenting in a separate text on the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire, 100 years ago, MEPs and MPs insist that "denial of genocide is a final stage of genocide", deplore attempts to that end, pay tribute to the victims and invite Turkey to "come to terms with its past".

Further information

- Euronest programme: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150313IPR34601/html/EURONEST-to-meet-for-the-4th-time-in-Yerevan
- Euronest assembly
  : http://www.euronest.europarl.europa.eu/euronest/
- Briefing on Eastern Partnership: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EXPO_STU%282015%29536438
- Euronest assembly: "We must focus on the values and aspirations which unite us: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150317STO35005/html/Euronest-assembly-We-must-focus-on-the-values-and-aspirations-which-unite-us

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