

**The Eastern Partnership Warsaw Summit (29-30 September 2011)**

The second Eastern Partnership Summit, hosted by Donal Tusk, Prime Minister of Poland, was held in Warsaw on 29-30 September 2011. The Summit was chaired by Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative / EC Vice-President and Stefan Füle, Commissioner for Enlargement and the ENP, also participated in the Summit along with Heads of State and Government of the EU Member States and five EaP countries(1).

The EaP Warsaw Summit renewed the political commitment of all participating countries to the key objectives of the Partnership. It reviewed progress made in the implementation of the Eastern Partnership over the last two years and decided on the next steps to ensure continued progress toward deeper political association and economic integration with the EU.

The Summit also emphasised that the Eastern Partnership is based on common values and principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. At the same time, it acknowledged the European aspiration and the European choice of some Eastern European countries. The EaP Summit also underlined the central role of civil society in pursuing the goals of the Eastern Partnership and referred to the possibilities of establishing new instruments such as a European Endowment for Democracy and a Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility.

The EaP Warsaw Summit agreed to strengthen and deepen existing cooperation with Eastern partners. In this respect, further progress towards Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas and in the area of mobility as well as enhanced political and sector cooperation featured high on the Summit's agenda.

Drawing on the joint Communication "A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood, A Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy" (25 May 2011), the participants of the Summit stressed that the intensity of the cooperation will be determined by the pace of reforms and partners most engaged in reforms will benefit more from their relationship with the EU. The participants of the Warsaw Summit agreed to a Joint Declaration (link: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/124843.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/124843.pdf))

In the margins of the Summit, a civil society conference entitled 'Towards a European Community of Democracy, Prosperity and a Stronger Civil Society' took place. This has signalled the growing role of civil society within the Eastern Partnership. Moreover, the first Eastern Partnership Business Forum took place in the coastal town of Sopot on 30 September. The EaP Business Forum aims to strengthen cooperation between businesses from the EU and partner countries.

**Related links:**

The President of the European Council:

<http://www.european-council.europa.eu/the-president/summits-with-third-countries?lang=en&summit=201109290&page=1>

<http://www.european-council.europa.eu/home-page/highlights/eastern-partnership-good-progress.aspx?lang=en>

The Polish Presidency of the EU Council:

<http://pl2011.eu/en/content/eastern-partnership-summit>

The Civil Society Conference:

<http://www.easternpartnership.org/community/events/eastern-partnership-conference-towards-european-community-democracy-prosperity-and->

<http://www.eap-csf.eu/en/news-events/news/declaration-of-the-civil-society-participants-of-the-eastern-partnership-conference/>

<http://www.eap-csf.eu/en/news-events/news/position-paper-of-the-civil-society-forum-to-the-eastern-partnership-summit/>

The EaP Business Forum:

<http://www.easternpartnership.org/community/events/eastern-partnership-business-forum-sopot>

<http://efni.pl/index.php?id=89>

## **Background**

The Eastern Partnership was launched in May 2009 with the goal of building closer relations between the EU and its neighbours to the east: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus (2), Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The Eastern Partnership aims to support Eastern European countries' sustainable reform process with a view to accelerating their political association and economic integration with the EU. It is based on common values and principles of democracy, liberty, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law.

The bilateral track of the Eastern Partnership provides a framework for Association Agreements and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas. At the same time, a core objective of the Eastern Partnership is to enhance mobility of citizens which will be gradually achieved through the establishment of visa free regimes between the EU and partner countries on a case by case basis provided that conditions for secure mobility are in place.

The multilateral track of the Eastern Partnership helps advance partner countries' legislative and regulatory approximation to the EU *acquis* through exchanges of experiences and best practices.

In parallel to governments' cooperation, the Eastern Partnership engages also with other stakeholders including civil society, parliaments, and regional and local authorities with the aim to bring their valuable input to the realisation of the ambitious goals of the partnership. To that end, the EaP Civil Society Forum, the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly and the Conference of Regional and Local Authorities of the EaP have been established.

*(1) Belarus decided not to participate in the Summit.*

*(2) Belarus does not participate in the bilateral track of the EaP*