



Draft

Resolution of the Conference of the National Civil Society Forum

"Roadmap of the East Partnership for Belarus"

July 5-6, 2010

Minsk

We, the participants of the Conference of the National Civil Society Forum "Roadmap of the Eastern Partnership for Belarus", the representatives of Belarus' civil society:

- consider the Eastern Partnership initiative at this stage to be the main mechanism for six post-Soviet countries' integration into European processes;
- recognise the importance of the Eastern Partnership for Belarus, which is not a member of the Council of Europe and poorly integrated into the most European processes (from strategic cooperation on defence and security issues to freedom of movement and contacts between people);
- consider Belarusian government and administration's actions and measures within this initiative framework to be insufficient;
- show interest in active civil society participation in the Eastern Partnership initiative within the framework of the Civil Society Forum being the main catalyst and the instrument of expanding "Europeanisation" processes and democratisation of Belarus.

The conference participants acknowledged the successful and efficient work of the Belarusian delegation at the First Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum in Brussels in 2009, and discussed goals and objectives of the delegation at the Second Forum in Berlin in 2010.

We consider **creating mechanisms for the civil society inclusion into the "road map" identification of expanding the Eastern Partnership initiative** to be the next stage goal of the development the Civil Society Forum. This mechanism should be set up as a programme monitoring which is organising and presenting overall picture of promoting the programme in

public space and EP platforms based on unified indicators.

Following the results of the activities of the thematic work groups, based on the themes of four Eastern Partnership platforms, the conference participants support the following conclusions and suggestions:

On the platform "Democracy, human rights, good governance and stability":

1. Introducing the system of legitimate and effective local self-government in Belarus based on the principles and norms of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. As a primary step, and in order to eliminate Belarus' lagging behind the other Eastern Partnership member states, it is proposed to:

- 1) Belarus to initiate drafting of a country report on the state of local self-government;
- 2) Belarus to sign and further ratify the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

2. The cooperation between state and civil society is necessary in order to enhance good governance practice. Lifting the ban on the activities of unregistered organisations is the first step in systematic reformation of the legislation. It is essential to create and support the mechanisms for participation of civil society institutions in decision-making at the national and local levels, which includes providing equal conditions for all civil society organisations, as well as creating necessary conditions for civil initiatives development, growth of civil society, voluntary movement and charity work.

3. It is necessary to initiate reforming the judicial system, particularly in pursuing provision of effective guarantees for the independence of judges and lawyers.

4. To promote the elimination of state run monopoly on the media, which is one of the main conditions for ensuring Belarusian citizens' the constitutional right to access information and disseminate it. It is necessary to establish mass media system in the Republic of Belarus in line with European norms and standards. With this objective in view it is proposed:

- 1) to ensure equal economic opportunities for mass media of different types of media ownership;
- 2) to ensure equal access to information for citizens of the Republic of Belarus;
- 3) to bring Belarusian legislation provisions on mass media in compliance with international norms and standards;
- 4) reorganise the state run broadcasting system in Belarus into public television and radio.

5. To promote introducing the ban on all types and forms of discrimination particularly based on sex, race, age, religion, social position or status, disability, political convictions by reinforcing in the law its comprehensive definition and introducing directly applicable prohibitive norms, as well as providing effective procedural mechanisms for their implementation.

6. To call to notice the necessity to ensure legislative and practical opportunities for individual and joint confession, practice of religion and belief, including introducing education and training standards based on the principles of tolerance and non-discrimination.

7. To promote lifting existing barriers to the mobility of citizens (such as visa barriers and other restrictions).

8. To initiate a discussion about the issues of pursuing gender equality, particularly by developing an effective national gender policy.

9. To facilitate forming an industrial relations system in the Republic of Belarus in full compliance with ILO Convention No 158 concerning Termination of Employment at the Initiative of the Employer while preventing signing unjustified annual labour agreements (contracts).

On the platform "Economic integration and convergence with EU political policy":

1. To promote the development of small and medium-sized enterprises by supporting joint programmes and projects of business structures and civil society organisations focusing on social sectors and sustainable regional development.

2. To promote developing projects and programs for small and medium businesses by training fair governance principles, business ethics, the principles of transparency and subsidiary. To promote greater involvement of European companies working in Belarus in these projects and programmes by participation in business alliances.

On the platform "Environment, climate change and energy security":

1. To consider creating effective mechanisms for public participation in significant environmental decision-making.

2. Acknowledging problems of receiving information about programs and projects submitted by state agencies within the framework of the third platform, we suggest creating transparent public examination review procedures for corresponding programmes, which results should be included in final decision-making.

3. To consider the necessity to use the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) mechanism for developing programmes and projects within the Eastern Partnership framework.

4. Based on the plans to build several nuclear power plants in the region, we suggest implementing monitoring processes for building new nuclear power plants and their operational use.

5. To initiate by non-governmental experts and expert groups drafting national reviews and evolutions of the state of energy security within the framework of the third thematic EP platform, and recommendations on harmonisation of policies of partner countries and the EU in order to strengthen regional energy and nuclear safety regulations.

On the platform "Contacts between people":

1. Enlargement of the access to participation of the Eastern Partnership countries in European programmes running in the following spheres: contacts between people, education,

intercultural dialogue, information society, scientific research (particularly students' and research exchange programmes, youth, educational and other programmes - Tempus, Jean Monnet , Erasmus, Youth in Action Programm, Grundtwig, etc.)

2. Promoting wider awareness of the opportunities to participate in EU programs in the Eastern Partnership countries.
3. Support of the information work on promoting Eastern Partnership countries, science, culture, art, as well as prominent representatives in the European Union countries through translation, presentations, festivals, conferences, information campaigns, etc.
4. To promote lifting existing barriers on mobility of citizens (such as visa barriers and other restrictions).
5. To promote the inclusion of the Eastern Partnership priorities and the support of the EP processes (especially the platform "Contacts between people") into the priorities of other EU programs, such as NSA-LA, EIDHR, etc. It is necessary to support the quantity and intensity of contacts between citizens within the framework of the EU programmes, particularly by providing access to the exchange programs for the citizens in rural areas and socially excluded groups.
6. To promote creating institutional framework for dealing with the issues of education, culture, youth, etc, based on the principles of dialogue between various stakeholders, particularly organising additional discussion platforms on thematic priorities by providing a structured dialogue as a special form of communication between stakeholders, as well as providing the possibility to monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the Eastern Partnership programmes.
7. To consider developing regional ties in the Eastern Partnership region and synchronizing the work in all thematic Eastern Partnership priorities.
8. To promote the development and strengthening the representation, protection and promotion of the civil society interests in Belarus within the Eastern Partnership framework.
9. To facilitate introducing unified standards for programmes implementation in the area of information protection, document management and adoption of necessary regulatory policies and laws.
10. To initiate the process of joining the European Declaration on e-government by the Republic of Belarus.
11. To promote improving the quality of decision-making in the area of Internet governance based on increased participation of civil society representatives.

The conference participants also consider it necessary to:

1. Call to notice the insufficient provision of information on projects within the Eastern Partnership framework, as well as the importance of ensuring the implementation of the principles of transparency and publicity of the contents of government programmes and projects within the EP framework.
2. To suggest the Community Advisory Committee within the Administration of President of Belarus to include into the agenda of one of its forthcoming meetings the question of the Eastern Partnership and civil society's participation in it.

3. Considering the incompleteness of the expert examination of certain proposals within the thematic groups, to continue the work on the "roadmaps" within thematic Eastern Partnership platforms and to submit general "road map" recommendations of the Belarusian delegation at the second Civil Society EP Forum.

4. To initiate establishing Foundation for Civil Society within the EP framework (based on the experience of the program "EUROMED").

5. To continue and increase scope of consultation practices with the expert community of Belarus at organising programmes and setting EU programmes priorities.

The Conference participants examined the list of civil society organisations that have applied for participation in the Civil Society Forum 2010 and recommend the representatives of the following organisations for further participation:

- 1 Assembly Of Belarusian Pro-Democratic Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- 2 Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ)
- 3 Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies
- 4 Belarusian Republican Non-governmental organisation "UNITED WAY"
- 5 Centre for European transformation
- 6 the Committee for the Protection of the repressed "Solidarity"
- 7 Public organisation "Eco House"
- 8 Frantsishak Skaryna Belarusian Language Society
- 9 International Consortium "EVROBELARUS "
- 10 International Helsinki Association *for* Human Right
- 11 Public Education Association "Lev Sapegha Foundation"
- 12 Movement" For Freedom "
- 13 RADA - Belarusian National Youth Council
- 14 Centre for Social Innovations
- 15 The Public Association "Educational Centre POST"
- 16 "BOTZH", Belarusian Organization for Working Women
- 17 Public association "Republican association of wheelchair users"
- 18 Foundation for sustainable development
- 19 Agency of Humanitarian Technologies
- 20 the Educational institution "Center of Legal Transformation"
- 21 "Belarusian School Society", Republican Non-Governmental Organisation
- 22 the Human Rights Center 'Viasna'
- 23 Analytical Centre "Wider Europe"
- 24 Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 25 The Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions
the Belarusian Independent Trade Union of Miners, Chemists, *Oil Refiners*, Transport
- 26 Workers, *Builders and Other Workers*
- 27 Education and Science Trade Union of Belarus
- 28 Belarusian youth public organisation "Civil Forum"
- 29 Business Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers Named after Prof. M. Kuniavsky (BUEE)
- 30 civil campaign European Belarus
- 31 Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus
- 32 Gomel Oblast PA «Civil Initiatives»

Minsk
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