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Outcome of the Vilnius summit and the future of the Eastern Partnership, in particular as regards Ukraine

Greens/EFA motion for resolution

Tabled by Rebecca Harms, Werner Schulz, Tarja Cronberg, Raiül Romeva i Rueda, Indrek Tarand on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 23 October 2013 on ‘the European Neighbourhood Policy: towards a strengthening of the partnership. Position of the European Parliament on the 2012 reports’[\(1\)](#),
- having regard to its resolution of 12 September 2013 on the pressure exerted by Russia on Eastern Partnership countries [\(2\)](#),
- having regard to the Summit’s Joint Declaration of 29 November 2013, entitled ‘Eastern Partnership: the way ahead’,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on Ukraine, in particular its resolution of November 2012,
- having regard to its resolutions containing Parliament’s recommendations to the Council, the Commission and the European External Action Service on the negotiations of the EU-Armenia Association Agreement[\(3\)](#), the EU-Azerbaijan Association Agreement[\(4\)](#), the EU-Moldova Association Agreement[\(5\)](#), the EU-Georgia Association Agreement[\(6\)](#) and the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement[\(7\)](#),
- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the European Union and Ukraine, which entered into force on 1 March 1998, and to the new Association Agreement initialled on 30 March 2012,
- having regard to the joint statements by High Representative Catherine Ashton and Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle condemning the excessive use of force by the police in Kiev to disperse demonstrators on 30 November 2013,
- having regard to the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda, replacing the Action Plan and endorsed by the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council in June 2009,

– having regard to the Commission communication of 12 May 2010 entitled ‘Taking stock of the European Neighbourhood Policy’ ([COM\(2010\)0207](#),

– having regard to the progress report on the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in Ukraine, issued on 14 May 2012,

– having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the Vilnius summit marked an important step forward in the Eastern Partnership process although the results were below expectations;

B. whereas, in particular, the decision of Armenia to withdraw from the Association Agreement negotiations and the last-minute decision of Ukraine to suspend the preparation of the signing of the association agreement frustrated the efforts and undermined the work of the last few years, aimed at deepening bilateral relations and enhancing European integration;

C. whereas over the last few months both Armenia and Ukraine have been subjected to increasing pressure from the Russian Federation aimed at forcing these countries to join the Eurasian Customs Union;

D. whereas, following the Ukrainian Government’s decision to suspend the signing of the Association Agreement, many thousands of people took spontaneously to the streets all over the country in favour of the European choice; whereas in Kiev the demonstrators peacefully occupied Independence Square for as long as the government did not review its decision;

E. whereas on 30 November 2013, in the early hours, helmeted riot police forces attacked and brutally dispersed the protesters, spraying tear gas and savagely using truncheons; whereas many people were reported injured, including 40 journalists; whereas some 20 people are still considered missing;

F. whereas after the clashes the motion of no confidence that was tabled by the opposition forces against the Ukrainian Government and put to the vote in the Verkhovna Rada on 3 December 2013 was defeated;

G. whereas three former presidents of Ukraine and numerous political leaders and civil society activists called for the setting-up of a round table in order to initiate a genuine dialogue between the parties, with a view to overcoming the current political crisis;

H. whereas in December 2012 the Foreign Affairs Council set conditions for the signing of the Association Agreement with Ukraine; whereas some of these conditions have not been met, particularly with regard to ending selective justice;

1. Welcomes the initialling of the Association Agreements with Georgia and Moldova at the Vilnius summit and expects them to be signed in due time once all the conditions are met; calls on the Commission to provide these countries with the necessary technical and financial assistance in order to continue the reform process at both political and economic level;

2. Welcomes the fulfilment by Moldova of all the conditions in the Visa Road Map; urges the Commission, in this connection, to recommend that the Council sign the Visa Liberalisation Agreement in due time;

3. Stresses that the Eastern Partnership is in no way aimed at harming bilateral relations between the partner countries and the Russian Federation and that, on the contrary, synergies should be developed in order to allow those countries to benefit from their traditional political and economic ties with both the European Union and Russia;

4. Calls on Moscow, in this connection, to adopt a constructive attitude and refrain from retaliatory measures and undue pressure aimed at undermining the sovereign right of its neighbours freely to determine their future; urges the EU and its Member States to speak to Russia with one voice in support of the European aspirations of the Eastern Partnership countries that freely choose to deepen their relations with the EU; calls on the EU, in this connection, to act in support of Ukraine or any other Eastern Partnership country at the WTO or any other international organisations in the event of any controversy with the Russian Federation;
5. Regrets the decision of the Ukrainian Government to suspend the preparation of the signing of the Association Agreement in Vilnius; recalls that EU integration has been the top priority of present and past Ukrainian governments, regardless of their composition, and that negotiations were carried out in good faith by different prime ministers representing different political forces, in line with the European aspirations of Ukrainian society;
6. Points out that the proposal to sign this Association Agreement is still valid and that the EU stands ready to sign it, as long as the benchmarks, as defined by the Foreign Affairs Council of December 2012, are met;
7. Expresses its strong support, sympathy and solidarity to all the people that took to the streets in Ukraine in favour of the European choice and expects the Council and the Commission to deliver on promises and assist Ukraine to overcome this deep political and economic crisis;
8. Urges the EU to play an active and constructive role in resolving the crisis by facilitating the setting-up of a round table between political parties, civil society and the main social actors and preventing any further repression on the part of the police, and calls for the sending of a high-level delegation for this purpose;
9. Takes the view that, in a genuine democracy, the main choices concerning the future of a country should be submitted to a referendum; believes that this question, with regard to the Association Agreement with the EU, should become a matter to be dealt with by the parties;
10. Calls, in particular, on the Commission to work with the Ukrainian authorities in order to find ways to counterbalance the effects of the retaliatory measures adopted by Moscow to stop the signing of the Association Agreement;
11. Strongly condemns the brutal attack by Ukrainian special police forces on the demonstrators and calls for the perpetrators to be brought to justice and on the Minister of the Interior to resign; calls on the Council, in this connection, to envisage the possibility of adopting sanctions against the police officers responsible for such acts;
12. Takes the view that the finalisation of a visa-free agreement between the EU and Ukraine is the best way to respond to the calls of Ukrainian civil society and students who have, over the last few days, demonstrated in the country's squares in favour of Ukraine's European choice; points out that this agreement will step up and facilitate exchanges and people-to-people contacts between civil societies, thus increasing mutual understanding and providing an opportunity for Ukrainian public opinion to familiarise itself with European standards and best practices in all areas;
13. Believes, furthermore, that the time has come to offer a genuine European perspective to the countries of the European Partnership that are more willing to engage in reforms and adopt and share EU values;
14. Points out that the EU communication strategy in partner countries is still lacking in effectiveness; urges the Commission, in this connection, to step up its efforts to explain the potential benefits and

advantages of the Association Agreement to the relevant sections of public opinion;

15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the President, Government and Parliament of Ukraine and the President, Government and Parliament of the Russian Federation.

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