



Outline of conference speech:

“How to improve the European Neighbourhood Policy? Concepts, perceptions and policy recommendations for its Eastern dimension”

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Panel 2: Changing the perspective: the ENP from the Eastern Partners' view

Moldova

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Moldova is ready to actively participate and willing to contribute to the development of the Eastern Partnership as a platform that is aiming to build new bridges in the region and contribute to improve the European integration record of each individual Partner. For this purpose we are determined to use all available instruments, both in the bilateral and multilateral formats.

As you are aware in Moldova European integration debate is very popular. For years already it remains the strategic goal of the national political agenda. Against this background we used the ENP framework to foster internal reforms and deepen our relations with the EU, since sustainable reforms represent the basis of the European integration process. We also went beyond ENP through EUBAM; Common Visa Application Centre and EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership. Moldova sustainable partner to pilot EU policy in the region.

Each year ENP was reinforced trying to address the shortcomings reported by all the partners involved. EaP is probably the first big step forward and probably as well an attempt to shape an EU's comprehensive vision towards Moldova and other partner countries from the region. Moreover EaP offers new opportunities for upgrading relations with EU one step short of accession, which is “political association and economic integration”. EaP does not meet our expectations of EU membership, but it does not preclude it and opens to the countries interested to become a future EU member additional means to go deeper and further on the road of European integration.

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We could easily identify some important added value elements of EaP that in fact reach the partners overall expectations:

Association Agreements;

Deep and comprehensive free trade area;

New instruments such as Comprehensive institutional Building Program;

Visa dialogue – more visa facilitation, as well as perspective to go deeper in visa liberalisation talks.

All these probably would be addressed within the bilateral dimension framework depending on the partners' ambition and readiness.

At the same time, the new multilateral framework will have to help partner countries to absorb EU standards and values, as well as provide for regional integration where possible. Thus, in the end projects launched under the Flagship initiatives and also the new political dialogue (Summits, Ministerial meetings), supported by platforms and panel will definitely foster the overall Partnership.

We consider the bilateral dimension as the cornerstone of the EaP and tailor-made approaches should be applied in relations between the EU and each Eastern Partner, taking into account the existing differences. Thus, we should think together how can we make the differentiation applicable in practice?

EaP flagship initiatives:

Two FI launched: (1st) Integrated Border Management Program and (5th) Prevention of, preparedness and response to natural and man-made disasters

Visibility vs Efficiency: Important to provide not only visibility, but also efficiency

Time to deliver...

Now, allow me to continue, by presenting to your attention a few challenges for the EaP that I would like to propose for further reflection:

Do we have a clear-cut plan how to meet the real expectations of the people in the region? And here of course I am referring to the mobility. Unfortunately, EaP is too general on this subject.

Will Lisbon Treaty influence the development of the EaP? How to ensure sustainability? (The role of the EU presidency)

The budget of the EaP is probably the best that EU could offer for now. But I am sure we all understand that it is not enough for such an ambitious project like EaP. We shall think seriously of solutions in this regard otherwise, there is a risk that we become superficial in achieving the

goals written in the EaP Prague Declaration. Private investment could be a good answer. But how to motivate private business to get involved?

Still not clear the deference between EaP and other EU initiatives in the regional (BSS) EU vs Russia and “sphere of influence” debate might also challenge EaP, especially if it is overseen by us. We should be very transparent and discuss openly about our interests and projects.

How could we get out most?:

EU to manage expectations - single voice is needed.

Probably we shall leave the bilateral dimension for political issues as well as for those that differ from one EaP partner to another and the multilateral platform for projects and initiatives that corresponds to our general interests. Otherwise, the more we will discuss about political issues that underscore differences between EaP Partners in the multilateral framework, the less efficient EaP will be and we will enter into a deadlock.

Conditionality or benchmarking policy should be more broadly implemented in the bilateral framework.

Of course the involvement of the EaP partners is crucial. However, we need to identify motivation instruments, while implementing the “joint ownership principle”.

Taking into account that we have a small budget for our ambitious project we shall look more seriously into the European Commission proposal on attracting private investment. For this purpose Private Public Partnerships are crucial. We must reflect of concrete projects in this regard.

Last but not the least we shall develop on the trilateral partnerships within EaP inviting interested third parties (i.e. USA, Japan, Russia, Turkey, IFI's etc.)

How can we contribute? - Moldova is a very special piece of the EaP puzzle. We are at the crossroads of the Eastern Europe and South Eastern Europe thus, being the only EaP country that it is a full-fledged member of SEECP, RCC and CEFTA – SEE regional structures. From this perspective Moldova is ready to “export” the SEE regional cooperation experience to the multilateral EaP dimension. To build on the EU projects already developed in the region (ex. CAC, Mobility Partnership, EUBAM, Human Rights dialogue);

Finally, let me to conclude my presentation with few challenging questions to inspire our debate:

What would be the added value of the bilateral approach for such countries like Ukraine and Moldova?

How to develop shared ownership in the multilateral framework?

How to define the principle of differentiation in practice?

Is EaP an appropriate framework to address key political issues in the region? i.e. regional conflicts.

Thank you!