

Priorities in the EU-Moldova relations during the Czech Presidency of the European Union (January-June 2009)

The priorities of the EU Czech Presidency

On 1 January 2009 the Czech Republic took over the Presidency of the EU Council, preceding France and following Sweden at this function. The priorities of the Czech Presidency was established in accordance with the joint program of the three EU Presidencies as France, Sweden and Czech Republic presented on June 30, 2008¹, and the Czech individual program called "*Europe without frontiers*"².

Among key topics to be discussed during the Czech Presidency include:

- Solving problems related to the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon;
- The EU institutional reform;
- Review financial and monetary policies of the EU taking into account the reduction of the Global financial crisis impact;
- Continuation of the process of EU expansion;

The priorities of EU Internal Agenda:

- Strengthen the EU capacity in order to respond to the challenges of the climate changing;
- Energy security;
- Strengthening the EU competitiveness;
- Trade liberalization;
- Justice and Home Affairs (immigration and visas)

The priorities of the EU External Agenda:

- Strengthening transatlantic relations;
- Promotion of the processes related to the Western Balkans;
- Strengthening the relations with Eastern Europe (Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia);
- Completing and official launching the Eastern Partnership.

Also, could be identified and priorities related to the relations of the EU Czech Presidency with the countries from the Eastern Europe and Central Asia, namely:

- Setting a calendar for completing the negotiations on the Collaboration Agreement UE-Ukraine;

¹ http://www.eu2008.fr/webdav/site.PFUE.shared/ProgrammePFUE/Trio_EN.pdf

² <http://www.eu2009.cz/en/calendar/calendar-85/>

- Recording a progress in negotiations of the Deep Free Trade Agreement UE-Ukraine;
- Launching the negotiations on the new agreement with the Republic of Moldova;
- Launching the negotiations on the Deep Free Trade Agreement and the Agreement on the liberalization of the visa regime with Georgia;
- Continuation of the EU efforts to monitor the situation in Georgia (activity Mission Monitoring of the EU in Georgia);
- Deepening the EU relations with Belarus in the prospect of the country democratization and its inclusion in the Eastern Partnership initiative;
- Clarify the perspective for a new legal agreement with the EU countries of Central Asia;
- In the context of strengthening the energy security of the EU Czech Presidency will strive to develop cooperation in the energy field with the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (mainly Azerbaijan);
- Organize the first Summit of the EU-Transcaspic region;
- As regards Russia, the Czech Presidency don not plan considerable initiatives, possibly continuing the negotiations on the new Strategic Agreement EU-Russia.

The Coordination Structure of the EU Czech Presidency. Key people

In February 2007, a structure was established in the Czech Government Office responsible for the preparation and pursuit of the Presidency at the EU. The management of this structure has been entrusted to **Mr. Alexandr Vondra, Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs**. Within the Office there are 2 activity directions: (1) Section for the EU Czech Presidency headed by **Ms Jana Hendrichová**, responsible mainly for logistical and organizational aspects and (2) The department headed by **Mr. Marek Mora, the Adjunct of the Deputy Prime Minister** responsible for preparing the Discussion topics on the agenda of the Czech Presidency, the coordination and the analysis of the Czech position within the framework of the EU negotiations.

Priorities in the EU-Moldova relations

The priorities of the Republic of Moldova in relations with the EU during the Czech Presidency remain to be guided by the primary objective of the country's European integration. During the EU Czech Presidency, Moldova-EU relations are to be familiar with more important developments, confirmed by the EU Council Conclusions on the Republic of Moldova adopted during the EU French presidency.

Political Dialogue:

- Launching the negotiations on the new Agreement Moldova-EU at the EU-Moldova Cooperation planned for June 2009. The negotiating mandate of the

European Commission could be approved in early 2009, and the actual negotiations on the new Agreement would be preceded by consultations.

- The permanent information of the European Commission on the implementation of the Action Plan Moldova-EU in the context of elaboration of the Progress Report for 2008;
- Organization of the joint Meeting Moldova-EU in the field of Human Rights and Democracy;
- Organization of the study visits of COEST Group in the Republic of Moldova during March 2009;
- Promotion in discussions with the European Commission of the idea of joint elaboration of the new Interim Instrument Implementation that will replace the Action Plan Moldova-EU and will facilitate the process of negotiations on the new Agreement Moldova-EU;
- Preparation at the national level for negotiating a thorough and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement;
- Participation in consultations and meetings organized by the EU Czech Presidency on the Eastern Partnership in order to promote the vision of the Republic of Moldova on how to implement the initiative;

Cooperation in the security field:

- Cooperation with the EU in order to resume the negotiations on the settlement of the Transnistrian problem in the "5 +2" format under recognized principles;
- Obtaining the financial and expertise assistance from the European Commission to implement confidence-building measures between the two sides of the Dniester;
- Continuation of the cooperation with EUBAM mission to strengthen the management of the Moldovan-Ukrainian border and identification of the new opportunities for cooperation within the existing mandate of combating the illegal migration, trafficking in human beings and control of passports of the foreigners entering the Republic of Moldova on the Transnistrian strip of the Moldovan-Ukrainian border.
- Obtaining the necessary support of the EU to establish a system of joint control of the Moldovan-Ukrainian border on the Transnistrian strip;
- Examination of the opportunities on the EU cooperation in the context of the European Security Strategy.

Justice and Home Affairs:

- Implementation of the projects established in the Platform for Cooperative Mobility Partnership EU-Moldova, and its interim assessment by the European Commission together with Moldova and the EU Member States (the organization of the Platform for Cooperation meetings and Task Force's Mobility Partnership);
- Negotiation of the Agreement of cooperation with EUROJUST;
- Preparing for negotiation of the Operational Cooperation Agreement with EUROPOL;

- Elaboration and the implementation of the projects on strengthening the border management (in cooperation with FRONTEX and EUBAM);
- Solving the problems in implementing the Agreement on visa facilitation, the mechanism identification in order to streamline the process of issuing a visa regime for Moldovan citizens, proceeding from the specific situation of the Republic of Moldova.
- Launching Moldova-EU dialogue on visa liberalization that will contribute to the identification and implementation of the EU conditions to gradually achieve a perspective of a free-visa regime for Moldovan citizens.
- Cooperation with the European Commission and EU Member States in order to obtain EU expertise in designing an action Plan for strengthening the policy of visas in Moldova.
- Evaluation of the negotiation process of the Readmission Agreements between the Republic of Moldova and the third countries, taking into account the Readmission Agreement Moldova-EU
- Negotiating and signing the protocols for implementation of the Readmission Agreement Moldova- EU between Moldova and the EU Member States.

Aspects of sectoral cooperation

- Continuation of the negotiations on obtaining by the Republic of Moldova of the full-fledged membership to the Energy Community Treaty;
- Continuation of the discussions with the European Commission in order to launch the negotiations for adherence to the European Agreement on the Assessment and Acceptance of the Industrial Products Conformity;
- Further consultations on the association of the Republic of Moldova to 7 Framework Program of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (FP7) (taking into account that the entry into force of the Additional Protocol to the PCA on participation in community programs scheduled for summer 2009) ;
- Organization of the consultations with the European Commission to launch the negotiations for adherence to the Common Aviation Area.

Regional and international cooperation:

- Cooperation of the Presidency of the Republic with the SEECP EU Czech Presidency;
- Participation in programs supported by the EU launched within the framework of the Regional Cooperation Council and other processes in South Eastern Europe.

Tools for promotion priorities

In order to monitor the process of the priorities implementation in this document a preliminary Calendar of the events planned during the EU Czech Presidency is attached.

However, in order to ensure a permanent dialogue, is appointed a Moldovan person as a special representative for the relations with the EU Czech Presidency. Also, in order to promote the EU-Moldova priorities are to be held political consultations, including the sectoral ones with EU Member States. Particular attention will be paid to the maintenance of the dialogue with the EU Czech Presidency and with the forthcoming EU Swedish Presidency.

**Preliminary Calendar of the events scheduled during the EU Czech
Presidency**

| Nr. | The action name | Term of realization, Venue |
|------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Bilateral consultations at the level of the heads of departments (local and European Affairs) for the examination of the prospects for developing Moldova -Czech relationship regarding the European Council decisions on 11-12 December 2008. | February 2009, Prague (TB) |
| 2. | COPS Troika reunion EU-Moldova | January 14 |
| 3. | Participation in the Consultations on the Eastern Partnership planned by the EU Czech Presidency. | February, Prague |
| 4. | Special Meeting of the EU Consuls, the European Commission and the Republic of Moldova | January-February, Chisinau |
| 5. | Extraordinary Meeting of the Joint Committee for the implementation of the Agreement on the Facilitation of the visa regime. | February, Chisinau |
| 6. | Meeting Cooperation Platform of the Mobility Partnership EU-Moldova | February-March, Chisinau |
| 7. | Contributing to the organisation of the meeting the Sub-committee No. 2 of Cooperation "Economics and Finance" | February 27, 2009 Chisinau |

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| 8. | Working with the EC in order to conduct the second round of negotiations on the adhesion of the Republic of Moldova to the Energy Community Treaty. | March, Brussels |
| 9. | Visit of the COEST group in Chisinau | March, Chisinau (TB) |
| 10. | Organization of the round table on the Eastern Partnership by inviting the European Commission and experts from those 6 partner countries. | March, Chisinau (within the framework of the COEST group visit, TB) |
| 11. | Conference "Community policy of Cooperation for the development and transformation in the action. The example of the Republic of Moldova ", associated with the visit to the Republic of Moldova of Mr Jan Kohout, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the CR | February-March, Chisinau (TB) |
| 12. | EU-Moldova meeting at the level of the Policies Directors | May 12, Prague |
| 13. | Official visit to the Republic of Moldova of Mr Karel Schwarzenberg, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic | April-May, Chisinau |
| 14. | Troika –COEST meeting EU-Moldova | March 25, Brussels |
| 15. | Moldovan-Czech seminar devoted to the role of Moldovan-Czech economic and trade relations in the process of the Republic of Moldova integration in the European Economic Area. | May, Chisinau |
| 16. | Moldova-EU Cooperation Council (on CAGRE) | June 16, Luxembourg |
| 17. | Round table devoted to the first anniversary of the signing of the Declaration on the Mobility Partnership between the Republic of Moldova and some EU countries. | June, Chisinau |
| 18. | Expanding and strengthening of the contacts between the state institutions from the Republic of Moldova and RC in order to facilitate the transfer of experience | During 2009 |

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| | in the field of the European integration policy. | |
| 19. | Special Summit "EU+ 6 " of launching of EPE | May 7, Prague (Brussels) |
| 20. | Contributing to organisation of the Reunion of the Cooperation Sub-Committee No. 4 "Energy, environment, transport and telecommunications, education, science and technology " | Quarter II |
| 21. | Contributing to organisation of the Reunion of the Cooperation Sub-Committee No. 4 "Energy, environment, transport and telecommunications, education, science and technology " | Quarter II |
| 22. | Coordination of the organization of study visits of experts MAFI, SV, CCECC, Agroindustrial Agency Moldova-Vin, Cadastre Agency and the Financial Relations in Italy. | Quarter II |
| 23. | Contributing to the Reunion of the Cooperation Sub-Committee 1 Cooperation "Trade and investment" | Quarter IV, Chisinau |