

Steering Committee meeting, 17-18 July, 2018

In attendance: Steering Committee members Krzysztof Bobinski, Ina Coseru, Laura Dittel, Aleksandra Kalatozishvili, Mikalai Kvantiliani, Petru Macovei, Hennadiy Maksak, Boris Navasardian, Goda Neverauskaite, Ana Otilia Nutu, Lasha Tughushi

Absent: Haykuhi Harutyunyan, Ziya Guliyev

Secretariat: Lidia Gromadzka, Administrative and Statutory Processes Manager, Tania Marocchi, EaP Index and Membership Manager, Natalia Yerashevich, Director

1. Adoption of the agenda of the meeting

2. Strategic updates (from the SC members and from the Secretariat - Project, Findings of the EC audit)

SC members provided updates on the internal situation and most pressing issues in each EaP country. On **Armenia**, it was noted that the new administration is not very familiar with CEPA and the Armenian National Platform (NP) could provide assistance to facilitate this process. It was noted that Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Special Commission on Electoral Reform is understaffed and is struggling to provide relevant recommendations for the amendment of the electoral code. On **Belarus**, it was pointed out that there are signs indicating that the Partnership Priorities might be signed in October; the meeting with Foreign Minister is planned; and the work on the registration of the NP with CSF EaP as founder is on-going. Was admitted the great work of the EU delegation in Minsk and good cooperation with BNP. Planning to have meeting with UNDP and discuss synergy between 2020 deliverables and Sustainable Development goals. Planning to implement national campaigning's on enabling environment for civil society. On **Georgia**, it was stressed that clearer indications are necessary to proceed on the roadmap to the EU, and that timing and stages should be better defined. On **Moldova**, it was noted that the situation is worsening and expected to continue deteriorating. The government has launched a campaign against the EU, and a number of protests have been organised but civil society need to exercise more pressure on the government. As for **Ukraine**, the EU-Ukraine Summit took place recently and the declaration was positively assessed. The Ukrainian NP is preparing an assessment of the implementation of the 20 deliverables for 2020 for the foreign ministerial in October.

The Director of the **Secretariat** provided the update about the implementation of the project and the results of the EC-commissioned audit of the previous grant to the EaP CSF for 2015-2017 and how the findings of the audit will have repercussions on the implementation of the current grant, especially for buying tickets and reservation of the hotels for the participants, as well as regranting reporting.

Decisions and Action Points:

- On Armenia: Sending an official letter to relevant organisations and ministries, informing them that the Armenian NP can provide help and assistance in getting acquainted with CEPA and its implementation; sending the letter to EESC that the NP can advise on the players in country and facilitate the process of formation of the CS platform; the Armenian NP should provide assistance to the Special Commission on Electoral Reform, monitoring its work and ensuring the delivery of quality results; use the meeting of PM Pashinyan with President Macron to pass the message on the importance of electoral reform; the Armenian NP sends to the Secretariat types of

activities that can be done in the second half of the year for the possible emergency support;

- On Georgia: possible statement of the SC directed at judiciary committee;
- On Moldova: the Moldovan NP should be recommended to start asking participants to meet in an emergency setting to cope with the current situation. The EU should be recommended to strengthen the work of the rule of law platform;
- For the Foreign Ministerial: The EaP CSF will do the assessment of the implementation of 20 deliverables for 2020. The Armenian and Ukrainian NPs can share the methodology used for their assessment.
- Secretariat will explore options for buying refundable tickets or insurance that will allow to recover most of the cost of the tickets in case of cancellations; explore the possibility of negotiating with hotels on possibility of recovering costs in case of cancellations; introduce clear indications for the attendees of the WG meetings, AA or other events organised by the CSF in which cases the costs will have to be covered by the participants themselves; explore and use the list of legitimate reasons for trip cancellation; invoice the non-eligible expenses from the previous grant to the organisations of the participants and create a list of people and organisations who have not provided proper documentation for regranting or were no-shows for the EaP CSF-organised events; if no reimbursement follows ensure that the members cannot benefit from the EaP CSF any more.

3. Meeting with Hanna Jahns, Cabinet of Commissioner Hahn on developments in the EaP

SC members discussed the situation in each country with Hanna Jahns, focusing on the most pressing challenges.

4. Selection of CSF participants for AA 2018 and finalising the list

SC members discussed and finalized the lists of AA2018 delegates to be sent to the EC for approval. Goda Neverauskaite expressed concern about a minimal quota for WG5 participants and it was decided to discuss the matter at the next SC meeting.

5. Meeting with Sinziana Poiana, DG NEAR

SC members discussed several issues with Sinziana Poiana, including the upcoming internal reform and the place of the Forum under the reformed EaP architecture. Ms Poiana stressed the importance of connection to the constituencies and members' engagement, credibility of the EaP CSF, rotation of people in the lead of NPs and consultation with members before key decisions made by the SC. Ms Poiana can be contacted on the information about emergency funding. She also stressed the importance of the diversification of funding for the EaP CSF.

6. Update on the EaP Index

SC members received an overview of the work behind the production of the 2017 edition of the EaP Index, including the methodology review, the redesign of the Index, its visibility as a product of the EaP CSF and plans for advocacy. The methodology review of the questionnaire followed last year's lessons learnt and included strengthening the sections on media, corruption, election and public administration. Work is ongoing to redesign the Index, strengthening the visualisation of the data through the use of an online, interactive tool that would allow readers to easily access the information. The Index will be fully hosted on the EaP CSF website to strengthen its visibility as a EaP CSF product and the design will follow the EaP CSF visual

identity. As for advocacy, Index data will be extrapolated to be used for EaP Platforms and Panels and the 2017 edition of the Index should be launched in each country in collaboration with the NPs. SC members expressed the wish for NPs to be more involved in the process.

Decisions and Action points:

- As of next edition, the team of experts working on the Index will be communicated to the National Platforms at the beginning of the process

7. Annual Assembly (key themes, title, key sessions, high-level invitees, task force)

The task force on AA has been formed and includes: Nikolai, Lasha, Alexandra, Krzysztof and Hennadyi, who will work with the Secretariat on shaping the agenda of the event. The major blocks of the agenda and the title have been discussed. Further discussions will continue online.

8. Discussion with Lawrence Meredith, Director, Neighbourhood East, Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, DG NEAR and Audrone Perskauskiene, Head of Division Eastern Partnership, Regional Cooperation and OSCE, EEAS: developments in the EaP, place of the EaP CSF in the EaP; Forum's strategic priorities

SC members discussed several issues with Lawrence Meredith and Audrone Perskauskiene. Judicial reform and free and fair elections were identified as main priorities for action, likely to be included in the next agenda. It was recommended to strengthen ties and cooperation with the Western Balkans and EU Member States, as they can provide best practices and assistance in these areas. At the last FAC meeting, several ministers expressed their interest in having a high level event around May 2019 for the EaP 10th anniversary. The EaP CSF is welcome to contribute.

Action points

- Possibility to contribute to the EaP 10th anniversary concept draft with comments to be sent by late August/ early September;
- Possibility to contribute to the Foreign Ministerial draft with comments to be sent by August 31st at the latest;

9. EaP CSF Internal reform

The proposals of the consultants have been discussed and the following decisions have been taken:

- Moving to a 2-year cycle: Non-staggered option chosen
- Frequency of Assemblies and new EaP CSF calendar: keeping an AA-type event every year chosen
- Membership selection: by NP (option 1) starting the next cycle if NPs are ready; 8 for, 3 against
- Quotas ("new" new/"old" new (=returning after a break)/returning): 30-30-40 and no "cooldown" period, chosen by a vote 6-5
- Steering Committee membership composition: option 2 chosen by a vote 10-0, 1 abstention
- SC members mandate: maximum 2 terms, applies to both organizations and persons: adopted by a vote 11-0
- Adopted transition scenario: the cycle starts with AA2018 in Tbilisi. There are no elections (except for arbitration body) at the AA2018, and the current SC is functioning until WG and NP elections are done (April/May/June 2019). The new SC is meeting for the first time afterwards, by July 2019 the latest.
- Mandates of Delegates and SC members are starting to be counted as of AA2018 (from scratch)

- Code of conduct: Decision taken to delegate drafting of the Code to a consultant. The draft should be ready by September-October and approved before AA2018.
- Registration fee (provisional name) at the Annual Assembly; NP decide on their own membership fee or its absence: adopted by a vote of 10-1
- Other issues discussed: fundraising, introduction of a membership at the National Platform level, arbitration committee, modalities of the reform voting procedure

The Secretariat will develop the draft reform based on the taken decisions.

10. Regranting for National Platforms: the procedure was discussed and the question on the appropriateness of the competitiveness of the project funding was raised. The matter was to be clarified with Ms Poiana during the Project Advisory Committee meeting.

11. It was decided to continue working on the new **MFF** and develop the EaP CSF position that will advocate for the ENI to be taken out of the NDCI.

12. Next SC meeting

Members of the SC agreed to hold the next meeting in Chisinau, Moldova in September-October.

13. On the sidelines of the SC meeting, **members of the Annual Assembly 2018 Service Provider Selection Committee** discussed the offers received and have provisionally **selected the offer** by Cecoforma, on the condition that they propose a different travel agency to handle flights.

14. The SC has adopted the [Digital alliance concept](#) and approved Nikolai Kvantaliani as responsible for future communication.

Adopted on August 1, 2018