

Kyiv, 24.07.2015

Press statement

The Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, led by Chair Elmar Brok, joined by their colleagues from the Sub-Committee on Human rights, led by Richard Howitt, and with participation of Andrej Plenkov, the Chair of the EP delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee, visited Ukraine on 23 and 24 July.

Members held intense discussions, meeting with the representatives of Ukrainian government and parliament, including the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko, the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, Volodymyr Groysman, the Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Pavlo Klimkin. They also exchanged views with the representatives of the civil society organisations, the OSCE and the EU Member States and institutions.

The Members of the Delegation expressed their full support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. They welcomed the efforts and the commitment to conduct the reforms aimed to further modernize the country, in particular through implementation of the Association Agreement with the European Union.

In this context Members believe that the implementation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area from 1 January 2016, will make a substantial contribution to improve the livelihoods of the Ukrainian citizens.

The Members strongly encourage the Ukrainian authorities to show determination in combatting corruption, in line with the strong call and expectations of the society. The fight against corruption is an essential element in the efforts to modernize the country and set sound foundations for inclusive social and economic development.

The Members welcomed the opportunity to discuss with counterparts our joint commitment to human rights and to strongly support cooperation between the EU and Ukraine on human rights on the day of the official dialogue, as an important part of the Association Agreement and to improving economic and political relations overall.

Welcomes the steps taken so far by Ukraine to implement the Minsk Agreement, in particular in the framework of the constitutional reform process and decentralization of the country. Takes positive note of the work on the reform of judiciary and in particular of the reform of the prosecutor general's office in line with our common European standards.

Members emphasise that, in order to achieve lasting peaceful solution to the conflict, there is no alternative to a full implementation of the Minsk Agreements by all sides. Members expressed their belief that a viable decentralisation process would best reflect the diversity of the country and its population.

Members stressed the importance of preserving strict state monopoly of law enforcement and of disarming all paramilitary forces or their full integration into the official security forces.

The Members reaffirmed the support to the visa liberalisation process and expressed hope that it will lead to visa free travel, as soon as all the requirements are fulfilled.

The Human Rights Sub-Committee Delegation undertook an intensive study visit in relation to the condition of internally displaced persons, judicial reforms and wider human rights

issues in the Dnipropetrovsk oblast and in Kiev. In particular the urgency of addressing the needs was emphasized.

Members of the Delegation included: Elmar BROK (EPP, DE), Andrej PLENKOVIĆ (EPP, HR), Sandra KALNIETE (EPP, LV), Gabrielius LANDSBERGIS (EPP, LT), Richard HOWITT (S&D, UK), Andrejs MAMIKINS (S&D, LV), Arne LIETZ (S&D, DE), Mark DEMESMAEKER (ECR, BE), Marek JUREK (ECR, PL), Paavo VÄYRYNEN (ALDE, FI), Petras AUSTREVICIUS (ALDE, LT).