

Brussels, 24 November 2005

European Neighbourhood Policy: A year of progress

Since the presentation of the first European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Action Plans a year ago, the policy is proving its worth as a key instrument to promote good governance, economic and social development in countries around the EU's land and sea borders. Today the Commission considered a Communication setting out the progress so far and underlining the priorities for the coming year. The paper sets out how the ENP is responding to neighbouring countries wishes for closer relations with the EU, how it is addressing the concerns of EU citizens regarding issues such as migration and organised crime, and helping to achieve the objectives of the European Security Strategy.

The Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner said *"The ENP is a young policy which is already confirming its potential and providing new impetus to our joint efforts with partners to support their economic and political reforms. By focussing efforts on a shared agenda, the ENP Action Plans are deepening the relationship with our neighbours and promoting greater mutual confidence"*.

She added: *"We can already see the first fruits of the ENP. Implementing the further commitments we have entered into in the Action Plans will require a concerted effort across the Commission, as we work with our partners in fields as diverse as trade, transport, energy, culture, education, migration and the fight against terrorism"*.

The ENP aims to build a zone of increasing prosperity, stability and security in the EU's neighbourhood, in the interests of both the neighbouring countries and of the EU itself. It offers partners a relationship that goes beyond cooperation to include closer political links and an element of economic integration, as well as assistance with reforms to stimulate economic and social development. In turn, ENP partners accept precise commitments to strengthen the rule of law, democracy and the respect for human rights, to promote market-oriented economic reforms, to promote employment and social cohesion and to cooperate on key foreign policy objectives such as counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Main achievements to date

- Seven ENP Action Plans have been negotiated and formally adopted - with Israel, Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine.
- The implementation and monitoring of these Action Plans is well under way. Examples of targets achieved include progress with Ukraine on Market Economy Status, visa facilitation and energy issues; setting up a border assistance mission on the Moldova – Ukraine border; expanding political dialogue with Mediterranean partners, including, for the first time, the creation of sub-committees to launch regular discussions on democracy, human rights and governance.

- Preparations are well underway for the use of twinning and TAIEX with ENP partners (both tools designed to support administrative reform and alignment with EU practice).
- Member States are increasingly addressing the same reform priorities in their own bilateral assistance programmes.
- International financial institutions (IFIs) are beginning to take the ENP Action Plans as the basis of their strategic agenda for operations with partner countries.

Next Steps

Key tasks for 2006-2007 include:

- completing work on the next five ENP Action Plans (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia, Lebanon).
- preparing an ENP Country Report on Algeria.
- the creation of an ENP-specific scholarship scheme, the opening of certain programmes and agencies to partner countries and the provision of effective policy-driven EC technical and financial assistance
- ensuring that the financing to be made available for ENP, under the 2007-2013 Financial Perspectives, is adequate to support the ambitions of this policy and that the ENPI Regulation is adopted in the near future so as to allow 2007 assistance programming to proceed.
- Starting a reflection on the long term perspectives for ENP to which a wide range of stakeholders both in the EU and partner countries will be offered a chance to contribute.

For more information:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/jordan/intro/index.htm

ENP - COUNTRY PER COUNTRY SITUATION

ENP partner countries	Entry into force of contractual relations with EC	ENP Country Report	ENP Action Plan	Adoption by EU	Adoption by partner country
Algeria	AA – 2005	<i>Under development</i>	--	--	--
Armenia	PCA – 1999	March 2005	<i>Under development</i>	--	--
Azerbaijan	PCA – 1999	March 2005	<i>Under development</i>	--	--
Belarus	--	--	--	--	--
Egypt	AA – June 2004	March 2005	<i>Under development</i>	--	--
Georgia	PCA – 1999	March 2005	<i>Under development</i>	--	--
Israel	AA – June 2000	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	21.02.2005	11.04.2005
Jordan	AA – May 2002	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	21.02.2005	11.01.2005
Lebanon	AA - <i>imminent</i>	March 2005	<i>Under development</i>	--	--
Libya	--	--	--	--	--
Moldova	PCA - July 1998	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	21.02.2005	22.02.2005
Morocco	AA - Marc 2000	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	21.02.2005	27.07.2005
Palestinian Authority	Interim AA - July 1997	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	21.02.2005	04.05.2005
Syria	AA <i>pending ratification</i>	--	--	--	--
Tunisia	AA – March 1998	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	21.02.2005	04.07.2005
Ukraine	PCA – March 1998	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	21.02.2005	21.02.2005

PCA – Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

AA – Association Agreement