

"The external dimension of EU Migration Policy"
- Focus on EU's relations with the countries of the Eastern
Neighbourhood and its forthcoming mobility dialogues with the
countries of the Southern Neighbourhood

- Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to speak at this Cosac meeting today.

As a former Member of the European Parliament, and I do know the value of having a close dialogue between legislatures. I am glad that I got the opportunity to speak to you at this event - at the very beginning of the Polish Presidency of the European Union.

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- I have been asked to talk about migration. Migration and human mobility are no new phenomena. People have always moved - both within and between countries - and human mobility has been and is a source for economic, cultural and technical

development. The free movement of capital, goods, services and people across borders are the fundamental principles of the European Union and a defining feature of our increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. Even if increased mobility sometimes poses significant challenges – for the countries of destination as well as for the countries of origin - **the benefits that can be realised through well-managed global migration cannot be put into question.** European history is shaped by people looking for opportunities to study or to find a better job in another country, or in search of freedom.

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- Migration is very much related to events outside the EU. That is why there is a clear need to increase the external dimension of the EU Migration policy; the developments in many of our neighbouring countries underline this need in a very clear manner: developments in the countries of North-Africa and other

Arab countries, but also how the EU has a clear interest in intensifying its relations with its eastern neighbours.

- The need to deepen the relations with our neighbours also has to do with the demographics of Europe. But despite high unemployment, many European countries face in fact labour shortages in specific sectors. In the near future, the EU will have to face increasing demand, directly related to **demographic realities**. Without labour immigration we will not be able to sustain our way of living.
- In the EU, it is up to each Member State to decide on the **volumes** of admission of workers and this has to be fully respected. But this is not in contradiction with the fact that we need to make the EU more attractive for talent coming from the outside of the EU and that we need **a common framework with clear admission rules and rights of migrant workers**. There are already two directives in this sense: Blue Card and Single Permit and two more are currently being negotiated Intra-corporate transferees and seasonal workers.

- The overall framework for the EU's external policy in the migration area is called the Global Approach. Established in 2005, this approach aims to have a balanced approach to migration, integration, different aspects of legal migration, tackling irregular migration and trafficking and looking at ways to improve the synergies between migration and development.
- Now, let's look at the relationship with our eastern and southern neighbours a bit more closely. Since we are at the beginning of the Polish Presidency, I will start with the eastern neighbours. Poland's geographical location, with borders in the east to key partners, such as Russia, as well as to Ukraine and Belarus who are both parties to the Eastern Partnership provides a good point of departure. The history of Poland is also a concrete example of why we need to have a well functioning cooperation with our neighbourhood.

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- The EU cooperation on migration with the Eastern Neighbourhood countries has been well developed both at the

multilateral and bilateral level through different processes. The **Eastern Partnership** provides a multilateral framework for dialogue but we also have more migration focused processes such as **the Söderköping process, the Prague process** and **the Budapest process**, all these covers various aspects of migration related issues such as asylum, migration, visa policy and border management. They involve technical cooperation and information sharing.

- This multitude of processes is a clear demonstration of the importance we attach to good relations and cooperation with our eastern neighbours. The fact is that we have to be careful not to build too many of such structures and avoid supplication; we need to **ensure synergies** among them, and where possible we should aim for **rationalisation and streamlining**.
- At the **bilateral level**, the EU and its MS have been supporting the Eastern Neighbours in a wide number of areas, ranging from data collection and analysis, management of legal migration, the tackling of irregular migration and migration and development.

- For all the Eastern Partnership states **migration profiles** are currently being prepared in the context of the EU financed project "Building Migration Partnerships". It is very important that the profiles – that are the basis of **evidence-based policies**, are fully owned by the countries, updated regularly and fully used to support policy coherence.
- The European Union is committed to **promoting the mobility** of citizens of the Eastern Partner countries. An effective cooperation on readmission, satisfactory functioning of visa facilitation agreements and an active engagement of the partner country in dialogue and cooperation allows for opening of the dialogue on visa liberalisation.
- To date **readmission and visa facilitation agreements** are in place with Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. Visa-free travel is a goal for all the six partner countries, on a case-by-case basis provided that all conditions are well managed and met.
- In Ukraine and Moldova, Action Plans on visa liberalization have proved to be important incentives for reforms including in

the migration management area. In addition, the EU has been supporting the Eastern Neighbours in their **capacity building** to prevent and fight irregular migration and to assist the returnees in their sustainable reintegration.

- The Mobility partnerships **between the EU and Moldova and between the EU and Georgia**, are both well on the way and have proved to be dynamic operational processes, including a combined number of more than 100 thematically balanced projects and initiatives by the partners.
- The Commission, together with some EU Member States, is working now with the government of **Armenia** on the establishment of a Mobility Partnership.
- I can envisage the **development of additional Mobility Partnerships** with Eastern partners over time, provided that there is sufficient interest for it on both sides. I look forward to working with Eastern partners and EU Member States towards this.

- The Polish hosting the planned **Eastern Partnership Summit in Warsaw on 29-30 September 2011**, will be an important opportunity to review progress in the development of the Eastern Partnership and set the course for the coming two years.

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- Now turning to the Southern neighbourhood. This spring we have witnessed important and dramatic developments in our southern neighbourhood that may also have far-reaching effects for Europe. The Arab Spring has brought hope of a better life for millions of people in our Southern Neighbourhood, as well as for greater respect of human rights, the rule of law and social justice. As parliamentarians you know the importance of showing support to democratic movements.
- The European Union has shown support to these movements and is ready to do more to help these countries on their way to democracy and economic development. We must do even more.
- We have also been quick to respond to the needs of migrants and those seeking international protection. Over 100 million € was

made available by the EU for humanitarian assistance and helping many to return to their countries of origin.

- The Commission however believes that a mid-term strategy is required that will make use of migration and mobility as a support instrument for the development of those countries.
- The Commission outlined its vision regarding the Southern Mediterranean in a Communication presented on 24 May. We propose to work towards **a new era of dialogue and partnership**. It proposed a dialogue on **migration, mobility and security with** the objective to reinforce long term relations between the EU and the countries of North Africa. The proposed set of measures will help support the democratic and economic transition in the region, promote people to people contacts across the Mediterranean and contribute to more effectively preventing irregular migration.
- On **24 June, the European Council** endorsed these ideas. In concrete terms, we will now launch a Dialogue on migration, mobility and security with Southern Mediterranean countries,

starting with Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco. Such dialogue should lead towards the conclusion of Mobility Partnerships based on the merits of each case.

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- Recent developments has demonstrated that the only way of dealing with migration and mobility is by dialogue and well-organised cooperation with our neighbouring and more distant countries on all levels.
- I believe that in the next 6 months we will be able to make much progress under the Polish Presidency in this area that is crucial for the future of Europe and its neighbours. We must aim to make steps forward on mobility partnerships both to the East and the South, which will give us a more balanced and coherent approach to migration in our neighbourhood.

Thank you!