

## **JOINT STATEMENT**

### **Russia-EU Permanent Partnership Council on Freedom, Security and Justice**

**St. Petersburg, 19 May 2011**

The fourteenth meeting of the Russia-EU Permanent Partnership Council on Freedom, Security and Justice was held in St. Petersburg on 19 May 2011.

The Russian Federation was represented by Mr. Alexander Kononov, Special Envoy of the President of the Russian Federation for cooperation with the European Union in the area of Freedom, Security and Justice, Minister of Justice, and Mr. Sergey Bulavin, State Secretary, Deputy Minister of Interior.

The European Union was represented by Mr. Tibor Navracsics, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Administration and Justice of Hungary, Mr. Sándor Pintér, Minister of Interior of Hungary, Ms Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs, Mr. Krzysztof Kwiatkowski, Minister of Justice of Poland, and Mr. Jerzy Miller, Minister of Interior of Poland.

The participants reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the Russia-EU Roadmap on the Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice and identified priority areas where the Parties will continue to take steps to improve cooperation.

Underlining the importance of mutual respect for the overarching principles underpinning the Common Space which provides a framework for closer cooperation, the participants highlighted the need to achieve concrete and tangible results in their cooperation for the benefit of citizens of the Russian Federation and European Union.

The Parties reiterated their commitment to further facilitate and improve people-to-people contacts and movement of their citizens as an important element of Russia-EU relationship. To this end, they welcome the progress made by the Senior Officials of Russia and EU to agree on an exhaustive list of Common Steps towards Visa-Free Short-Term Travel of Russian and EU Citizens. The Parties look forward to prompt finalization of this work, of their internal procedures, and further report to the upcoming Russia-EU summit to be held on 9-10 June 2011 in Nizhny Novgorod.

The Parties reiterate that the implementation of the Common Steps will open possibility for engaging in negotiations on an EU-Russia visa waiver agreement. They noted the importance of the effective implementation of Agreements on Facilitation of the Issuance of Visas and on Readmission.

The Parties expressed their overall satisfaction with the implementation of Agreement on the Facilitation of the Issuance of Visas to the Citizens of the Russian Federation and the European Union of 25 May 2006. They welcomed the opening of negotiations on amendments to this Agreement on 27 April 2011 in Moscow. In this connection, they expressed hope that the negotiations will be finalised as soon as possible and the amendments to the Agreement will contribute to further facilitation of issuance of visas for short-term stay to Russian and EU citizens.

The Parties underlined the importance of facilitating local trans-border movement for Russian and EU citizens, residing in border regions, through relevant agreements between the Russian Federation and the interested neighbouring EU Member States. They agree that given the particular geographical position of the Kaliningrad oblast of the Russian Federation they will

keep searching ways to create more favourable local trans-border traffic regime for residents of the oblast.

The Parties decided to launch a Russia-EU Dialogue on Migration in line with the Joint Statement on this issue adopted today. The Parties welcomed the Russian proposal to organise the first meeting within the Dialogue in late June 2011 in Moscow.

The Parties expressed overall satisfaction with the implementation of the Russia-EU Agreement on Readmission of 25 May 2006. They stressed the importance of continuing efforts in order to further improve the application of some of its technical aspects and the need to conclude as soon as possible remaining implementing protocols to the Agreement between Russia and EU Member States concerned.

The Parties emphasized the importance of continued cooperation between the Russian border guard service and Frontex.

The Parties welcomed progress in cooperation on fighting illicit drugs production, trafficking and use.

The Parties expressed satisfaction with the adoption of the resolution «Paris Pact initiative» by the 54th session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) held in Vienna on 21-25 March 2011 and the organization, in the second half of 2011 in Vienna, of the third Ministerial Paris Pact conference on fighting drugs originating from Afghanistan. The Parties discussed the EU and Russian strategies and plans to fight against the drugs originating from Afghanistan, including the Russian “Rainbow-2” plan, emphasized the importance of regional cooperation and the role of the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) in this respect.

The Parties agreed to strengthen cooperation as regards in particular the trafficking in synthetic drugs. They welcomed the imminent conclusion of negotiations on a draft Russia-EU agreement on drug precursors and declared their intention to prepare it for signing. In this regard they stressed the importance to agree on the remaining provisions. The Parties also underlined the importance of enhancing dialogue and exchange of information on drugs demand reduction and stressed that study visits of Russian experts to rehabilitation centres in EU Member States will be beneficial in that respect.

The Parties reconfirmed that intensification of common efforts in the fight against terrorism should be pursued. In this context, they recalled the principle to extradite or prosecute in accordance with their obligations under international law any person who supports, facilitates, participates or attempts to participate in the financing, planning, preparation or commission of terrorist acts or provides safe havens. The Parties also supported the idea to develop contacts between the Russian and the EU competent authorities on a wide range of anti-terrorism issues.

The participants reconfirmed their commitment and necessity to strengthen their cooperation and efforts to combat trafficking in human beings.

The Parties reaffirmed mutual interest in reinforcing their common efforts in combating transnational organized crime. In this regard they welcomed the outcome of the second round of negotiations between Russia and Europol on a strategic and operational cooperation agreement and expressed the hope for successful work during the third round of negotiations provisionally planned for July 2011 as well as for the completion of the negotiation process and prompt signing of the new agreement. This will enable the Parties to reach a qualitatively new level of cooperation between Russian law-enforcement agencies and Europol. The Parties also reviewed mutually beneficial cooperation between Europol, EU Member States Liaison Officers and Russian law enforcement authorities.

The Parties stressed the importance of joint efforts in the field of judicial cooperation in criminal matters. They took note of the latest round of negotiations for a cooperation agreement between

Russia and Eurojust on 23-25 March 2011 in The Hague and looked forward to the results of the next round in the second half of 2011. The Parties welcomed the outcome of the first meeting of the Russia-Eurojust Working Group and underlined the need for Eurojust experts to visit the Data Protection Authority of the Russian Federation before the end of 2011.

The Parties noted the importance of adequate protection of personal data in the course of law-enforcement and judicial cooperation, including in the cooperation between Russia and Europol, as well as Russia and Eurojust.

The Parties agreed to continue their efforts in strengthening judicial cooperation in civil and commercial matters. In this context, they took note of the EU approach favouring multilateral instruments, in particular relevant Hague Conventions, and the Russian approach favouring the conclusion of a Russia-EU cooperation agreement. The Parties agreed to hold a Russia - European Commission expert meeting to discuss judicial cooperation in civil and commercial matters in Brussels in 2011.

The Parties welcomed the perspective of an expert meeting in the area of anti-corruption.

The participants agreed to hold the next, fifteenth meeting of the Russia-EU Permanent Partnership Council on Freedom, Security and Justice in October 2011 in Warsaw.