

JOINT STATEMENT

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

Brussels, 18-19 November 2010

The thirteenth meeting of the Russia-EU Permanent Partnership Council (PPC) on Freedom, Security and Justice was held in Brussels on 18-19 November 2010.

The European Union was represented by Mr Stefaan De Clerck, Minister of Justice of Belgium, Ms Annemie Turtelboom Minister of the Interior of Belgium, and Mr Melchior Wathelet, State Secretary for Asylum and Migration of Belgium, Ms Viviane Reding, Vice-President of the European Commission, European Commissioner Responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship and Ms Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner Responsible for Home Affairs and by Mr Tibor Navracsics, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Administration and Justice of Hungary.

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 Sergei Bulavin, State Secretary, Deputy Minister of Interior.

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

The parties expressed their overall satisfaction with the implementation of the EU-Russia visa facilitation agreement and looked forward to the launch of negotiations aimed at introducing amendments to the Agreement further facilitating the issuance of short-term visas. In this connection they expressed their hope that these amendments will facilitate short-term travel for EU and Russian citizens, including for obtaining multiple-entry visas.

With a view to improve conditions for simplified travels of residents living in border adjacent areas of the EU Member States and the Russian Federation the Parties stressed the need of progress in negotiating and concluding local border traffic agreements between interested neighbouring EU Member States and the Russian Federation, in line with the relevant legislation of both Parties. In this connection, they discussed the particular situation of Kaliningrad region and decided to work towards a solution.

Following the outcome of the 25th EU-Russia Summit at Rostov-on-Don held on 31 May – 1 June, the participants endorsed the recommendations of the Visa Dialogue Senior Officials meetings of 24 September and 18 November 2010. The Parties agreed to launch the work to

elaborate jointly an exhaustive list of common steps the implementation of which will open possibility for engaging in negotiations on a EU-Russia visa waiver agreement.

They noted the importance of the effective implementation of the Agreements on readmission and on visa facilitation as well as look forward to swift opening of the negotiations on the revision of the visa facilitation agreement.

The Parties underlined the joint commitment to further enhance dialogue on migration related matters. Such a dialogue, to be established by the Parties in accordance with the existing legal framework and without prejudice to the negotiations of a New EU-Russia Agreement, should cover migration in all its dimensions, such as promotion of legal migration, management of migratory flows, fight against irregular migration, international protection, migration and development or integration. The Parties instructed their experts to consider without further delay the necessary organisational aspects of establishing such a dialogue.

The Parties expressed overall satisfaction with the implementation of the EU-Russia readmission agreement while stressing the importance of continuing efforts in order to further improve the application of some of its technical aspects. The Parties welcomed the entry into force as of 1 June 2010 the clause covering also the readmission of third country nationals and stateless persons. The Parties urged the conclusion of the remaining implementing protocols as early as possible.

The participants underlined the importance to jointly address the global problem of drugs, particularly those originating from Afghanistan, while taking note of the Russian initiative "Rainbow 2". The Parties entrusted experts to study possibilities to develop EU-Russia dialogue and cooperation in combating drugs following a balanced approach aimed at reduction of demand and supply of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and prevention of diversion of chemical precursors used for their illicit manufacture while taking into account the new Russian anti-drugs strategy. The Parties looked forward to concluding negotiations on an EU-Russia agreement on drug precursors.

The Parties welcomed the outcome of the Data Protection Conference of 19 and 20 October 2010 and emphasized the importance of adequate protection of personal data for enhancing law enforcement and judicial cooperation in all its aspects. The Parties expressed their satisfaction that the Conference brought together representatives of Europol, Eurojust and the Russian Federation. Discussions took place in an open and constructive atmosphere and allowed for a good and substantial exchange of information between the participants.

The Parties stressed the importance of further development of cooperation between Europol and Russian law enforcement agencies. They also welcomed the launch of the negotiations on an operational agreement between Europol and the Russian Federation that is crucial for effectively fighting organized crime and entrusted their experts to perform their work as soon as possible.

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 any person who supports, facilitates, participates or attempts to participate in the financing, planning, preparation or commission of terrorist acts or provides safe havens, in accordance with their obligations under international law. Russia and the EU 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 efforts to combat trafficking in human beings.

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 between Eurojust and Russia on 21 and 22 October 2010 and looked forward to the results of the forthcoming rounds in early 2011. The parties also looked forward to an early meeting of the Eurojust-Russia Working Group, as well as to the Eurojust visit to the Data Protection Authority of the Russian Federation in the first half of 2011.

The participants 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 an EU-Russia Cooperation Agreement.

The Parties also reviewed the outcomes of the existing mutually beneficial cooperation of Europol and EU Member States Liaison Officers with Russian Federation law enforcement authorities. The participants also welcomed the perspective of an expert meeting in the area of anti-corruption in 2011.

The participants agreed to hold the next meeting of the EU-Russia PPC on Freedom, Security and Justice in the first half of 2011 in the Russian Federation.

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