EURONEST PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

CONSTITUENT ACT OF THE EURONEST PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

PREAMBLE

Meeting in Brussels on 3 May 2011, the members representing the European Parliament and members representing Parliaments of the Eastern European Partners;

Whereas, within the framework of the Eastern Partnership the European Union and the Eastern European Partners took note with interest of the proposal by the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit, held in Prague (Czech Republic) on 7 May 2009, to establish a EU-Neighbourhood East Parliamentary Assembly, the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly;

Whereas the European Commission presented a communication on the Eastern Partnership on 3 December 2008 and the European Council welcomed the establishment of an ambitious Eastern Partnership and adopted an important Declaration on the Eastern Partnership at its meeting on 19-20 March 2009, which provides for an institutionalisation of the Eastern Partnership;

Whereas the creation of the Eastern Partnership multi-lateral executive structures needs to be completed by the creation of a parliamentary assembly called to hold the executive to account and to scrutinize its activities;

Whereas the idea to establish the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly dates back to the European Parliament Resolution of 15 November 2007, in which it is proposed to set up such an assembly following the example of the multilateral parliamentary assemblies already established with the participation of the European Parliament;

Whereas in the final statement of the Parliamentary Conference European Neighbourhood East, organised on 4-5 June 2008 by the European Parliament with the participation of representatives of the six Eastern Neighbourhood countries: the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus a reference to the creation of a EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly was adopted;

Whereas the parliamentarians of the Eastern European Partners expressed, at the joint meeting in Kyiv on 18 May 2009, their interest in launching the parliamentary dimension of the Eastern Partnership by means of establishing the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly and adopted recommendations thereto;

HAVE AGREED:

ARTICLE 1

Constitution and fundamental principles

The EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly is by this Act constituted, as the parliamentary institution of the Eastern Partnership between the European Union and its Eastern European Partners, to which Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union in principle could be applied. The EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly is founded on mutual interests and commitments as well as on the principles of differentiation, shared ownership and responsibility. The principle of differentiation in this regard shall not prejudice the rights of individual Eastern European Partners, but, on the contrary, it shall be aimed at defining the differences in interests and objectives regarding the relations of each Eastern European Partner with the European Union.

Participation in the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly shall be voluntary and shall maintain a spirit of integration and openness.

The European Parliament and the Eastern European Partners respect the diversity of the cultures and traditions, as well as the national identities of the peoples of the European Union Member States and of the Eastern European Partners, and the organisation of their public authorities.

ARTICLE 2

Objectives

The EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly shall help to support, promote and consolidate in practical terms the Eastern Partnership by covering its four thematic platforms, namely:

(a) questions related to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as questions related to market economy, sustainable development and good governance;

(b) further economic integration between the EU and its Eastern European Partners, supporting the socio-economic reforms of the Eastern European Partners, as well as trade and investment liberalization, leading to convergence with EU laws and standards with the objective of establishing a network of deep and comprehensive free trade areas;

(c) mutual energy support and security mechanisms and the harmonization of the Eastern European Partners' energy policies;

(d) promoting people-to-people contacts and facilitating the interaction between the European Union and the Eastern European Partners citizens, in particular young people; promoting cultural cooperation and inter-cultural dialogue as well as supporting education,

research, the development of the information and media society.

ARTICLE 3

Membership

To take part in the work of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly, a Parliament shall:
- be part of the constitutional system of one of the countries participating in the Eastern Partnership;
- have been elected according to OSCE commitments, and other international standards for democratic elections**;**
- commit itself to protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, pluralistic democracy and the rule of law.

ARTICLE 4

Composition

The EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly shall be a joint Assembly and shall be comprised of two components, formed of Members from:

(a) the European Parliament, on the one hand;
(b) the Parliaments of the Eastern European Partners, on the other.

ARTICLE 5

Structure

The EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly shall have the following structure:

(a) Plenary of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly;
(b) Bureau;
(c) Committees;
(d) Secretariat.

The Plenary of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly shall adopt, by qualified majority of two-thirds of the members present, its Rules of Procedure, in which it shall make full provision for its composition and powers and for the functioning of its bodies.

ARTICLE 6

Powers

The powers of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly shall be

(a) to establish itself as a forum for parliamentary debate, control and review of all questions relating to the Eastern Partnership, as the parliamentary institution of that Partnership;

(b) to ensure compliance with the objectives of Article 2 of this Constituent Act;

(c) to adopt resolutions and recommendations addressed to the Eastern Partnership Summit and the institutions, bodies and ministerial groups and conferences devoted to the development of the Partnership, in matters relating to the various aspects of the Partnership;

(d) to deliver opinions on questions put to it by the Eastern Partnership Summit itself and by the ministerial conferences associated with the Eastern Partnership, for which it may call upon the former and the latter to consult the Assembly on any issues relating to the Eastern Partnership;

(e) to establish appropriate relations between the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly, on the one hand, and the Summit and the various ministerial conferences and institutions associated with the Eastern Partnership, on the other;

(f) to provide for information exchange, training and educational programs aimed at facilitating the efficiency of the parliamentary work, implementation of standards and best practices in the work of the Parliaments of the Eastern European Partners;

(g) to assist in the harmonisation of the national legislation of the Eastern European Partners with the European Union legislation, including by means of implementation of the appropriate projects at bilateral and multilateral level.

ARTICLE 7

Funding

The operating expenditure of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly shall be borne by the European Parliament and the Parliaments of the Eastern European Partners that form part of the Assembly, in proportions to be laid down in the Rules of Procedure.

ARTICLE 8

Meetings

The Plenary of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly shall in principle meet once a year, alternately in an Eastern European Partner country and in the premises of the European Parliament in one of its places of work, at the invitation of the European Parliament or of the Parliament of the Eastern European Partner hosting the meeting.

The Bureau of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly and the committees shall meet, as laid down in the Rules of Procedure.

ARTICLE 9

Final provisions

This Constituent Act is signed in Brussels on 3 May 2011, without prejudice to its compliance with the internal provisions of each of the participant Parliaments and shall enter into force on the date of its signature.

After constitution of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly this Act shall remain open for signature to any entitled party that has not subscribed to it.

Any of the Parties to this Constituent Act may decide not to continue to be part of it by serving formal notice on the Bureau of the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly one year in advance.

For the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia .....(signature)

For the Milli Mejlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan .....(signature)

For the Parliament of Georgia .....(signature)

For the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova .....(signature)

For the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine .....(signature)

For the European Parliament .....(signature)