

**ASSEMBLY OF MEMBERS OF THE SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA,
THE SEJM AND SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND, AND THE VERKHOVNA
RADA OF UKRAINE**

DECLARATION

29 May 2015

Vilnius

The Assembly of Members of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland, and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, having met in Vilnius on 28–29 May 2015, following the free and democratic elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on 25 October 2014 that were recognised by the international community;

recalling that ten years ago, on 13 May 2005, the Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Artūras Paulauskas, the Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, and the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Volodymyr Lytvyn, signed a statement in Luts'k, establishing the Assembly of Members of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland, and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, which gave a new impetus for trilateral cooperation among the parliaments of the three countries;

taking account of the work of the Assembly done and *seeing* room for its further improvement in future, particularly in the realm of activities of the parliamentary committees;

noting that closer regional cooperation based on common values and democratic principles promotes peace and wellbeing in the region and is not directed against anybody;

believes that the Assembly, as an instrument for regional cooperation of the European Union and European Neighbourhood Policy, can play an important role and help Ukraine implement the necessary reforms in these difficult times;

highlights the important work done so far by the parliaments, other public institutions and non-governmental organisations of the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Poland in helping Ukraine in a variety of areas;

supports Ukraine, its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, and conveys solidarity with Ukraine, informed by shared understanding, interests, obligations, respect and values of the European Union and Ukraine;

condemns the acts of aggression of the Russian Federation, namely, the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the military aggression in Eastern Ukraine, that were made in violation of international law and have compromised security of the region and Europe at large;

urges the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw all its forces and military assets from the territory of Ukraine, as well as any other armed groups and troops under Russia's control, and to restore the full and effective control of the Ukrainian–Russian border and to enable Ukraine to carry out the border control;

believes that EU sanctions against Russia should be enhanced in case Russia continues ignoring proper implementation of the Minsk Agreements;

draws attention to Russia's sophisticated propaganda that incites nationalistic and xenophobic sentiment domestically and disorients the public opinion in democratic countries; calls on European governments and societies to respond adequately to and counter this propaganda; and appeals to all citizens of the Russian Federation to resist and reject this evil propaganda;

requests immediate release of Nadiia Savchenko – Ukrainian member of Parliament and member of the PACE – as well as other citizens of Ukraine illegally detained in Russia, including Oleg Sentsov;

pays tribute to those people in Russia who oppose aggressive policies of the government; and requests an investigation of the assassination of Boris Nemtsov;

calls on the parliaments of the Member States of the Assembly to unite efforts in mobilising political and other kinds of support of the Euro-Atlantic community for Ukraine; to achieve this, suggests strengthening the cooperation of the Lithuanian, Polish and Ukrainian parliamentary delegations in international parliamentary organisations, first and foremost the Parliamentary Assemblies of NATO, the Council of Europe and OSCE, as well as reinforcing the cooperation with the European Parliament;

notes that the results of the EU–Ukraine Summit held in Kyiv on 27 April 2015 clearly reflect positive developments in the area of systemic reforms in Ukraine and the respective role of the Verkhovna Rada;

considers the decisions made at the Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga on 21–22 May 2015 to be an important step in strengthening the EU–Ukraine relations based on mutual commitments and mutual responsibility;

sees opportunities for contributing to the implementation of the decisions adopted by the EU Eastern Partnership Summit held in Riga on 21–22 May, which reaffirm the commitments assumed in previous Summits and under bilateral agreements in acknowledgement of Ukraine's aspirations and choice to pursue European integration; *also sees* opportunities for helping the country carry out reforms crucial for the successful implementation of the European Union–Ukraine Association Agreement, including the creation of a deep and comprehensive free trade area and the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan;

supports the determination of Members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to continue the reforms and broaden the scope of crucial reforms;

strongly supports the strategic aspirations of Ukraine for European integration and points out that, pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, Ukraine as a European state has a European perspective and may apply to become member of the European Union;

undertakes to continue the cooperation in order to deepen political association and economic integration between the European Union and Ukraine, and to coordinate actions in implementing the European Union–Ukraine Association Agreement, including the creation of a deep and comprehensive free trade area with the European Union;

underlines the importance of the EU–Ukraine Association Agreement and the implementation of reforms thereunder with a view to ensuring the wellbeing of the people of Ukraine, and calls on the

Member States of the Assembly to share their best practices in strengthening democratic institutions and introducing the principles of good governance and develop closer business relations and reciprocal trade;

calls on national parliaments of EU Member States to swiftly ratify the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in solidarity with the Ukrainian nation in order to provide for the Agreement's full entry into force as of 2016;

seeks to cooperate in order to ensure the implementation of the EU Visa Liberalisation Action Plan for Ukraine by the end of 2015, as noted in the Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit held in Riga on 21–22 May 2015, and looks forward to a positive report by the European Commission suggesting to exempt Ukrainian citizens from the visa requirement in order to provide for visa-free travel already in 2016, and draws attention to the six-year-long positive experience of Poland in organising the small cross-border movement without any problems;

takes note of the importance of the trilateral Lithuanian–Polish–Ukrainian Brigade LITPOLUKRBRIG for Ukraine's effort to meet NATO standards;

hopes that the next NATO Summit to be held in Warsaw in 2016 will adopt decisions that will further strengthen the security of the Eastern flank of NATO member countries and assist Ukraine in its efforts to move closer to the Alliance;

calls on the Member States of the Assembly to foster common cultural heritage and promote the cooperation of culture researchers and historians, youth exchanges and other joint projects aimed at developing people-to-people contacts and enhancing the civil society.

Loreta GRAUŽINIENĖ
Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania

Bogdan BORUSEWICZ
Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland

Volodymyr GROYSMAN
Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine