



# **REPORT**

**of the Moldovan Presidency  
to the Central European Initiative  
2008**

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# Contents

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<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. General Remarks .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3. CEI repositioning process .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4. Meetings and activities .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators (CNC) .....	3
CEI Parliamentary Committee .....	4
Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Transport .....	5
The Roundtable of the CEI Ministers of Economic Sectors.....	7
The 11 <sup>th</sup> Summit Economic Forum .....	8
High Level Meeting on Tourism.....	8
High level Meeting on Agriculture.....	10
International Scientific Conference.....	12
The CEI Parliamentary Assembly .....	13
CEI Youth Forum .....	13
Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators .....	14
Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Foreign Affairs.....	14
Special Postal Stamp .....	16
CEI Summit of the Heads of Government .....	17
<b>5. Annexes.....</b>	<b>18</b>
The Priorities of the Presidency of the Republic of Moldova at the CEI.....	18
Objectives .....	19
Calendar of events of the Moldovan CEI Presidency .....	20
Meeting of the Parliamentary Committee of the CEI (Annex 1).....	22
Conclusions of the Moldovan Presidency on the Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Transportation (Annex 2).....	25
Conclusions of the Moldovan Presidency on the Roundtable of the CEI Ministers of the Economic Sectors (Annex 3).....	28
Conclusions of the Moldovan Presidency on the Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Tourism (Annex 4).....	30
Conclusions of the Moldovan Presidency on the Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Agriculture (Annex 5).....	33
“Strengthening Cooperation towards a Knowledge-based Society in CEI Region” (Annex 6)....	36
Parliamentary Assembly of the Parliamentary Dimension of the CEI (Annex 7).....	38
Final Declaration VIII CEI Youth Forum „Strengthening Youth through Mobility” (Annex 8).....	43
Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the CEI (Annex 9).....	46
Meeting of the Heads of Government of the Member States of the CEI (Annex 10) .....	48



## 1. Introduction

This Report summarizes the most important activities undertaken within the Presidency of the Republic of Moldova to the Central European Initiative (CEI).

## 2. General Remarks

The Republic of Moldova took over the Presidency of the Central European Initiative (CEI) for the year 2008 at the Sofia Summit of the CEI Heads of Government on 27 November 2007.

In its activity, the Moldovan Presidency followed the CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedure, the results and conclusions of the CEI Working Groups and Task Forces, as well as the good practices, needs and opinions of all the Member States. In this regard, the Republic of Moldova continued to promote closer cooperation with the European Union. One of the main priorities of the Moldovan Presidency was the support for EU aspirations of the CEI non-EU Member States, as reformulated in the CEI mandate. Special attention was paid to the promotion of common projects between the EU and non-EU CEI Member States related to the know-how exchange, which proved to be the most efficient and stimulating mechanism for the transmission of best practices in all areas of development.

In order to contribute to the process of the recognition and visibility of the CEI, the Republic of Moldova took necessary steps in order to raise the European public's awareness about the organization. These actions included the establishment of close contacts with the media and the non-governmental sector, elaboration of the web page of the Presidency, organization of projects with stronger regional and national impact,

improvement of the participation at the meetings, especially at the highest level.

The Moldovan Presidency had the responsible task of implementing the structural changes outlined in the Decisions of the Sofia Summit, setting the base for the future organizational framework of the CEI. Thus, the Republic of Moldova assisted the Secretariat with the establishment of the Network of the Focal Points.

Not less important is the special attention of the Moldovan Presidency paid to the consolidation and intensification of the cooperation within the Member States in the sectorial domains. That is why, the Moldovan Presidency urged the involvement of the National Focal Points in the working sessions of the sectorial events organized under this mandate, which as such made the activity of the national experts more active and flexible.

The Moldovan Presidency paid special interest to the development of closer cooperation within the Troika, assuring the continuity in the CEI activities. In this regard, the Moldovan Presidency continued the efforts of the Republic of Bulgaria. Such cooperation as well as the simultaneous Chairmanship by the Republic of Moldova of the CEI, SEECP, MAG RACVIAC, CEFTA and the SEE Health Initiative gave the opportunity to create the premises for synergy, mutual reinforcement and a clear division of labour between all regional actors.

The necessity to pay more attention and awareness to the possibilities given by CEI Funds and importance of these in implementation of a large scale of projects of common interest, was noticed for the first time. The Moldovan Presidency organized a Conference on CEI project opportunities that enjoyed great success, by raising significant interest from the public (private/public sector) and by submission of over 40 projects.

The main objectives and priorities, intentions and aspirations, were incorporated in the

Concept Paper of the Moldovan Presidency which were presented in the beginning of 2008 to the CEI Executive Secretariat and the CEI Committee of National Coordinators.

For a better, faster and easier access to information, the Moldovan Presidency has launched an official web-site on the Moldovan Presidencies ([www.chairmanship.mfa.md](http://www.chairmanship.mfa.md)) to the regional initiatives held for the period 2008-2009.

### 3. CEI repositioning process

Within the CEI Summit of the Heads of Government a number of decisions on further organizational development of the Initiative were adopted, relations between the CEI and its Member States, consolidation of relations in the sectorial domains, improvement of the CEI working areas and other decisions of common and of major importance for the region were undertaken.

Considering the priorities and main objectives of the CEI as well of the CEI Member States in the period of transformation and reorganization, and bearing in mind the main priority of the non EU CEI Member States – European Integration, the core priority of the Moldovan Presidency consisted in supporting the EU aspirations of these countries.

Special attention was paid to the promotion of common projects between the EU and non-EU CEI Member States related to the know-how exchange, which proved to be the most efficient and stimulating mechanism for the transmission of best practices in all areas of development. In this context, for the first time, in April 2008 the common visit of the CEI Executive Secretariat and the Moldovan Presidency to Bruxelles was organized, where there were a number of meetings with the representatives of the European Commission, DG AIDCO, DG RELEX and other officials.

### 4. Meetings and activities

In accordance with the priorities of the Moldovan Presidency, a calendar of events was elaborated. During its Presidency of the CEI, the Republic of Moldova organized over 15 political and sectorial events in Chisinau, namely Ministerial Meetings on Transport, Tourism and Agriculture, Conference on Energy and Scientific Conference, Round

Table of the CEI Ministers of Economy, Summit Economic Forum, events on Parliamentary dimension, Youth Forum, Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the CEI Summit of the Heads of Government.

In the context of the meetings organized in Chisinau, the Moldovan Presidency has elaborated the relevant conclusions in order to ensure the continuity of the activities.



## Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators (CNC)

Chisinau, 31 January 2008

In conformity with the Moldovan Calendar of events on 31 January 2008 in Chisinau the Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators took place organized under the Moldovan CEI Presidency. The Meeting was attended by the National Coordinators of the CEI Member States.

According to the Agenda of the Meeting, the National Coordinators examined the ongoing activities of the CEI as well as the Programme of Moldova's Presidency which involves the organizations of high level political and sectorial meetings in domains including: economy, energy, transport, agriculture, tourism, youth, civil society, science and others.

At the same time the implementation of Sofia decisions, establishment of the CEI Network of Focal Points and of the experts who will collaborate in promotion and implementation of projects of common interest were discussed.

Considering the appreciations expressed by participants can be stated that the CNC Meeting was one of the successes that have launched a number of ideas and proposals to be achieved during the year.

### Results:

- Considering the importance on the enhancement of the relations between CEI and European Commission it was decided that a common visit to Brussels of the Secretary General of the CEI Executive Secretariat and Moldovan Presidency would be undertaken.
- The importance of the consolidation of cooperation in sectorial domains, such as was approved the Moldovan Calendar of events, as proposed by Presidency were acknowledged.
- A number of projects were approved.



## CEI Parliamentary Committee

Chisinau, 26 May 2008

The Parliamentary Committee of the Central European Initiative Parliamentary Dimension held its annual meeting in Chisinau on 26 May 2008, in accordance with Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure.

The Meeting was attended by national delegations representing the Parliaments of Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine.

The topic of the Session was *"The role of the Parliament in support of upgrading the CEI - EU relations: Building a new Europe, without the dividing lines"*.

The Meeting was concluded with the Chairman's Conclusions which stipulated the main ideas, views and tasks achieved during the event. (see ANNEX 1).

### Results:

- Participants acknowledged that the CEI Parliamentary Dimension has been working for many years to support democracies in transition on their way to the EU. There has been a constant increase in the international contacts of National Parliaments.
- Participants expressed the opinion that the role of national parliaments and Parliamentary Assemblies has been growing more important since they express the will, and thus, must act as mediators between local and national needs, on the one hand, and international and supranational requirements, on the other.
- The Parliamentary Committee Meeting underlined that parliamentarians had an important complementary role to play in fostering purposeful and well-structured cooperation among governments, public institutions and private sector, leading to the creation of networks oriented and linked with those of the CEI particularly and the EU generally.





- Participants underlined that Parliamentary Dimension of the CEI had a great opportunity to provide useful ideas for the CEI re-positioning approach by using the main three tools of PD.
- Parliamentary Committee Meeting encouraged the CEI PD to establish a more dynamic co-operation between its EU and non-EU Member States with a view to develop a coherent framework of assistance.
- Participants agreed that in order to support those Member States of the CEI that aspire to become EU members, it is necessary to enhance the political role of the CEI, specifying that PD should be engaged at maximum in this process.
- The Parliamentary Committee Meeting recommended that the CEI Parliamentary Assembly consider encouraging the Parliaments of the CEI EU Member States to take appropriate actions in order to raise awareness of the European Commission as regards upgrading its relationship with the CEI.

### Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Transport

Chisinau, 2-3 July, 2008

The Moldovan CEI Presidency organized the High level Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Transport with the generic *“Multi-modal transport development in CEI countries”*.

This event has been organized in conformity with the Presidency Calendar of events, as well in the context of the priorities set up by the Moldovan Presidency in the Concept Paper, *development of the sectorial fields of activities*. The Meeting gathered Ministers of Transport of the CEI Member States and the National Focal Points for this domain, being a part of the CEI Network of Focal Points, established following the decision on repositioning of Sofia Summit. At the same time, the event was attended by high representatives of the European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, TRACECA, World Bank and others.

During the Meeting were put on discussions the following issues:

1. Contribution of the multi-modal transport to the regional economic cohesion among CEI countries.
2. Arrangement/structure and functioning of the multi-modal transport in CEI region.
3. Infrastructure of the multi-modal transport; exploring best practices of the Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in multi-modal transport.
4. Competitive Agenda; Recommendations and Guidelines for CEI Transport Focal Points Network.





During the Meeting a number of presentations of the special guests were made, the Moldovan Presidency also presented arrangement, structure and functioning of the multi-modal transport on: Giurgiulesti International Free Port and on Railway Transport.

The Meeting offered an additional opportunity to review the work and activity of different states regional processes, initiatives and organizations in the priority domains, such as contribution of the multi-modal transport to the regional economic cohesion and integration among CEI countries, providing a platform for identifying synergies among them.

The Meeting was summarized with the Conclusions and Recommendations for the further activity of the Focal Points. (see ANNEX 2).

#### Results:

- The participants of the Meeting agreed that Multimodal Transport is the most efficient way of handling a regional or international door to door transport operation. Thus, it allows joint efforts in order to facilitate the trade between countries combining the specific advantages of each mode in one journey, such as the flexibility of road haulage, the greater capacity of railways and the lower costs of water transport in the best possible way.
- The participants agreed that taking into account the common priorities and interconnected sectorial domains of activity in the transport and trade issues, CEI member states should direct their efforts towards achieving the coordination goal through concrete projects and results.

The relevant recommendations have been made for CEI Focal Points and will lead them in their further activities.



## The Roundtable of the CEI Ministers of Economic Sectors

Chisinau, 8 October 2008

The Roundtable of the CEI Ministers of Economic Sectors took place, within the framework of the CEI Economic Forum, on 8 October 2008, in Chisinau under the theme *"Moldova and the CEI Region: Bridging East and West"*.

Topics under discussions included an analysis of the challenges towards achieving sustainable economic growth in the CEI Region, discussion about economic reforms in Moldova and in the CEI Region in general, trade development, investment opportunities in priority sectors, support to SME and policies to increase flexibility and competitiveness. In this context, much emphasis was put on issues regarding energy efficiency, the deepening of the European neighbourhood Policy, SME's development policy, macroeconomic stability and regulatory reforms throughout the region. Member States highlighted the solutions to these areas and the reforms put forward in order to increase the competitiveness of the CEI area as a whole. In particular, the main points that raised consensus among the Member States were the growing need for energy security, the development of energy infrastructure and the strengthening of trade exchange in the CEI region. Special accent was put on the EU integration process and EU accession, confirmed as two core goals that the CEI is to bring forward. The Ministers underlined the exceptional importance of the CEI as a unique regional Forum for cooperation and consultation among and among its Member States.

Following the Roundtable the relevant Conclusions and Recommendations for the CEI Focal Points dealing with this domain were elaborated. (see ANNEX 3).

### Results:

- The Ministers agreed on the need to take full advantage of the future EU Enlargement process to improve macro-economic stability, accelerate structural reforms, complete the privatization process, as well as creating a favorable environment for private business activities and foreign investment;
- The Ministers stressed the importance of providing a stable investment climate, ensuring an effective and non-discriminatory regulatory framework for investments as well as upgrading infrastructure and education;
- It emerged that there is a growing need among the member countries to think globally but to act in partnership within the framework of the CEI. For this reason, the CEI membership has proved to be an invaluable asset for all the Members.
- Delegations agreed that the structure and the role of the CEI must be strengthened in view of repositioning of the CEI according to the Decisions ratified in Sofia by the CEI Heads of Government.





## The 11<sup>th</sup> Summit Economic Forum

Chisinau, 9 October 2008

This year the Summit Economic Forum took place in Chisinau, on 9 October 2008, under the leading theme “*Moldova and the CEI Region: Bridging east and West*” and incorporated another major event – the annual Moldova International Investment Forum.



This year the Summit was very positive and successful. It provided Moldova with strong visibility thanks to the high number of international participants but also due to great interest from the local press and international news agencies. A total of 869 participants from 45 countries attended 12 formal sessions and benefit from its facilities. Approximately 40 informal one-to-one meetings took place in the bilateral meetings room purposely arranged.

A Final Report on the Summit Economic Forum 2008 was elaborated and disseminated to all the CEI Member States and other involved and interested actors and partners.

## High Level Meeting on Tourism

Chisinau, 10 October 2008

On 10 October 2008, in Chisinau the Meeting of the Ministers of Tourism of the CEI Member States was organized. The Meeting was attended by the CEI Ministers of Tourism sector and National Focal Points. The topic of the event was “*Tourism and Regional Development: New Directions, Challenges and Opportunities*”.

The agenda of the Meeting included the following items for discussions of a special importance:

1. Wine tourism – new opportunity for CEI regional development.
2. Sustainable development of tourism and Climate Change.
3. Cultural diversity and solidarity, a new form of regional cooperation in tourism.
4. Competitive Agenda: Innovation, Climate change and other topical issues.
5. Recommendations and Guidelines for CEI Tourism Focal Points Network.

The Meeting was held in an open and constructive discussion atmosphere, in which important ideas, views and conclusions on contribution of the regional cooperation on development of the tourism, wine tourism – new opportunity for CEI regional development, sustainable development of tourism and climate change, cultural diversity and solidarity, a new form of regional cooperation in tourism, competitive agenda: innovation, climate change and other topical issues were discussed.



At the Meeting, the Moldovan Presidency was able to present the opportunity of developing the **“Wine Culture Tourism Route”** project, aiming at facilitating the relationship between the wine, culture, and tourism sectors, to set out wine cultural tourism routes, set up a cultural portal to enable participating countries to communicate, and generate exchanges of goods and services on routes, events and festivals based on long-lasting partnerships in order to create revenue streams which will ensure the sustainability of the routes beyond the pilot project. This project will set out a list of terms and norms governing the wine route which is not only commercial but highly intercultural dialogue between CEI Member States. It will produce the principles for a charter, which will direct activity, and it will encourage partnerships and networks.

The Meeting was finalized with the Conclusions and Recommendations which should be followed by the CEI National Focal Points in their future actions on the domain of tourism. (see ANNEX 4)

### Results:

- Ministers agreed on the high importance of the tourism domain development as well enhancement of the relation and cooperation in this domain between specialized agencies of the CEI Member States.
- The importance of setting up mechanisms to improve the competitiveness and quality of tourism at regional and local levels in order to ensure the sustainable and balanced development of tourism at national levels, improve the industry's performance and make tourism areas more competitive at regional, national and international levels.
- It was agreed that tourism development provides attractive opportunities for a number of providers of goods and services, especially in rural areas. It also helps to finance the infrastructure necessary for the economic development of an area and can give it a distinctive image and identity that will benefit all its economic activities.
- The participants agreed that taking into account the common priorities in the field of tourism, CEI member states should direct their efforts towards achievement of the coordination goal through concrete projects and results.

## High level Meeting on Agriculture

Chisinau, 23 October 2008

Under the auspices of the Moldovan Presidency to the CEI, on 23 October 2008, in Chisinau, the High Level Meeting on Agriculture was organized. Considering the importance of the domain as for the CEI working areas, as for majority of the CEI Member States, the event was prepared under the topic *“Practice of states in development of sustainable Agriculture; agriculture for development”*. The Meeting gathered high level officials (Ministers) from the CEI region, CEI National Focal Points, as well special invitees from Food and Agriculture Organization, European Commission, USAID, IFAD and other high ranking guests.

The Meeting was held in an open and constructive atmosphere and the discussions concentrated on such issues as the importance of sustainable agriculture for the economic development of CEI countries, challenges in reaching sustainable development in agriculture, ways and means of achieving an

“Agriculture for Development” desideratum, and needs assessment for technical assistance in implementing joint regional projects.

At the Meeting, the Moldovan Presidency presented policy documents in the agricultural sector reflecting on issues such as measures necessary in the post-calamity situations, agricultural integrationist tendencies, food security and the domestic support in agriculture, as well as stability and investment policies.

The Meeting was used by the country delegations for outlining their strategies and approaches in reaching sustainable development as well as for sharing best practices in this area.

The event was concluded with the results and recommendations for Focal Points for their further activities in this domain, which were transmitted to the CEI Member States. (see ANNEX 5)





**Results:**

- Participants underlined the significance of cooperation between ministries of the CEI Member States and the importance of establishing direct contacts among specialist, in particular with regard to the transfer of technologies, promotion of innovations, and exchange of best practices and know-how
- It was underlined that the expansion of biofuels sector as one of reasons of raising food prices, the sector could offer new jobs and thus creates new income opportunities in rural areas. It could also contribute to a fight against climate change and ensure energy for the future.
- It was underlined that ensuring long-term food security can be achieved only with substantial public investments in agriculture and rural infrastructures and by modernizing production systems. In this context, the countries, along with International Organizations and International Financial Institutions, including FAO, UNDP, IFAD, EBRD, the World Bank and the European Commission, must work together to invest in sustainable, market based solutions to food security.
- It was concluded that there has still been a lot to be done in the region in order to further develop this crucial part of our economies and livelihoods, while at the same time, a strong agriculture sector could become a powerful engine for economic growth for many CEI countries.



## International Scientific Conference

Chisinau, 24 October 2008

In accordance with the Moldovan Presidency Calendar, the International Conference on *"Strengthening Cooperation towards a Knowledge-based Society in Central European Initiative Region"* was organized.

The Conference was organized with the participation of the CEI Networks of Focal Points on Science & Technology and those on Information Society. The Conference also gave an opportunity for all interested people to participate. This event has a major importance for enhancing the cooperation activities in the CEI region and could provide a platform for launching concrete actions relevant to issues debated:

- The role of CEI in Promoting Development of Knowledge-based Society in the Region;
- Identifying New Forms of Cooperation in the S&T;
- EU Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) – the opportunity to Improve International Cooperation in Science & Technology and Information Society.

The Conclusions with recommendations for National Focal Points were inserted into the relevant document which concludes the Conference. (see ANNEX 6).



### Results:

- It was noticed that the particular structure of the Central European Initiative, comprised of 9 EU and 9 non-EU Member Countries, gives an advantage comparing to other regional initiatives;
- It was agreed that the lack of interaction and communication between CEI focal points
- It was noticeable in its first year of existence, a need of implementation of some interaction mechanisms is needed;
- It was noted that the topics of interest and the problems faced are similar across the CEI region and that great benefit could be obtained from exchanges of best practices, joint actions for regional cooperation;
- It was agreed that special attention must be placed on the involvement of young researchers in the regional circulation of talents and on creating frameworks for the use of experience acquired abroad for the development of their countries of origin, in the long run;
- The participants acknowledged that a specific comprehensive programme of actions related to the activity of the networks of focal points is necessary;
- The participants at the Conference agreed on the importance of meetings between the networks of focal points and convene that regular meetings should take place every year in the country of the CEI Presidency.

## The CEI Parliamentary Assembly

Chisinau, 18 November 2008

On 18 November 2008, in Chisinau, the CEI Parliamentary Assembly was organized within which the Meeting of the General Parliamentary Committees took place. The events gathered the parliaments from the CEI Member States in order to discuss the issues of the common interest and of the most importance for the region.

The General Committees took place simultaneously and included working sessions of the Meeting of the General Committee on Political Affairs, Meeting of the General Committee on

Economic Affairs and Meeting of the General Committee on Cultural Affairs.

The Agenda of the Assembly included the discussions on the theme *"The role of the National Parliaments in the process of EU integration: CEI regional context"*, debates on the Resolution of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, adopted 11 June 2008, Prague and other business of the major importance. The Meeting was concluded with the adoption of the Final Document (see ANNEX 7).



## CEI Youth Forum

Chisinau, 24 November 2008

Under the auspices of the Moldovan Presidency to the CEI, the CEI Youth Forum *"Strengthening Youth through Mobility"* was organized. The CEI Youth Forum is a feature event of the CEI organized annually in the country that holds the CEI Presidency.

Representatives of all CEI Ministers in charge with Youth, CEI - Executive and CEI Project Secretariat, as well as representatives of youth structures, young activists, youth workers are invited to participate in the event.

During the Meeting important matters were open for discussion, such as:

1. Education through mobility: opportunities and challenges.
2. Sustainable development of mobility in the CEI member states - own practices.
3. Globalization and internationalization of knowledge's according to the needs of the labour market.
4. Elaboration of the Final Declaration by the participants, submitted to the CEI Heads of Government (see ANNEX 8).



## Meeting of the CEI Committee of National Coordinators

Chisinau, 25-26 November 2008

On 25-26 November 2008, in Chisinau, the periodical CNC Meeting was organized. The Meeting preceded the high level political events took place in Chisinau, namely the CEI Summit and the CEI Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Thus, that CNC Meeting was considered as a preparatory one for those important events.



The Agenda of the Meeting included a review of the activities realized such by the Presidency, as by the CEI. At the same time, the Moldovan Presidency informed the participants on the final organizational and logistical aspects of the Political Events. The Final Document was discussed and approved to be presented to the adoption to the CEI Heads of Government.

## Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Foreign Affairs

Chisinau, 27 November 2008

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the CEI Member States were invited to participate at their annual Meeting. This year Meeting was held on 27 November, in Chisinau, under the Moldovan Presidency to the CEI, preceding the CEI Summit of the Heads of Government. The Meeting has gathered the Ministers/Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the CEI Member States.

The Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Foreign Affairs took place under the theme “The Role of CEI in Enhancing Regional Cooperation and EU Integration”. The Agenda of the event included the discussions on the situation in the region, consolidation of the regional collaboration in the framework of the EU integration and EU aspirations of the CEI non-EU Member States. At the same time, CEI Ministers of Foreign Affairs approved the CEI Co-operation Fund budget for 2009, as well the Final Document, which was going to be adopted at the CEI Summit of the Heads of Government.



**Results:**

- The Ministers applauded the CEI's commitment to the countries remaining outside of the EU, by assisting them in their reforms in political, economic and social spheres in order to be in line with those of the EU countries.
- Ministers supported and commended the functional character of the CEI, focused on project implementation
- Participants underlined that the multilateral CEI Cooperation Activities, which best increase cohesion of the whole CEI Region in the fields of common interest, should be preserved and further strengthened.
- Ministers stressed the need for a practical harmonization of the Networks of Focal Points and a further enhancement of their work in order to give more impetus at expert level for the continuing of a project-oriented cooperation.
- Ministers decided to extend the CEI Co-operation Fund to the year 2009, increasing, in principle, the annual contributions to the CEI Co-operation Fund by 20%, while retaining the present scale of contributions.
- The Ministers also decided to renew the mandate of the Deputy Secretary General of the CEI - Executive Secretariat from Ukraine, Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Mykola Melenevskyi, for a three year period, i.e. from February 2009 to February 2012.
- The Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Central European Initiative was finalized with the Conclusions (see ANNEX 9).



## Special Postal Stamp

With the occasion of Moldovan Presidency to the Central European Initiative, the Government of the Republic of Moldova launched a special postal stamp.

The official ceremony of launching of the postal stamp took place at the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Central European Initiative (CEI), on 27 November 2008.





## CEI Summit of the Heads of Government

Chisinau, 28 November 2008

The major political event which concludes the Presidency, the CEI Summit of the Heads of Government, took place this year on 28 November 2008, in Chisinau. This year Summit was organized under the auspices of the Moldovan Presidency to the CEI with the theme "Cooperation for European Future".

The Summit was attended by the CEI Prime Ministers, representatives of the CEI Executive Secretariat, as well a number of the high ranked special invitees from the Council of Europe, European Commission, EIB, BERD, OSCE, World Bank, BSEC PERMIS and others.

Within the Summit the Heads of Government expressed view of their countries on the regional situation, CEI Repositioning, enhancement of the relations with the EU, as well plans and aims for the future. At the same time, in context with the Agenda item, the Annual Report of the Secretary General of the CEI Executive Secretariat was approved; as well the Final Document was adopted.

The Final Document of the Summit composed of summary of the activity of the Member States in the framework of the CEI, scopes and results achieved during the year, results on the implementation of the decisions of the Sofia Summit 2007, overview of the situation in the region during the year, relations with the EU and other regional and international actors and partners and other issues of the great importance for the further development and activity of the regional and of the CEI in order to achieve the major scopes and objectives.

### Results:

- The Heads of Government acknowledged with satisfaction the efforts of the Moldovan CEI Presidency and the CEI-ES in strengthening the relationship between the CEI and the European Commission and their initial positive results.

- The Heads of Government commended the Government of the Republic of Moldova for the continuous efforts during its CEI Presidency as well as for the excellent organisation and warm hospitality offered during the Summit Meeting of the Heads of Government of the Member States of the Central European Initiative in Chisinau on 28 November 2008.
- The Heads of Government expressed their satisfaction about the successful accomplishment of the Repositioning of the CEI in accordance with the decisions of the CEI Summit in Sofia in 2007.
- The Heads of Government stressed that increasing financial contributions of the CEI Member States was well-timed and appropriate. An enhanced scale of allocations to the CEI budget will increase the scope of operational activities within the Initiative.
- The Heads of Government took note with appreciation of the growing funding potential of the CEI, due to an increase of the CEI Co-operation Fund, the Italian contribution provided to the CEI Trust Fund at the EBRD, the Austrian contribution to the Know-how Exchange Programme, and the Czech contribution to the CEI Special Fund for Climate and Environment Protection.

The event was concluded with adoption of the Final Document (see ANNEX 10)



## 5. Annexes

### The Priorities of the Presidency of the Republic of Moldova at the CEI

The Summit of the CEI Heads of Government in Sofia marked a new phase in the CEI development. The Decisions adopted at the meeting have set the strategic orientation for the future of the organization and serve as the guiding lines for the Presidency of the Republic of Moldova.

In its activity, the Moldovan Presidency will follow the CEI Guidelines and Rules of Procedure, the results and conclusions of the CEI Working Groups and Task Forces, as well as the good practices, needs and opinions of all the Member States. In this regard, the Republic of Moldova will continue to promote closer cooperation with the European Union. One of the main priorities of the Moldovan Presidency is the support for EU aspirations of the CEI non-EU member states, as reformulated in the CEI mandate. Building a new Europe, without the dividing lines, is impossible without the inclusion of all states of the continent into a single area of political, economic and cultural development and cooperation. For this reason, the initiatives directed towards the adjustment of the CEI non-EU members to European values and standards will be strongly supported. Special attention will be paid to the promotion of common projects between the EU and non-EU CEI member states related to the know-how exchange, which proved to be the most efficient and stimulating mechanism for the transmission of best practices in all areas of development.

In order to be more effective and influential, the CEI must attain a stronger degree of recognition and visibility. Having this in mind, the Republic of Moldova will take necessary steps in order to raise the European public's awareness about the organization. These

actions include the establishment of close contacts with the media and the non-governmental sector, development of an elaborate web page of the Presidency, organization of projects with stronger regional and national impact, improvement of the participation at the meetings, especially at the highest level. One of the instruments that could help to achieve this end is the organization of the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers immediately before the Summit of the Heads of Government of the CEI states.

Another priority of the Republic of Moldova is the development of closer cooperation within the Troika, assuring the continuity in the CEI activities. In this regard, the Moldovan Presidency will continue the efforts of the Republic of Bulgaria. Such cooperation as well as the simultaneous Chairmanship by the Republic of Moldova of the CEI, SEECP, MAG RACVIAC, CEFTA and the SEE Health Initiative will create the premises for synergy, mutual reinforcement and a clear division of labor between all regional actors.

The Moldovan Presidency will have the responsible task of implementing the structural changes outlined in the Decisions of the Summit, setting the base for the future organizational framework of the CEI. Thus, the Republic of Moldova will assist the Secretariat with the establishment of the network of experts and will stimulate the initiation of its activity in the shortest time possible. The elimination of the CEI Working Groups and the reduction of the number of the CNC meetings should free financial resources for more practical-oriented projects and meetings.

In line with the new streamlined areas of activities, the Moldovan Presidency has prepared a number of events, which include, but are not limited to, the following objectives.

## Objectives

- Implementation of the Decisions on CEI Repositioning;
- Development of the CEI – EU dialogue and consolidation of the European perspective of the CEI non-EU member states;
- Exchange of experience between the CEI EU and non-EU member states through the implementation of joint projects and transfer of know-how;
- Coordination of the establishment of the network of focal points;
- Promotion of the awareness about the CEI at the national and international levels;
- Strengthening the cooperation and good neighbor relations between the participating states;
- Promotion of democratic values and European standards as a firm development mechanism for the entire region;
- Cooperation with the South East European Cooperation Process, Regional Cooperation Council and other regional arrangements, with the aim of strengthening the cooperation, stability and development of the Central and South Eastern Europe and avoidance of overlapping in their activity;
- Coordination of the CEI activities agenda with the participating states, taking into the account the political priorities of the region at that time;
- Creation of a favorable framework for common solutions to specific problems that the states of the region are encountering.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE  
MOLDOVAN PRESIDENCY



**CNC Meeting**

31.01.2008

**CNC Meeting**

10.03.2008, Trieste, Italia

**CNC Meeting**

16.05.2008, Vienna, Austria

**Parliamentary Committee**

26.05.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Transport**

02.07.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**CNC Meeting**

15 .09.2008, Trieste, Italy

**Round Table of the CEI Ministers of Economy**

08.10.2008 Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**11<sup>th</sup> CEI Summit Economic Forum**

09.10.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**High level Meeting on Tourism**

10.10.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova



**High level Meeting on Agriculture**

23.10.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**International Scientific Conference “Strengthening Cooperation towards a Knowledge-based Society in CEI Region”**

24.10.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**CNC Meeting**

27.10.2008, Rome, Italy

**Political Directors Meeting**

28.10.2008, Rome, Italy

**Meeting of General Parliamentary Committees**

18.11.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**CEI Parliamentary Assembly**

18.11.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**VIII CEI Youth Forum**

24.11.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**CNC Meeting**

25-26.11.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Foreign Affairs**

27.11.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

**CEI Summit of the Heads of Government**

28.11.2008, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE  
MOLDOVAN PRESIDENCY







## MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE

26 May 2008, Chisinau

### Chairmanship's Conclusions

The Parliamentary Committee of the Central European Initiative Parliamentary Dimension held its annual meeting in Chisinau on 26 May 2008, in accordance with Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Valeriu GUMA, Head of the Moldovan Parliamentary Delegation to the CEI PD, the President of the CEI Parliamentary Dimension.

The meeting was attended by national delegations representing the parliaments of Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic and Ukraine.

The topic of the Session was *"The role of the Parliament in support of upgrading the CEI - EU relations: Building a new Europe, without the dividing lines"*.

The Meeting was addressed by Mrs. Maria Postoico, Deputy Chairwoman of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova; Mr. Mykola Melenevskyi, Deputy Secretary General, Executive Secretariat of the CEI; Mr. Grigore Petrenco, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Policy and European Integration of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova; Mr. Dumitru Tira, National Coordinator of the Moldova Presidency to the CEI, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova; Mr. Paolo Berizzi, European Commission Delegation in the Republic of Moldova; H.E. Mr. Nikolaus Graf Lambsdorff, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Moldova; Mr. Nicolae Esanu, Deputy Minister of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, Permanent representative of the Government to the Parliament.

The General Committee on Economic Affairs meeting aiming at informing the national delegations about the Agenda and Programme of the Meeting of the Committee, which will be held in Prague, Czech Republic, on 10-12 June 2008 - took place in the framework of the Parliamentary Committee Meeting. Also, the meeting of the General Committee on Cultural Affairs, aimed at identifying the future topics for the Committee's discussion, took place. It was agreed that the future deliberations topic will be *education for sustainable development*. The next meeting of the General Committee on Cultural Affairs will take place in Vienna on 2 and 3 October 2008. During the October meeting the Committee will elect its deputy chairpersons.

In the framework of the Session there were made interventions on behalf of the national delegations from Romania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Italy and Ukraine.



- Parliamentary Committee Meeting noted that the main aim of the CEI, since the founding of the CEI in 1989, has been building a new Europe without dividing lines; one of the CEI's objectives is to bring the countries closer together and assist some of them in their preparation process for the EU membership.
- Participants acknowledged that the CEI PD has been working for many years to support democracies in transition on their way to the EU. There has been a constant increase in the international contacts of National Parliaments. In addition to the regular conferences and meetings, there have been a lot of networking between parliamentary friendships groups and other activities. Thus, National Parliaments act as a passageway, a bridge that enhances the foreign policy of their respective states.
- Participants expressed the opinion that the role of national parliaments and Parliamentary Assemblies has been growing more important since they express the popular will, and thus, must act as mediators between local and national needs, on the one hand, and international and supranational requirements, on the other.
- The Parliamentary Committee Meeting underlined that parliamentarians had an important complementary role to play in fostering purposeful and well-structured cooperation among governments, public institutions and private sector, leading to the creation of networks oriented and linked with those of the CEI particularly and the EU generally.
- Parliamentary Committee Meeting stressed that, in the light of the decisions adopted in Sofia concerning the re-positioning of the CEI, 2008 was a key year for the future of the CEI. Re-positioning of the CEI was a wide process where parliamentarians could act as legislators and could support this process through parliamentary diplomacy. Cooperation among the Parliaments of the CEI Member States has always been an important part of the CEI activities. The CEI PD, along with the Governmental and the Business Dimensions, is positioned as one of three basic pillars of the Organization.
- Participants underlined that Parliamentary Dimension of the CEI had a great opportunity to provide useful ideas for the CEI re-positioning approach by using the main three tools of PD:
  - 1) To profit from the entire potential of the three General Committees.
  - 2) To consolidate the role of the Standing Committee. The Romanian delegation came with the proposal to include in the preamble of the next reunions a meeting of the *Standing Committee* and, if possible, to organize it as a one-day meeting. The Standing Committee represents the best frame to mediate the political decision, especially in the context that PD does not have an institutionalized Secretariat.
  - 3) To establish a Sub-committee in charge with the relations with the international and regional parliamentary organizations. The sub-committee will represent a tool created as the consequence of the necessity to adapt the PD activities and approaches to the new realities shaped as the result of the last political, economic and cultural challenges, as well as the result of the new CEI mandate concerning the regional cooperation.

- Parliamentary Committee Meeting underlined that, according to the new Guidelines and Rules of procedure of the CEI, Republic of Moldova in common with all member states have to render this intergovernmental Forum of eighteen Member States a more effective instrument of cooperation, better equipped to serve the needs of its Member States. Thus, in the context of the CEI reform process, the Republic of Moldova should concentrate its efforts in order to ensure the uniform transition within the implementation process of the reforms assuming a great responsibility for the continuous development of the Initiative.
- Participants were informed that the main priorities of the Presidency of the Republic of Moldova to the CEI are: the development of the relations between the CEI and the EU; strengthening the relations between the CEI members, especially between the EU and non-EU member states, through the implementation of joint projects; development of the CEI operational capacities.
- Parliamentary Committee Meeting encouraged the CEI PD to establish a more dynamic cooperation between its EU and non-EU Member States with a view to develop a coherent framework of assistance. It was emphasized that the CEI PD should interact and further develop its co-operation with the existing regional bodies and initiatives in order to support the upgrading of the CEI-EU relations.
- Participants underlined the importance of the CEI reorganization and of the need to institutionalize a permanent Secretariat of the Parliamentary Dimension of the CEI.
- Participants agreed that in order to support those Member States of the CEI that aspire to become EU members, it is necessary to enhance the political role of the CEI, specifying that PD should be engaged at maximum in this process. Parliamentarians within the CEI are able to share between them the experience and knowledge at a very practical and technical level as they all was facing the same problems on their way to EU. The CEI is a waiting room for the countries which aspire to achieve EU membership and this regional instrument can offer the possibility of exchange of experience.
- The Parliamentary Committee Meeting recommended that the CEI Parliamentary Assembly consider encouraging the Parliaments of the CEI EU Member States to take appropriate actions in order to raise awareness of the European Commission as regards upgrading its relationship with the CEI. In particular, they stressed the importance of agreement on the observer status and establishing a permanent high-level dialogue between CEI and EC.

Participants expressed their gratitude to the host of the Parliamentary Committee meeting and agreed to hold the Parliamentary Assembly in Chisinau in November 2008.



## CONCLUSIONS OF THE MOLDOVAN PRESIDENCY ON THE MEETING OF THE CEI MINISTERS OF TRANSPORTATION

Chisinau, 3 July 2008

Under the auspices of the Moldovan Presidency to the Central European Initiative, a Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Transport was convened on July 3 2008, in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova.

The Meeting was attended by a number of delegations of a the CEI Member States, representatives of the CEI Executive Secretariat, World Bank, UNDP, EBRD, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank and Secretary General of TRACECA. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Vasile URSU, Minister of Transport and Road Industry of the Republic of Moldova.

The Agenda of the Meeting included subjects of the common interest for the CEI Member States and for the whole region. The Meeting aimed to discuss the issue on “**Multimodal transport development in CEI countries**”, was held in an open and constructive atmosphere of discussions, during which important ideas, views and conclusions on contribution of the multi-modal transport to the regional economic cohesion among CEI countries; arrangement/structure and functioning of the multi-modal transport in CEI region; infrastructure of the multi-modal transport, exploring best practices of the Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in multi-modal transport, were launched.

In this context, the Moldovan Presidency presented arrangement, structure and functioning of the multi-modal transport:

**Giurgiulesti International Free Port** - GIFP handles both maritime and inland vessels and benefits from access to the European and Russian railway systems, good access to the European road network and its relative proximity to four international airports. Privately owned and privately operated by Danube Logistics SRL – ownership: Dutch EASEUR Holding BV (80%) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (20%);

Managed by an international team of professionals, GIFP combine a Port zone (oil terminal, dry cargo terminal, grain, container, building material, general cargo) with an Industrial free zone (oil tank farm, grain silos, office park, vacant land for lease of up to 70 hectares). Unique opportunity to locate in the midst of the rapidly growing economies within the Danube Corridor in South Eastern Europe with exceptional cost, logistics, infrastructure, tax and regulatory advantages.

**Railway Transport** - In the light of multimodal development operational length of Moldovan railways is -1153.6 km; broad gauge 1520mm (1142.6 km); narrow gauge 1435mm (11.0 km);

This event gives to Railway Moldova (as a supplier of intermodal services) recommendations, actions and tools on how it can pave the way for a continuously stable growth of combined transport in CEI countries involving railway with the aim to achieving modal shift for the benefit of the freight market and society

The Meeting offered an additional opportunity to review the work and activity of different states regional processes, initiatives and organizations in the priority domains, such as contribution of the multi-modal transport to the regional economic cohesion among CEI countries, providing a platform for identifying synergies among them.

### RECOMMENDATIONS and GUIDELINES for further activity of the CEI Transport Focal Points Network

The participants to the Meeting agreed that Multimodal Transport is the most efficient way of handling a regional or international door to door transportation operation.

This is so because Multimodal Transport allows joint efforts in order to facilitate trade between the countries combining in one voyage the specific advantages of each mode, such as the flexibility of road haulage, the larger capacity of railways and the lower costs of water transportation in the best possible fashion.

Multimodal Transport also offers the shipper the possibility to rely on a single counterpart, the multimodal transport operator who is the architect of the entire journey and only responsible party from pickup to delivery, rather than having to deal with each and every modal specialist of the transport chain.

Multimodal Transport requires: a thorough control over all the steps involved in regional/international transport, including multiple storage and handling stages; this means extensive use of information technologies and carrier's networks and regulatory frameworks from Initiative region, which can provide freedom to plan and operate to carriers and reliable liability regimes to customers.

On top of that CEI Multimodal transport needs to be competitive in markets where unimodal operations not only have been there for a long time but also are simpler to handle and, most of time, more cost effective.

The participants agreed that taking into account the common priorities and interconnected sectoral domains of activity in the transport and trade issues, CEI member states should direct their efforts towards achievement of the coordination goal through concrete projects and results.

Following the discussions held during the Chişinău Mining of the CEI Ministers of Transport several important **recommendations for CEI Transport Focal Points Network were identified:**

- Resetting the subject in the Agenda of priorities of the CEI Transport Focal Points;
- Elaboration of a Study about multi modal transport in the CEI states with concrete recommendations on modalities of transportation, for interested parts dealing with trade and transport.
- Promoting projects on enhancing Partnership between the Public and Private sectors (PPP) in the region;
- Exploring and exchanging best practices of the Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in multi-modal transport
- Establishing linkages between trade associations from CEI countries, in the trade transport and transit areas;
- Establishing border links and institution of business linkages between associations dealing with trade and transport in the CEI countries;
- Special attention in this respect should be paid to ecological problems.

The Moldovan Presidency expressed the hope that the deliberations of the Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Transport on Multimodal Transport, held on July 3 2008, in Chisinau, and its conclusions and recommendations would lead to concrete actions aimed at overcoming the impediments that overshadowed multimodal transportation and consequently hampered trade facilitation in the CEI region.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE  
MOLDOVAN PRESIDENCY



## **CONCLUSIONS OF THE MOLDOVAN PRESIDENCY ON THE ROUNDTABLE OF THE CEI MINISTERS OF THE ECONOMIC SECTORS**

Chisinau, 8 October 2008

The Meeting of the CEI Ministers of the Economic Sectors was hosted in Chisinau on 8 October 2008 by the Moldovan Presidency of the Central European Initiative (CEI).

The Roundtable was attended by 71 participants from 17 CEI Member States and 10 Delegations representing International Financial Institutions and International Organisations. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Igor DODON, First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economy and Trade of the Republic of Moldova.

The Ministers briefed all the participants on the macroeconomic performance of their countries and their involvement in the cooperation within the framework of the CEI. Furthermore, they offered an extensive outline of the economic reforms and their proposals in order to enhance the CEI activities in this domain. Mr. Iurie MUNTEAN, Deputy Minister of Economy delivered the speech on behalf of the Republic of Moldova. He mentioned that one of the main priorities of the CEI Moldovan Presidency throughout the year was to strengthen ties and promote closer links between the EU and the non – EU member countries of the CEI.

In this context, Moldova has taken considerable steps towards the implementation of reforms leading to the development of private sector activities, with special emphasis on the development of Small and Medium Enterprises, the improvement of the investment climate and the competitiveness of the country. The Delegates stressed that the CEI has become a strategic partner since it provides a unique multilateral forum for Member States. Moreover, they called for a renovated and long-lasting commitment to the cooperation promoted by the CEI at the economic and political levels.

All participants agreed on the need to solve frozen conflicts in the region and overcome the economic disparities among Member States since economic instability and insecurity greatly influence the economic performance of the region as a whole. In this respect, participants called for a greater commitment towards efforts to achieve the long-term goals of economic development and sustainable growth. The meeting was held against the backdrop of a serious financial and banking crisis that is hitting European and global economies on an unprecedented scale. Participants noted that the disruptions of the world financial markets should serve as a reason for all Member States to agree on a set of common objectives and to take joint action in order to overcome the grappling effects of the crisis and regain the confidence of the citizens.



The Official Delegations acknowledged that economic and political cooperation within the framework of the CEI offers the unique opportunity to all member countries to build a strong partnership. It is thanks to its mandate that the CEI can continue to help transition countries in Central and eastern Europe in their effort to integrate further with the European Union (EU).

The Ministers agreed on the vital role of investment in the support of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as a means of securing lasting stability to the economy and urged CEI Member States to take joint action in order to enhance development measures for the SMEs that have proved to be a strategic factor when coping with globalization challenges, such as climate change, limited energy sources and sustainable development.

Much emphasis was put on the impact of sustained economic growth on the environment. Here, all the Official Delegations called for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in energy-intensive industries and stressed the need to increase the use of renewable energy sources and the promotion of waste recycling. The Ministers emphasized the increasing role of the Energy sector in the future of the CEI member states and the need for improving energy infrastructures as a means of improving energy security throughout the region. Increasing the share of renewable energy resources therefore represents a challenge, particularly in the light of ambitious EU targets in this field.

Participants noted that the European Neighbourhood Policy has proved to be an essential instrument for:

- Stimulating reforms
- Strengthening cooperation
- Contributing to a greater prosperity in our neighbourhood and thereby
- Fostering stability and human security

The Official Delegations welcomed the significant progress that Moldova has made over the last year by moving ahead on its ambitious reform agenda based on the EU-Moldova ENP Action Plan and have welcomed Moldova's renewed commitment to strengthen its partnership with the European Union.

International organisations as well as donor's countries reaffirmed that the external aid offered to the Republic of Moldova positively contributed to the sustainable development of the country. The CEI Moldovan Presidency expressed the wish that the ideas set out during the meeting are put into practice by the CEI in order to fulfil the Initiative's mission as an important actor in the international diplomatic relations as well as for the Republic of Moldova to attain its main goal of furthering European Integration.



## CONCLUSIONS OF THE MOLDOVAN PRESIDENCY ON THE MEETING OF THE CEI MINISTERS OF TOURISM

Chisinau, 10 October 2008

On behalf of the Moldovan Presidency to the Central European Initiative (CEI), a Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Tourism was convened on 10 October 2008, in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova.

The Meeting was attended by a number of delegations of the CEI Member States, representatives of the CEI Executive Secretariat and Project Secretariat, local experts. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Artur COZMA, Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Moldova.

The Agenda of the Meeting included subjects of common interest for the CEI Member States and for the whole region. The Meeting that aimed to discuss the issue of **“Tourism and Regional Development: New Directions, Challenges and Opportunities”**, was held with open and constructive discussions, during which important ideas, views and conclusions on the contribution of the regional cooperation on development of the tourism, wine tourism – new opportunity for CEI regional development, sustainable development of tourism and climate change, cultural diversity and solidarity, a new form of regional cooperation in tourism, competitive agenda: innovation, climate change and other topical issues.

At this important meeting, the Moldovan Presidency was able to present the opportunity of developing the **“Wine Culture Tourism Route”** project, which aims to facilitate the relationship between the wine, culture, and tourism sectors, set out wine cultural tourism routes, set up a cultural portal to enable participating countries to communicate, and generate exchanges of goods and services on routes, events and festivals based on long-lasting partnerships in order to create revenue which will ensure the sustainability of the routes beyond the pilot project. This project will set out a list of terms and norms governing the wine route which is not only commercial but highly intercultural dialogue between CEI Member States. It will produce the principles for a charter, which will direct activity, and it will encourage partnerships and networks.

The Meeting offered an additional opportunity to review the work and activity of different states regional processes, initiatives and organizations in the priority domains, such as contribution of the tourism development, tourism policy, to the regional economic cohesion and integration among CEI countries, providing a platform for identifying synergies among them.

It was mentioned that the tourism and regional development are closely linked. Tourism policy, which is a tool for economic development and job creation, is becoming an instrument for territorial development and for enhancing and preserving an area's heritage.

In many regions, the tourism industry is one of the greatest sources of economic growth and job creation. Tourism, through active promotion policies, can also become a tool for integrating less developed regions or giving them equal access to the fruits of growth.

### RECOMMENDATIONS and GUIDELINES for further activity of the CEI Tourism Focal Points Network

One of the first major challenges present at this event consists of setting up mechanisms to improve the competitiveness and quality of tourism at regional and local levels in order to ensure the sustainable and balanced development of tourism at national levels, improve the industry's performance and make tourism areas more competitive at regional, national and international levels. A second challenge consists of reconciling local tourism development with the preservation and renewal of tourism resources.

National policy can do much, but it must be based on regional development strategies that focus on more targeted approaches. Governments are increasingly seeking to devise appropriate strategies that make it possible to enhance the value of natural and cultural resources, while at the same time preserving them and ensuring sustainable economic development.

Tourism is a useful territorial development tool provided that it is based on planning and viable strategies for promoting the balanced development of the area, in which tourism will not necessarily become the predominant activity.

It was agreed that tourism development provides attractive opportunities for a number of providers of goods and services, especially in rural areas. It also helps to finance the infrastructure necessary for the economic development of an area and can give it a distinctive image and identity that will benefit all its economic activities.

It is generally recognized in the tourism world that successful destinations are those where

a partnership has been built up between the public and private sectors. Partnership may however need to extend beyond marketing and into strategic planning / development issues. It may also need to develop a more effective two way process to ensure that the balance of risk does not seem to lie disproportionately on any side – public or private.

Key aspects of a sustainable tourism policy include land use; management of the physical environment; conservation of natural and cultural heritage sites; development of market led products; and investment in human resources.

The participants were agreed that taking into account the common priorities in the tourism field, CEI member states should direct their efforts towards achievement of the coordination goal through concrete projects and results.

During of this important meeting of the CEI Ministers of Tourism were **identified several important recommendations for CEI Tourism Focal Points Network:**

- A greater co-ordination of regional tourism attractions and activities;
- The development and co-ordination of activities should be re-enforced at local and regional levels. Specific resources should be committed to strategic planning, and the provision of product development supports.
- Promote projects to enhance Partnership between the Public and Private sectors (PPP) in the region;
- Exploring and exchange of the best practices of the Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in tourism field;
- Any research on the impact of tourism should be disaggregated on a regional basis and should feed into regional tourism strategies;
- More strategic decisions on planning and investment in regional attractions and infrastructure for the best regional outcome;
- Identification of recommended tourism development strategies for rural areas.

The Moldovan Presidency expressed the hope that the deliberations of the Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Tourism, held on 10 October 2008, in Chisinau, and its conclusions and recommendations would lead to concrete actions and programmes in the CEI region.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE  
MOLDOVAN PRESIDENCY



## CONCLUSIONS OF THE MOLDOVAN PRESIDENCY ON THE MEETING OF THE CEI MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE

Chisinau, 23 October 2008

Under the auspices of the Moldovan Presidency to the Central European Initiative (CEI), a Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Agriculture was convened on 23 October 2008, in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova.

The Meeting was attended by the vast majority of the CEI Member States as well as by the representatives of the CEI Project Secretariat, the European Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The meeting was chaired by Mr. Anatolie GORODENCO, Minister of Agriculture and Food Industry of the Republic of Moldova.

The Meeting included subjects of the common interest for the CEI Member States and for the whole region and was convened under a common motto **“Countries’ Practices in Sustainable Agriculture Development. Agriculture for Development”**. The meeting was held in an open and constructive atmosphere and the discussions concentrated on issues such as the importance of sustainable agriculture for economic development of CEI countries, challenges in reaching sustainable development in agriculture, ways and means of achieving an “Agriculture for Development” desideratum, and needs assessment for technical assistance in implementing joint regional projects.

At the meeting, the Moldovan Presidency presented policy documents in the agricultural sector reflecting on such issues as measures necessary in the post-calamity situations, agricultural integrationist tendencies, food security and the domestic support in agriculture, as well as stability and investment policies.

The Meeting was used by the country delegations for outlining their strategies and approaches in reaching sustainable development as well as for sharing best practices in this area. During the discussions, several challenges that the CEI countries are currently facing were examined. These included issues such as food safety and food security, development of and increasing living standards in rural areas, and adjusting sanitary and phytosanitary legislation to European standards. On top of it, concerns related to soaring food prices and global financial crisis were brought up by many delegations and the necessity to invest in agriculture was indicated in this context as a key to stimulating more efficient supply and fighting food inflation.



Another important aspect raised at the Meeting concerned overcoming negative effects of global warming on agriculture. With regards to this, countries expressed views on possible common strategies and specific actions to be taken to minimize negative effects of climate change.

In addition, investing in organic agriculture and the development of biofuels sector were mentioned several times. The organic farming is seen by many CEI member states as an important pillar in ensuring sustainability in agriculture. Importantly, a number of countries from the region have already gained significant expertise in this field and they continue to invest in organic products, which are greatly demanded on European markets and worldwide. At the same time, Governments' support and incentives that would encourage and allow farmers to specialize in organic farming were still highly needed in several CEI countries.

When it comes to the expansion of biofuels sector, it was underlined that though being one of reasons of raising food prices, the sector could offer new jobs and thus create new income opportunities in rural areas. It could also contribute to a fight against climate change and ensure energy for the future.

With respect to the need of increasing agricultural outputs, it was underlined that ensuring long-term food security can be achieved only with substantial public investments in agriculture and rural infrastructures and by modernising production systems. In this context, the countries, along with International Organisations and International Financial Institutions, including FAO, UNDP, IFAD, EBRD, the World Bank and the European Commission, must work together to invest in sustainable, market based solutions to food security.

Once again, participants underlined the significance of cooperation between ministries of the CEI member states and the importance of establishing direct contacts among specialist, in particular with regard to the transfer of technologies, promotion of innovations, and exchange of best practices and know-how.

It was concluded that there remains a lot to be done in the region in order to further develop this crucial part of our economies and livelihoods, while at the same time, a strong agriculture sector could become a powerful engine for economic growth for many CEI countries.

Finally, it must be noted that in addition to CEI Ministers or their representatives the Meeting brought around the table CEI Focal Points on Sustainable Agriculture – a Network of experts who replaced a CEI Working Group on Agriculture during a recent process of CEI “repositioning”.

Last but not least, it is expected that the next meeting of the CEI Ministers of Agriculture would take place in Romania under the upcoming 2009 Romanian Presidency in the CEI – as announced in Chişinău by the Romanian Agriculture Minister Mr. **Dacian Cioloş**.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS and GUIDELINES** **for further activity of the CEI Network of Focal Points on Sustainable Agriculture**

Following the discussions held during the Chişinău meeting of the CEI Ministers of Agriculture, the following **recommendations for CEI Member States and the CEI Network of Focal Points on Sustainable Agriculture** were identified:

- To ensure that all CEI member states nominate their representatives to the Network of Focal Points on Sustainable Agriculture so that it can serve as a real network of experts within the CEI region;
- To enable more frequent contacts among members of the Network;
- To use the Network of Focal Points to exchange experience and best practices on applied policies, national strategies and programmes related to agriculture sector. In particular to use the Network to initiate Technical Assistance projects in favour of non-EU CEI member states, in accordance with their needs and by means of CEI funding instruments (e.g. the CEI Know-how Exchange Programme);
- To strengthen regional and cross-border cooperation in the areas of common interest, such as prevention and control of pests and animal diseases, protection of water resources, protection of biodiversity, and sustainable management;
- To develop regional projects and to promote joint initiatives of the CEI with International Organisations and IFIs (FAO, EU, EBRD, Bioversity International, CGIAR, EFI, etc.);
- To assess the needs of each CEI country in achieving the desideratum "Agriculture for development";
- To identify common areas for cooperation among CEI countries that would have a positive impact on agricultural development;

The Moldovan Presidency expressed the hope that the deliberations of the Meeting of the CEI Ministers of Agriculture, held on 23 October 2008, in Chisinau, and its conclusions and recommendations would lead to concrete actions aimed at ensuring the sustainable development of agriculture for the overall economic development of CEI countries.



International Conference in the framework of the  
Moldovan Presidency of the Central European Initiative

### **"STRENGTHENING COOPERATION TOWARDS A KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY IN CEI REGION"**

October 24, 2008, Chișinău, Republic of Moldova

#### **Conclusions & recommendations**

As a result of the recent repositioning of the CEI structure in November 2007, at the CEI Summit of Heads of Government in Sofia, Bulgaria, a new system of networks of focal points was created. In this context, the event was organized with the aim to strengthen the role of the focal points in fostering regional cooperation, in the fields of Science & Technology and Information Society, towards a sustainable development of a knowledge-based society in the CEI region.

The sessions of the Conference focused on 2 key topics: development of knowledge-based society in the CEI region: identifying new forms of cooperation and EU Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) as an opportunity to improve international cooperation in S&T and Information Society. Also, the event included a working session, intended at exchanging experience and enhancing the cooperation activities within the CEI region in the fields of S&T and Information Society, by creating an opportunity for networking, collaboration, sharing of information and building of reliable relationships between the scientific communities of our countries.

Following the presentations and discussions held during the sessions mentioned above, the participants:

1. Noticed that the particular structure of the Central European Initiative, comprised of 9 EU and 9 non-EU Member Countries, gives an advantage compared to other regional initiatives. In this way, each non-EU member state can benefit from a privileged relationship with a EU member state through the Know-how Exchange Programme, in terms of coaching towards developing further capacities for better integration into the European Research Area;
2. Agreed that the lack of interaction and communication between CEI focal points was noticeable in its first year of existence, a need of implementation of some interaction mechanisms is needed;
3. Acknowledged that the Trieste-based Lead Institutions are very important in offering a research, innovative and educational environment for the development of human capital in the region and scientific capacities of the countries in the region;
4. Noted that the topics of interest and the problems faced are similar across the CEI region and that great benefit could be obtained from exchanges of best practices, joint actions for regional cooperation, horizontal support activities with considerable regional relevance and other actions which require cooperative efforts;

5. Consented that special attention must be placed on the involvement of young researchers in the regional circulation of talents and on creating frameworks for the use of experience acquired abroad for the development of their countries of origin, in the long run.

The participants acknowledged that a specific comprehensive programme of actions related to the activity of the networks of focal points is necessary. In conclusion, the participants asked Central European Initiative, to consider the following recommendations in supporting the activity of the CEI networks of focal points, with respect to:

1. Implementation of interaction mechanisms between the focal points, intensify the exchange of information, profiles of interested institutions and research groups in their countries to collaborate with their counterparts in other CEI countries;
2. Reinforcing research cooperation agreements between their institutions and promote establishing new frameworks for cooperation;
3. Raising awareness of the CEI opportunities for cooperation and funding and encourage the building of relationships between scientific communities in the region, while CEI member states should create premises for intensifying the mobility among its states;
4. Identifying centers of excellence in the region and promote them widely, as well as take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Trieste-based Lead Institutions;
5. Supporting the implementation of feasibility meetings, funded from the CEI Know-how Exchange Programme or CEI Cooperation Fund, with respect of developing further cooperative project proposals to be submitted to other funds, especially the Seventh Framework Programme;
6. Facilitating the procedures for financial reporting system of the beneficiaries of CEI funding, to prevent delays in delivering of final payments and, consequently, loss of interest for CEI funding instruments in the future;
7. Establishing closer links between the CEI networks of focal points and the networks of FP7 National Contact Points in the region, organize joint information days and trainings.

The participants to the Conference agreed on the importance of meetings between the networks of focal points and convene that regular meetings should take place every year in the country of the CEI Presidency.



## **PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE PARLIAMENTARY DIMENSION OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE**

Chisinau, 18 November 2008

### **Final document**

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Central European Initiative held its annual meeting in Chisinau on 18 November 2008. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Valeriu Guma, Head of the Moldovan Parliamentary Delegation to the Central European Initiative, representing the Moldovan CEI Presidency.

The meeting was attended by national delegations representing the parliaments of Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine. The meeting was also attended by the Deputy Secretary General of the CEI Executive Secretariat.

The meeting was addressed by H.E. Mr. Marian Lupu – Chairman of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova; Mr. Valeriu Guma – Head of the Moldovan Delegation to the CEI PD; Mr. Bogdan Pascu - Head of the Romanian Delegation to the CEI PD, Chamber of Deputies; Mr. Mykola Melenevsky – Deputy Secretary General of the Executive Secretariat of the Central European Initiative; Mr. Kalman Mizsei – EU Special Representative for the Republic of Moldova; Mr. Vlad Cubreacov - Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Policy and European Integration of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova; Mr. Dumitru Țîra - Chairman of the Committee of National Coordinators of CEI, Head of the Department for Regional Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova; Mr. Péter Sárdi – component leader in the Twinning Project, State Secretary, Head of Office for Foreign Relations, Hungarian National Assembly; Mr. Igor Boțan – Executive Director, Association for Participatory Democracy, Republic of Moldova.



### The Parliamentary Assembly of the Central European Initiative

reiterating the main CEI objective of building a new Europe, without dividing lines, and including all states of the Continent into a single area of political, economic and cultural development,

considering the increasing scope of common interests for cooperation among the CEI Member States,

acknowledging the positive consequences of the EU enlargement process for stability, economic growth and sustainable development in the entire CEI region,

expressing its conviction that a clear European perspective offered to the CEI non-EU Member States is a powerful incentive for accelerating structural reforms necessary for a closer relation with the EU,

underlying the importance of better coordination with other regional actors, avoiding overlapping and making full use of all the instruments of regional cohesion and solidarity,

having regard to the previous documents adopted by the CEI Parliamentary Dimension,

taking into account the upcoming CEI Heads of Government meeting,

- **agreed** that the entire region is moving forward on a path of democratization, political stability and economic progress,
- **reaffirmed** that the CEI, as a privileged regional forum for dialogue and cooperation, can make an important and concrete contribution to the consolidation of peace and stability on the European Continent,
- **welcomed** the growing recognition of the CEI regional ownership at European level,
- **called** to support the EU aspirations of the CEI non-EU member states in order to gradually bring together all the countries of the region as member states of the Union,
- **stressed** that the CEI parliamentary cooperation has its own important role in promoting democratic values and European standards at national and international levels, achieving sustainable economic growth, accelerating structural reforms, increasing stability, security and well-being for the entire region,
- **supported** the intention of Governments to further focus on the promotion of CEI-EU joint projects within European programmes, in particular involving both EU and non-EU CEI Member States related,
- **stressed** the significance of the CEI Co-operation Fund for strengthening ties among the CEI countries and supported planned increase of this Fund in 2009 as well as encouraged National Governments to consider increasing their financial involvement into other CEI projects, in particular Know-how Exchange Programme and Special Fund for Climate and Environment Protection,
- **welcomed** the progress of the CEI non-EU Member States in the process of reforms aimed at achieving the EU standards,
- **agreed** that CEI PD will continue to support, within its mandate, the accession of EU aspirants among the CEI Member States,

- **emphasized** the need for further developing the partnership relations among the parliaments in the CEI region,
- **noted** with satisfaction the improved cooperation with the South East European Cooperation Process, Regional Cooperation Council and other regional actors,
- **underlined** the importance of the repositioning of the CEI and emphasized the need to institutionalize a Permanent Secretariat of the CEI Parliamentary Dimension, subjecting the creation of the Permanent Secretariat to the approval on the part of Parliaments and the willingness on the part of all member countries to support the funding of the project in line with their own specific capabilities,
- **encouraged** the Parliaments of the CEI EU Member States to take appropriate steps in order to upgrade CEI - EC relationship and to establish a permanent high-level dialogue between CEI and EC,
- **took note** of the annexed Resolution of the CEI-PD General Committee on Economic Affairs adopted by the members present at the voting during the Committee meeting in Prague, on 11 June 2008, chaired by Mr. Bogdan Pascu,
- **agreed** upon the growing importance of Education for Sustainable Development and called the CEI Member States to support all the initiatives aimed at the promotion of Education for Sustainable Development,
- **expressed** gratitude to the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova for the excellent organization of the events and warm hospitality offered during the Moldovan Presidency,
- **extended** best wishes to the forthcoming Romanian CEI Presidency.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE  
MOLDOVAN PRESIDENCY



## **GENERAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS OF THE CEI - PARLIAMENTARY DIMENSION**

Prague, 11-12 June 2008

### **Resolution**

The CEI-PD GCEA meeting about “The Future of Nuclear Energy in Europe” was held on June 11<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> in Prague. The meeting was chaired by Bogdan Pascu, Chairperson of the General Committee on Economic Affairs. The topic of the meeting followed up on the GCEA meeting held on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in Minsk and also the GCEA programme discussion that took place on November 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 in Sofia.

The meeting was attended by members of national delegations representing the parliaments of Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine (Hungary was represented at the level of secretary). The meeting was also attended by the Deputy Secretary General of the CEI Executive Secretariat.

The meeting was addressed by Mr Přemysl Sobotka – President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, Mr Tomáš Hüner – Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, Mr Petr Krs – Deputy Chairman for Management and Technical Support of the State Office for Nuclear Safety, Czech Republic, Mr Vladimír Hlavinka – Member of Board of Directors and Chief Production Officer of ČEZ, a.s. (Czech Energetic Company), Mr Lubor Žežula – Project Manager, Nuclear Safety and Power Division of the Nuclear Research Institute Řež plc.

### The CEI-PD General Committee on Economic Affairs

- is fully aware of the growing need of energy for further economic development of CEI member states. GDP growth is in general closely linked with increasing energy consumption. Responsible politicians should be able to forecast the growing need of energy as well as to ensure its production from environment friendly and realistic resources.
- does not overestimate the potential of renewable resources and registers quickly decreasing reserves of fossil fuels. One should rely neither on the import of energy nor on a discovery of a new miraculous energy resource. It is thus necessary that nuclear energy, which has positive impact on the environment and diversifying effect on energy suppliers, is incorporated in the energy mix.
- recognizes the right of each state to develop peaceful nuclear energy in compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- appeals to CEI member states to inform general public about the nuclear energy production, including the safety and security of nuclear power plants, on the basis of technical arguments, scientific findings, in the context of the whole energy policy and including the experience from Chernobyl accident.
- encourages CEI member states to support education and training of nuclear energy experts and proposes that CEI member states evaluate the possibility to create a special fund for training nuclear plants personnel. Due to the urgency of the problem GCEA proposes to organize an expert conference on the development, construction and safety of nuclear power plants.
- recognizing that the irradiated fuel, its potential use and final disposal as well as the possible proliferation are all matters of serious concern, appeals to the CEI member states to engage in common discussions in order to find the optimal solutions and to promote the highest standards of nuclear safety and security.
- proposes to non-EU member states to establish closer relations with EU in the field of nuclear energy.

Adopted unanimously in Prague, June 11, 2008.



## **FINAL DECLARATION**

### **VIII CEI YOUTH FORUM „STRENGTHENING YOUTH THROUGH MOBILITY”**

Chisinau, 24 November 2008

We, representatives of the youth delegations from the Central European Initiative Member States, who gathered in Chisinau (Moldova) on the occasion of the 8th CEI Youth Forum on "Strengthening Youth through Mobility" (24 November 2008), to discuss the challenges and perspectives of youth mobility on the way to its extension and development, adopted the following declaration:

Convinced that young people are attached to unanimously endorsed values based on peace, tolerance, solidarity, equality and multiculturalism;

Aware of the fact that there is a unanimous wish to create a European common policy to promote free movement, universal fundamental rights, access to social rights, regardless of gender, background, ethnic group, religion, political views etc;

Considering that the participation of young people, respect for their individuality, and the idea of education for democratic and European citizenship should be undisputed;

Aware of the fact that the key to fostering intercultural dialogue and to fighting stereotypes, helping the foundation of a European identity with mobility

Recognising that mobility is becoming increasingly widespread, is essential in order to build a positive and encouraging environment for youth development;

Considering that mobility is viewed as an asset to professional life, because it makes reference to jobseekers' capacity to adapt to different realities and their will to reach out to others;

Underlining that the knowledge resulting from this attitude provides opportunities for people's personal, cultural, and human enrichment;

Taking into account that economically speaking, in terms of growth and social progress, youth mobility plays a major role in encouraging peace and stability;

Aware of the challenges and the perspectives of mobility development and its role in promoting and consolidating youth in Europe and that the establishment of an adequate system of mobility would assure the development of education partnerships all around Europe;



Confident that an enhanced mobility would empower young people by strengthening their participation in social, economic and political life;

Strongly convinced that the measures suggested in the Declaration will encourage cooperation and partnership among CEI Member States and other countries worldwide;

We suggest that the following steps be taken:

- make it easier for citizens from both EU and non EU CEI Member States to fully take advantage of the benefits of European integration and the European Single Market;
- enhance and promote the mobility of youth and those working with youth since work experience abroad and exchange of good practices is of the utmost importance resulting from globalisation and internationalisation of work and knowledge;
- encourage mobility via exchange programmes, practical training, knowledge transfer etc. between and among EU Member States and CEI non EU Member States;
- enhance the opportunities and empowerment of young people regardless of country of origin gender, background, ethnic group, religion, political views etc. especially to support the participation of young people with fewer opportunities through mobility;
- facilitate access to European education and mobility programmes and strengthen Community action programmes such as the Life Long Learning Programme (LLP) and the Youth in Action Programme;
- improve transparency of education systems in Europe and mutual recognition of diplomas and diploma supplements as well as promote the European credit transfer system;
- encourage the provision of user-friendly information to give European citizens a clearer overview of the existing legal framework. This is an important step towards making them aware of their rights and of the advantages they can benefit from;
- support know-how and exchange on the labour market as a result of mobility experience through the creation of databases;
- promote the diffusion of Europass for the rapid exchange of information between work supply and demand by creating a common database managing personal data such as CVs, academic data, research;
- develop co-management structures for dealing with issues concerning youth mobility at local, regional, national and international level helping and promoting youth trans boundary organisations;
- expand intercultural exchange multilingualism and develop greater sensitivity to the increased diversity in the world and the challenges and freedom of movement opportunities;
- give educational institutions the chance to provide better facilities for teaching and learning foreign languages and for taking part in European educational exchange and mobility programmes;
- bridge possible obstacles linked to healthcare, accommodation, transportation, part-time jobs for all young people;
- develop better accessibility to mobility programmes for disabled and disadvantaged young people;

- simplify mobility administrative procedures, e.g. visa applications in order to encourage mobility of youth on all levels (In EU, outside of EU);
- efforts should be made in order to establish a special status for young people involved in education (formal or non formal and informal), training, capacity building, exchange, volunteering or taking part in representative activities and statutory meetings;
- Youth work visa should be released more easily in order to enable young people active in formation or civil society to travel unhindered throughout Europe;
- the governments of the CEI Member States should be in constant touch with the members of the European Parliament as well as with the representatives of the European Commission in charge of mobility issues to raise its concerns and views on mobility;
- they should also make concrete inputs and amendments to the legislation concerning youth and mobility with the aim to enable young people to travel for the purpose of training, education, volunteering, exchange or representative and statutory meetings.





## MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE

Chisinau, 27 November 2008

### Conclusions

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Central European Initiative (CEI) held their annual meeting in Chisinau on 27 November 2008.

The meeting was hosted by H.E. Mr. Andrei Stratan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, which holds the CEI Presidency for 2008. It was attended by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary and Macedonia, their deputies from Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Montenegro, the State Secretaries from Italy, Poland, Serbia and Romania, as well as other representatives such as the CEI National Coordinator from Austria, the Ambassadors in the Republic of Moldova from Belarus and Slovakia, the Director General at the MFA from Slovenia and a Special Representative of the President from Ukraine. The Secretary General of the CEI - Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES) also participated in the meeting.

The discussion focused on the role of CEI in Enhancing Regional Cooperation and EU Integration.

The Ministers applauded the CEI's commitment to the countries remaining outside of the EU, by assisting them in their reforms in political, economic and social spheres in order to be in line with those of the EU countries. In this context, there was a common praise for the role of the CEI as an important and comprehensive forum for regional cooperation in support of European integration. The success of the CEI in doing so was based in its unique model consisting in a number of instruments and mechanisms for cooperation, which were continuously developed. These instruments aimed at assisting individual Member States (MS) in fostering their own priority objectives in the process of European integration, while harmonizing them with the European standards and values through a dynamic and project-oriented regional cooperation.

In this regard, many speakers supported and commended the functional character of the CEI, focused on project implementation. They agreed that the project component has been one of the strongest assets of the CEI. The focused instruments such as the CEI Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP) and the CEI Special Fund for Climate and Environment Protection Fund (CEI Climate Fund) and their full use, in order to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience among EU and non-EU CEI countries, made the CEI better fitted and equipped than a year ago to implement its principles and objectives. Thus, the Ministers spelled out a full sup-

port to the functioning of these instruments. At the same time, the Ministers underlined that the multilateral CEI Cooperation Activities, which best increase cohesion of the whole CEI Region in the fields of common interest, should be preserved and further strengthened.

The efforts of the CEI - Executive Secretariat to establish closer links and institutional ties with the European Institutions were particularly welcomed by the Ministers. They underlined that, since the geographical area covered by the CEI was larger than any of the four main regional policies of the EU, it was essential for the CEI to engage itself in working relationship with some of the recently established regional settings, e.g. with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) in the Western Balkans area, and with the Black Sea Synergy in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries. Moreover, the Ministers thought that the emerging Eastern Partnership with its multilateral scope might also offer possibilities for the CEI. The CEI, with its own experience and know-how of Eastern Europe, could significantly complement the EU's work on the Eastern Dimension, in particular during the Czech EU Presidency, which has decided to put an important emphasis on this matter.

The Ministers also believed that, in these endeavours, the EU might need the support from the various regional platforms, including the CEI. Indeed, further keeping of the EC's attention and fostering further involvement in EU funded projects was a must and was considered vital for the performance of the CEI in the future, particularly for its revitalization as a mostly project-oriented organisation. They assessed the initial results in this field as particularly promising. Namely, the CEI's involvement in larger EU projects, with the aim to help disseminate European best practice and experience in the entire CEI region, especially in the non-EU MS, was considered by the Ministers as an added value both for the CEI and the EU. Therefore, the fact that the CEI succeeded to obtain a role of Lead partner in certain projects was much appreciated.

The Ministers expressed satisfaction that the cooperation with the other regional structures was increasing and gaining momentum. Thus, the CEI's dedication to maintaining a permanent contact and constructive dialogue, in particular with the RCC, the BSEC, the All and the SEECF, was highly praised and should be further pursued.

The Ministers stressed the need for a practical harmonization of the Networks of Focal Points and a further enhancement of their work in order to give more impetus at expert level for the continuing of a project-oriented cooperation. However, they considered the Networks as a current weak point of the CEI, which should be vigorously improved.

At the end, the Ministers declared themselves strongly committed to strengthen gradually the financial background of the overall CEI operational activities. Even if rather symbolic, they considered that an increase of the CEI Cooperation Fund was a first important step in the right direction. In this context, they decided to extend the CEI Co-operation Fund to the year 2009, increasing, in principle, the annual contributions to the CEI Co-operation Fund by 20%, while retaining the present scale of contributions.

The Ministers also decided to renew the mandate of the Deputy Secretary General of the CEI - Executive Secretariat from Ukraine, Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Mykola Melenevskyi, for a three year period, i.e. from February 2009 to February 2012.

The Ministers expressed their gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Moldova for the excellent organization of the Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the CEI Member States in Chisinau. They also expressed their best wishes to the incoming Romanian CEI Presidency.



## **MEETING OF THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE**

Chisinau, 28 November 2008

### **Final Document**

1. The Heads of Government of the Member States of the Central European Initiative (CEI) held their annual Summit Meeting in Chisinau on 28 November 2008. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mrs. Zinaida Greceanîi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, holding the CEI Presidency for the current year.
2. The meeting was attended by the Heads of Government or their representatives of Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

Representatives of the European Union French Presidency, the European Commission, the Adriatic Ionian Initiative, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the Council of Europe, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Regional Cooperation Council, the South East European Cooperation Process, the United Nations Development Programme for the Republic of Moldova as well as the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe attended the meeting in their capacity of special guests.

The meeting was also attended by the Secretary General of the Central European Initiative Executive Secretariat and the Head of the Central European Initiative Project Secretariat as well as by a representative of the CEI Parliamentary Assembly.

### **The Situation in the Region**

3. Upon invitation of the Moldovan CEI Presidency, the CEI Heads of Government expressed their views on the overall theme "Cooperation for European Future".
4. The Heads of Government reviewed the current situation within the CEI region. They welcomed the continuous progress of countries in the region in moving closer to the European Union.
5. The Heads of Government welcomed the "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2008-2009" of November 2008 which reiterates the EU's commitment to the European perspective of the Western Balkans and confirms the continuation of the EU Enlargement Process, along with the Thessaloniki Agenda and the Salzburg Declaration.



6. The Heads of Government acknowledged the Enlargement Strategy which contains the Road Map for reaching the final stage of accession negotiations with Croatia. They welcomed it as an instrument to accelerate Croatia's accession to the EU and as an additional sign of EU's commitment to the membership perspective of the Western Balkans. They also acknowledged the continuous efforts of Macedonia.
7. The Heads of Government welcomed the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreements (SAAs) with Bosnia and Herzegovina and with Serbia. They also welcomed with satisfaction the implementation of the Interim Agreements with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, and expressed hope that the Interim Agreement with Serbia will enter into force soon. They expressed hope that the ratification of the SAA with Albania will be completed in the nearest future. They welcomed the ongoing ratification processes with Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina and they expect that the ratification process of the SAA with Serbia will start soon.
8. The Heads of Government commended the progressively closer links between the EU and Ukraine and their desire to strengthen and widen relations in an innovative way. In particular, they welcomed the considerable progress made in the course of the year in negotiations on an Association Agreement and expressed their hope of moving the reform and approximation process forward, thus contributing to gradual economic integration and deepening of political association.
9. The Heads of Government acknowledged the progress in the implementation of the Action Plan by the Republic of Moldova and stressed the need for further deepening the cooperation by signing a new upgraded and ambitious agreement adjusted to the country's European aspirations.
10. The Heads of Government welcomed the entering into force of the Visa Facilitation Agreements with a number of countries in the Region, signed with the EU. They expressed their hope that the ongoing dialogue between the EU and the individual countries will lead to visa liberalisation, on the basis of the Roadmaps presented this year. They also welcomed the beginning of a dialogue on visa liberalisation between the EU and the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, encouraging both countries to fulfil the necessary criteria.
11. The Heads of Government also encouraged the countries of the Western Balkans to consider moving towards a visa free regime in the region.
12. The Heads of Government welcomed the ongoing work on the preparation of the EU's Eastern Partnership and consider it as an important instrument enabling, alongside with other outreaching initiatives like the Black Sea Synergy, closer political and economic cooperation between the EU and the East European and Caucasus countries as well as supporting reforms in these regions. They considered that it should also bring added value to the bilateral relations of the EU, getting the relevant countries with clear European aspirations closer to the EU.
13. The Heads of Government underlined the importance of the Mobility Partnership which will promote a better framework for legal mobility, providing more effective ways of integration and protection for migrants, and, at the same time reducing the risks of illegal migration and trafficking in human beings, while matching labour market demands. This initiative fully respects Member States' competences in this field and takes into account the different labour market situations in the countries of the region.

14. The Heads of Government stressed the important role the EC is playing in stabilizing the region and bringing the countries closer to the EU. They noted that the EC was giving particular priority to the strengthening of the rule of law, good governance, judicial and administrative reform and the development of civil society. In this context, they welcomed all available policy instruments, which the EU was mobilizing to support the achievement of these goals. The Heads of Government welcomed the initiatives of EU Member States to introduce Twinning Programmes in the region. Through these programmes, legislative bodies of these EU Member States will provide assistance in developing, modernizing and creating the necessary conditions for the legislative bodies of the target countries to adjust their legal system more comprehensively to the European standards and norms.
15. The Heads of Government recognized that good neighbourly relations between CEI Member States and regional cooperation remain of high importance in moving closer to the EU.
16. The Heads of Government also noted the continuous interest of the EU in the implementation of the Treaty establishing the Energy Community in SEE, as well as in the steps towards admission of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in this Community.
17. The Heads of Government commended the results of the Slovenian EU Presidency of the first half of the year, which dedicated special attention to the non-EU CEI Member States.
18. The Heads of Government took note of the developments related to NATO enlargement and the decision taken in this respect at the Bucharest Summit. They acknowledged the ongoing ratification of the Accession Protocols for Albania and Croatia. They also acknowledged that Macedonia will join them soon. They took note of the recent developments between the NATO and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro and of their further progress in the framework of the Intensified Dialogue as well as the recent activities of Serbia in order to actively participate in the PfP programme. They took note of the recent intensification of the dialogue and cooperation between Ukraine and the Alliance.

#### The Role of the CEI

19. The Heads of Government reiterated the importance of the CEI role in bringing non-EU CEI Member States closer to the fulfilment of their EU aspirations. They considered the role of regional actors such as the CEI as particularly helpful in strengthening cooperation among its countries within and outside of the EU. In this context, they expressed their appreciation for the role played by the CEI in fostering political dialogue and cooperation among its Member States and praised its contribution to supporting these goals.
20. The Heads of Government acknowledged with satisfaction the efforts of the Moldovan CEI Presidency and the CEI-ES in strengthening the relationship between the CEI and the European Commission and their initial positive results. They encouraged the incoming Romanian CEI Presidency and subsequent Presidencies to continue these efforts. They also appreciated the participation of the European Commission in the CEI Summit of the Heads of Government and looked forward to its participation in the CEI high-level events on a regular basis.
21. The Heads of Government welcomed the development of cooperation with other regional initiatives, processes and organizations active in the CEI area and underlined the importance of the principle of regional cooperation with like-minded European processes and regional initiatives.

22. The Heads of Government commended the Government of the Republic of Moldova for its dynamic leadership during its CEI Presidency with the organisation of numerous events. In this context, the Heads of Government expressed their satisfaction with the special events organised by the Republic of Moldova as CEI Presidency, such as the Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Meetings of the Ministers of Transport, of Agriculture and of Tourism, the Round Table of the CEI Ministers of Economy and International Scientific Conference "Strengthening Cooperation towards a Knowledge-based Society in CEI Region".
23. The Heads of Government also evaluated positively the organisation and the results of the 11th CEI Summit Economic Forum (SEF08) which took place under the overall theme "Moldova and the CEI Region: Bridging East and West". It attracted more than 800 participants from 45 countries, from both the public and private sectors as well as Representatives of International Organisations and International Financial Institutions. The Heads of Government considered the Roundtable of the Ministers of the Economic Sectors, organised in the context of the SEF08, as a good opportunity for exchanging views on the economic development and the results achieved in the reform processes in the CEI Region.
24. The Heads of Government took note with appreciation of the Meeting of the CEI Parliamentary Assembly whose final document was brought to their attention. This document reflects the continuing commitment of the Parliamentary Dimension to cooperation in the framework of the CEI and in particular their engagement in enhancing cooperation between the CEI and the EU.
25. The Heads of Government received a message from the participants of the 8th CEI Youth Forum whose declaration on "Strengthening Youth through Mobility" was brought to their attention.
26. The Heads of Government expressed their satisfaction about the successful accomplishment of the Repositioning of the CEI in accordance with the decisions of the CEI Summit in Sofia in 2007. They agreed that the CEI should continue to carry out its activities based on the bottom-up approach, stemming from the national priorities of the Member States. The Heads of Government acknowledged that national priorities should provide a foundation for the whole CEI architecture.  
The Heads of Government strongly believe that the realization of CEI projects according to the priorities, as defined in the Plan of Action for 2007-2009, will increase efficiency of cooperation within the CEI and facilitate sustainable economic development of the whole region.
27. The Heads of Government stressed that increasing financial contributions of the CEI Member States was well-timed and appropriate. An enhanced scale of allocations to the CEI budget will increase the scope of operational activities within the Initiative.
28. The Heads of Government took note with appreciation of the growing funding potential of the CEI, due to an increase of the CEI Co-operation Fund, the Italian contribution provided to the CEI Trust Fund at the EBRD, the Austrian contribution to the Know-how Exchange Programme, and the Czech contribution to the CEI Special Fund for Climate and Environment Protection. They also recognized that the participation of the CEI in the EU programmes, not only as partner, but also as Lead partner, was a positive development and paved the way for a new phase of cooperation between the CEI and the EC.

29. The Heads of Government commended the Government of the Republic of Moldova for the continuous efforts during its CEI Presidency as well as for the excellent organisation and warm hospitality offered during the Summit Meeting of the Heads of Government of the Member States of the Central European Initiative in Chisinau on 28 November 2008.
30. The Heads of Government also extended their best wishes to the incoming Romanian CEI Presidency to whom they pledged their full cooperation and support.

#### Decision

31. On the Adoption of the Annual Report 2008 of the Secretary General of the CEI Executive Secretariat.



## Moldovan CEI Presidency Secretariat

### **Dumitru TIRA**

Director

Regional Cooperation Directorate  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration  
Republic of Moldova, Chisinau  
tel./ fax: + 373 22 578 257  
e-mail: [dumitru.tira@mfa.md](mailto:dumitru.tira@mfa.md)

### **Carina BLANOVSCI**

First Secretary

Regional Cooperation Directorate  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration  
Republic of Moldova, Chisinau  
str. 31 august 1989, 80  
Tel. +373 22 578 240  
fax. +373 22 232 320  
e-mail: [carina.blanovschi@mfa.md](mailto:carina.blanovschi@mfa.md)

### **Liliana GUTAN**

First Secretary

Regional Cooperation Directorate  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration  
Republic of Moldova, Chisinau  
str. 31 august 1989, 80  
tel. +373 22 578 240  
fax. +373 22 232 320  
e-mail: [liliana.gutan@mfa.md](mailto:liliana.gutan@mfa.md)

### **Svetlana ARSENI**

First Secretary

Regional Cooperation Directorate  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration  
Republic of Moldova, Chisinau  
str. 31 august 1989, 80  
tel. +373 22 578 303  
fax. +373 22 232 320  
e-mail: [svetlana.arseni@mfa.md](mailto:svetlana.arseni@mfa.md)

### **Alexandru MOCANU**

Third Secretary

Regional Cooperation Directorate  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration  
Republic of Moldova, Chisinau  
str. 31 august 1989, 80  
tel. +373 22 578 330  
fax. +373 22 232 320  
e-mail: [alexandru.mocanu@mfa.md](mailto:alexandru.mocanu@mfa.md)



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## Republic of Moldova - ideal location for your business. Basic facts about Republic of Moldova

The Republic of Moldova is a country, favorably located in south-eastern Europe, which covers the area of 34.000 square kilometers. Being situated at a distance of 300 km from Black Sea, Moldova extends over 350 km from North to the South and 150 km from West to the East. The country has an access to the Black Sea through the Danube River and Giurgiulesti Port, which is the southerly point of the Republic of Moldova. Moldova borders two countries: Ukraine on the East and Romania on the West. Due to Romania's and Bulgarian's adherence to European Union in 2007, Moldova became a close neighbor to EU.

Moldova, neighbour country with the European Union, a bridge between the East and the West market. The free trade agreements and the evasion of double taxation bedded agreements regarding the promotion and the investments protection, offered advantages for the market acceleration from the European Union and Community of Independent States, are guest a part of the profits offered by the investors.



**General information:** The Republic of Moldova lies in the central part of Europe, Moldova occupies an area of 33,843.5 km<sup>2</sup>, a small country between two big neighbours Romania and Ukraine.

**Policy:** Foreground objectives established by the Government of the Republic of Moldova are directed to the national security insurance, economical development, insurance of the fundamental liberties and the citizens rights. The progress obtained in the modernization on the democratic institutions according to the European standards and the success registered to the level of a well promoted policy,

well based government and democratic institutions consolidation directed to insure a decent live to the population of the country and to attend them with qualitative services, all this proves that the Republic of Moldova is a country oriented to the European Community.

**External policy:** Beginning with 2003 year the European Integration of the Republic of Moldova was declared as a strategical option of the internal and external politics.

The EU-Moldova political dialogue and cooperation considerably progressed since 2005, when the ENP Action Plan was signed. In October 2008 the EU Council adopted a set of Conclusions on Moldova that marked a political decision to start soon the negotiations on a new ambitious EU-Moldova Agreement with the objective to establishing a deep and comprehensive free trade area, as well as reiterating the perspective for a visa free travel for Moldovan citizens. The European integration remains the key goal for the EU-Moldova relations."

**Macroeconomics statistics:** From 2000 till now days, the macroeconomic situation of the Republic of Moldova was definite as having balanced positive economic tendencies, it's acceleration was generated by the internal (drought, 2007) and external crisis (natural gas and wine price advance imported in Russia, 2006). In the first quarter of the 2008 year was registered an increase tendency of the principal indexes of the country development. According to the official data, the macroeconomic consolidation is still growing, the industrial production growth in the first 3 month of the 2008 year was 107,7% towards to the analogical period of the previous year, the investment growth in the fixed capital – 130,1% and GDP growth -103,0%.

The macroeconomic indicators growth was determined by the private area development, stabile market situation, the foreign investment flux in the national economy, banking sector stability, qualified work force, the stimulation of the real sector development of the national economy by the Government and the geographic position of the country. The external trade development to the European Union market and the export growth contributed to the maintenance of the positive growth.



## Republic of Moldova

**Area:**

total: 33 846 square km  
land: 33 009 square km  
water: 837 square km

**Land use:**

agricultural lands: 58%  
forest: 13%  
populated area: 9%  
other: 20%

**Largest cities**

- 1 Chisinau 712,218
- 2 Tiraspol 158,069
- 3 Balti 127,561
- 4 Tighina 97,027
- 5 Cahul 35,481
- 6 Ungheni 35,157
- 7 Soroca 28,407
- 8 Orhei 25,680

**Languages:**

Moldovan  
Russian  
Gagauz  
(a Turkish dialect)

**Climate:**

Temperate continental  
(warm summers and mild winters)

**Population:**

**Total 4,144,647**  
Population 3,589,300  
Transnistria 555,347

**Ethnic groups:**

Moldovan 64 %  
Ukrainian 14 %  
Russian 13 %  
Gagauz 2.5 %  
Romanian 1.4 %  
Bulgarian 1.7 %  
Other 0.4 %

**Literacy:**

total population:  
99.1%  
male: 99.6%,  
female: 98.7%



