Joint Declaration on
Eastern Partnership Justice and Home Affairs

The Ministers responsible for Justice and Home Affairs of the EU Member States, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine and representatives of the European Commission (hereinafter "the Participants") met in Luxembourg on 7 and 8 October 2013 to discuss current cooperation and future prospects in the area of justice and home affairs.

The Participants,

Recalling their commitment to the principles of international law and to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as stated in the Eastern Partnership summit declarations;

Welcoming the progress of cooperation in justice and home affairs within the Eastern Partnership and the results achieved by the respective panels under Multilateral Platform 1 on Democracy, Good Governance and Stability;

Recognising that for the benefit of both citizens and their countries, more needs to be done, in particular to strengthen the judiciary and law enforcement;

Reiterating the importance of justice sector reform and efforts to prevent and fight corruption, in order to strengthen the rule of law;

__________________________

1 Integrated border management; Fight against corruption; Improved functioning of the judiciary; Migration and asylum
Acknowledging the role of civil society in the process of reform in the area of justice and home affairs;

Stating their commitment to continue consolidating, streamlining and complementing bilateral and multilateral JHA cooperation within the framework of the Eastern Partnership,

Stressed the importance of continuing work, including with the Council of Europe, to ensure that all judicial systems meet European standards, in order to achieve an independent, efficient, impartial, accountable and effective judiciary and guarantee access to justice;

increasing judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, including by encouraging accession to the relevant Council of Europe and Hague Conference multilateral conventions and by increasing regional cooperation;

making progress with efforts to tackle illicit drugs and psychoactive substances, taking a balanced and evidence-based approach, by strengthening cooperation on demand and supply reduction, by exchanging strategic and technical information and by continuing dialogue on drugs between the EU and Eastern European partner countries;

speeding up efforts to bring data protection systems into line with European standards, including implementation of the relevant Council of Europe standards;

taking forward work within the Eastern Partnership to further develop and implement tools and measures aimed at preventing and fighting corruption, such as internal control mechanisms, measures on conflict of interest management, disclosure and verification of assets, transparency of public expenditure, activities addressing corruption in public procurement, and involving civil society in independent monitoring of the effectiveness of anti-corruption policy;

strengthening further activities aimed at combating organised and transnational crime, notably by identifying and addressing common threats, focusing on criminal phenomena prioritised within the framework of the EU policy cycle, and providing Europol with relevant information and intelligence where appropriate;

enhancing cooperation on preventing and fighting cybercrime through the effective application of the common standards laid down in the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, active participation in the Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online, the improvement of law enforcement capabilities and effective cooperation with the private sector;
continuing their cooperation on migration and mobility, in particular through continuous and effective implementation of visa facilitation and readmission agreements, implementation of visa liberalisation action plans, and cooperation under mobility partnerships, including promoting legal migration and preventing irregular migration and trafficking in human beings;

continuing cooperation on implementing all necessary measures, including increased capacity-building measures, exchanging information, training and sharing best practice within the bilateral and multilateral frameworks of Eastern Partnership cooperation and with the EU agencies relevant for the area of justice and home affairs.

Welcoming the proven value of the first Eastern Partnership Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial meeting as a forum for deeper multilateral political reflection on justice and home affairs matters, the Participants have undertaken to meet regularly to monitor progress and give political steer to their cooperation on this important thematic dimension of Eastern Partnership cooperation.