



## **STATEMENT of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on Anti-corruption measures in EaP countries**

Corruption weakens public institutions and the rule of law, damages the competition and private investment climate, jeopardizes development and fosters instability.

Impunity of public officials, lack of rule of law, opaque governance systems continue to hamper political and economic reforms in countries of EaP. Corruption in the government and business is pervasive, and a growing lack of accountability enables bureaucrats to act with impunity.

From year to year countries of EaP continue to rank poorly on Transparency International Corruption Perception Index. Another corruption measurement tool of Transparency International, Global Corruption Barometer 2013, shows that in too many countries the representatives of public institutions are not trusted.

All EaP governments need to take the cry against corruption from their citizens seriously and *respond with concrete actions to elevate transparency and accountability*. Politicians need to regain trust by proving the legality of their incomes and assets and reveal potential conflict of interest.

The *EU should in turn serve as a model for transparent and accountable governance*, both at member state and EU institution level. A first step would be applying a principled approach in EU relations with EaP countries, during their *involvement in election monitoring and other democratic processes*. The EU should also *ensure that support to civil society goes to independent watchdogs* and support them in the exercise of their political rights. Given the importance of Association Agreements with EaP countries, the *EU should make the negotiations around these agreements open to the public* and actively communicated to allow for informed debates and discussions at country level. Finally, the *EU should establish a ban for corrupt officials*, similar to the Magnitsky list introduced in the US.

The key thematic areas for joint actions of EU and EaP stakeholders in 2014-2015 should include:

- *Budget transparency*: monitoring of EU funding spent by EaP governments;
- *Immunity - not Impunity*: clear define the notion of immunity for MPs' and other high level officials' that does not lead to impunity;
- *Whistle blowers' protection*: develop, adopt and implement the legislation on whistle blowing and whistle blowers protection;
- *Income and asset declarations of MPs, judges, public officials*: ensure access to information, cross-check by civil society and independent authorities, apply sanctions to law breakers;
- *Off-shore companies*: Greater EaP and EU member states efforts should be directed towards tackling the issue of off-shore companies used for corrupt activities;
- *Political corruption*: Ensure transparency of political and election campaign funding, build the capacity of civil society to hold their elected politicians to account and demand integrity and transparency of the political process.