

**STATEMENT of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on the formation of civil society platforms in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine**

13 February 2015

The Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum welcomes the efforts of the Ukrainian Side of the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform (CSP) to facilitate the full establishment of the bilateral EU-Ukraine CSP. After negotiations and agreement with all relevant stakeholders in Ukraine, the Ukrainian side of the CSP has consensually been established as a joint body of 26 representatives from all civil society interest groups. The ultimate design of the Ukrainian side includes the National coordinator of the EaP CSF who represents Eastern Partnership's largest and most representative civil society platform to date.

We approve the consistent efforts that the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is now making to establish the bilateral EU-Ukraine CSP in the nearest future. While the EESC has proposed a list of its 9 representatives, the EaP CSF is delegating 3 legitimate and democratically appointed representatives to the EU side of the CSP to complete the formation and to launch the bilateral EU-Ukraine CSP as soon as possible. We suggest that the representatives from the EaP CSF be the Forum's current or former members that represent the EU Member States and have demonstrated their consistent ability to connect across the EaP civil societies and facilitate reforms.

The Steering Committee believes that the AA CSPs in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine should include representatives from the EaP CSF on the EU side of the AA CSPs, while in national sides of the AA CSPs representatives from the EaP CSF should constitute their main part. This will help ensure the widest representation of civil societies, guarantee legitimacy of the CSPs in the respective states and provide additional support to the Association Agreements implementation.