



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**NOTE**

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From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	18683/11
Subject :	Declaration on the Establishment of a European Endowment for Democracy

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1. The Polish Presidency and the EEAS presented delegations with a draft Declaration on the Establishment of a European Endowment for Democracy in response to the Conclusions of the Council (Foreign Affairs) of 20 June<sup>1</sup> and 1 December 2011<sup>2</sup> respectively.
2. On the basis of Member States' comments and suggestions, the Polish Presidency revised the draft, which was further adjusted and agreed to by COREPER on 15 December 2011. This text appears in the annex to this note.

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 11486/2/11 REV 2

<sup>2</sup> Doc. 17944/11

**DECLARATION ON  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY**

THE SIGNATORIES,

Considering that democracy is a universal value that includes respect for human rights as enshrined in public international law, in particular the International Bill of Human Rights together with other relevant UN, international and regional texts;

considering that democracy is a constituent part of European history, and considering the values endorsed by the European Union referred to in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, and the principles that shall guide the European Union's action on the international scene contained in Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union;

recognising the historic importance and the political momentum generated by the democratic change and the democratic aspirations of the peoples in the European Neighbourhood;

recognising the need to support democratisation in countries and societies that are going through a period of transition or that are struggling for their democratic aspirations;

recognising that human rights and democracy are inextricably connected and keeping in mind the Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations dated November 17, 2009, stating i.a. that democracy should ensure the rights of all and that the ability of men and women to participate on equal terms in political life and in decision-making is a prerequisite of genuine democracy;

Recalling that the Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions dated June 20<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 have expressed political support for the creation of a European Endowment for Democracy to support deep and sustainable democracy, with a view to further discussions on its modalities.

DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

A European Endowment for Democracy, hereinafter referred to as "the Endowment" shall be created. The Endowment shall have legal personality under the law of one of the Member States and shall operate as an autonomous International Trust Fund. The seat of the Endowment shall be located in one of the Member States.

The objective of the Endowment will be to foster and encourage "deep and sustainable democracy" in transition countries and in societies struggling for democratisation, with initial, although not exclusive focus, on the European Neighbourhood.

The Endowment will function primarily as a grant-awarding institution. The Endowment will deliver its support through direct support to beneficiaries and in cooperation with relevant partners, i.a. civil society organizations, political foundations and the European Network of Political Foundations (ENoP) and its members.

The beneficiaries of the Endowment, which will be supported in a non-partisan manner, may include i.a.: pro-democratic movements and other pro-democratic actors in favour of a pluralistic multiparty system on democratic ground; social movements and actors; civil society organisations; young leaders (including through a European invitation programme for young people who have shown interest in democratisation), independent media and journalists (including bloggers, social media activists, etc), non-governmental institutions, including foundations and educational institutions functioning also in exile; provided that all the beneficiaries adhere to core democratic values, and human rights as well as subscribe to principles of non-violence.

The Endowment will have a lean structure, with low operational costs in relation to its activities and rules enabling it to take and implement decisions flexibly and rapidly. Its financing should be transparent, while preserving the confidentiality of beneficiaries, where appropriate. It should engage in regular consultations with relevant EU institutions and other actors, i.a. political foundations, as appropriate, avoid duplication and ensure synergy, complementarity and added-value to EU instruments, in particular European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, Instrument for Stability, and European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument as well as to member states bilateral instruments. Evaluation of the Endowment and its activities shall be ensured on a regular basis.

The Endowment may comprise two organs: a Board of Governors and an Executive Committee. All Member States of the EU together with relevant EU institutions will be invited to participate in the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors shall have oversight over the Endowment's activities and ensure consistency with EU policies.

The Statutes of the Endowment shall establish the details of the rules of functioning, the competence of the Endowment's organs and all other necessary provisions for the Endowment to deliver its mandate in the most agile and flexible and efficient manner.

The Endowment will be financed through the voluntary contributions from the Member States and may apply for funding from the EU budget or other relevant sources. Funds received from the EU budget shall be used in full conformity with the EU financial rules and regulations.

## FINAL PROVISIONS

The Member States, together with representatives from the European Parliament, the European Commission and the High Representative will establish a working group to agree on the binding Statutes of the Endowment and other relevant documents as soon as possible to ensure that the Endowment can start operating in the shortest possible delay.

The Member States agree that the present Declaration may be open for signature by EFTA and other countries upon specific invitation, providing they are willing to agree to the principles governing the establishment of the Endowment and to contribute financially to the Endowment. The statutes of the Endowment shall also specify the terms under which other third parties can provide financial support.

Done in Brussels,

For the Member States:

For the EU Institutions:

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