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CONFERENCE OF THE BALTIC ASSEMBLY WITH PARTICIPATION OF
THE BENELUX PARLIAMENT, GUAM PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY,
NORDIC COUNCIL AND VISEGRAD COUNTRIES

TOGETHER IN STRENGTHENING
OUR COOPERATION

9 JUNE, 2017, RIGA, LATVIA
SAEIMA, BALTIC HALL, JĒKABA STR. 6/8

Friday, 9 June

08:30 – 09:00 **Registration of the participants**
Jēkaba str. 6/8

09:00 – 09:20 **Opening of the Conference**

- **H.E. Ms Ināra Mūrniece**, Speaker of the Saeima
- **Prof Aadu Must**, President of the Baltic Assembly

09:20 – 11:15 **SESSION I: EU relations with Eastern neighbours and their perspectives**

Since its adoption in 2009, the Eastern Partnership policy has furthered EU relations with six countries in the Eastern neighbourhood. The 2015 Riga Eastern Partnership Summit set goals and priorities for cooperation, as well as a framework for implementing reforms in the partner countries. In return, the EU and its member states supported the partners in their efforts to develop their societies and countries. In November, the fifth Eastern Partnership Summit will take place in Brussels. The Eastern Partnership is a single platform for cooperation with the six countries of the Eastern neighbourhood. At the same time, it allows partner countries to choose their level of engagement with the EU. What kind of supporting role should the Parliaments play to help the partners in attaining sustainable results? How should the GUAM countries proceed further with their reform process to form a more prosperous and developed region? What can we expect to achieve at the fifth Eastern Partnership Summit?

Chaired by: **Prof Aadu Must**, President of the Baltic Assembly

Keynote Speakers:

- **Ms Zanda Kalniņa-Lukaševica**, Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia
- **Mr Ojārs Ēriks-Kalniņš**, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Saeima

Speakers:

- **Mr Emmet Tuohy**, Senior Research Fellow of the Estonian Center of Eastern Partnership
- **Mr Anne Mulder**, Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Member of the Dutch delegation to the Benelux
- **Mr Kakhaber Kutchava**, President of the GUAM Parliamentary Assembly

- **Mr Volodymyr Arieu**, Chair of the Subcommittee on Interparliamentary Liaison Office, Bilateral and Multilateral Relations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
- **Ms Britt Lundberg**, President of the Nordic Council
- **Mr Konrad Glebocki**, Vice Chair of the European Union Affairs Committee, Sejm of the Republic of Poland
- **Mr Attila Tilki**, Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Hungarian National Assembly

Debates

11:15 – 11:45 Coffee break

11:45 – 13:15 **SESSION II: People-to-people contacts - the pulse of the Eastern Partnership**

One of the cornerstones of the Eastern Partnership is developing people-to-people contacts and increasing mobility. It brings citizens of the EU and its partner countries closer to one another as well as creates new opportunities for exchange of culture, knowledge, experience, and skills. Business-to-business contacts, visa liberalisation, youth, education and culture exchange programs are the provided tools. The next step is to make these tools more effective and better known across the Eastern Partnership region. What are the best practices accumulated in the Parliaments to stimulate and to improve people-to-people contacts and exchange of expertise? What are the ways to make these opportunities more visible, approachable and used by the partner countries?

Chaired by: **Prof Jānis Vucāns**, Vice President of the Baltic Assembly

Keynote Speaker:

- **Mr Vassilis Maragos**, Head of Unit of the Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus & Eastern Partnership, European Commission

Speakers:

- **Mr Darius Skusevičius**, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania
- **Mr André Postema**, President of the Benelux Parliament
- **Ms Sofio Katsarava**, Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Parliament of Georgia
- **Mr Volodymyr Arieu**, Chair of the Subcommittee on Interparliamentary Liaison Office, Bilateral and Multilateral Relations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
- **Mr Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson**, Member of the Presidium of the Nordic Council, Vice Chair of the Icelandic delegation
- **Ms Mónica Bartos**, Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Hungarian National Assembly

Debates

13:15 **Concluding remarks**

- **Prof Aadu Must**, President of the Baltic Assembly
- **Mr Kakhaber Kutchava**, President of the GUAM Parliamentary Assembly