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EPP adopts position paper on EU-Russia relations; Elmar Brok: "relations have potential for improvement"

Brussels, 17 February 2011



The EPP adopted [a position paper on EU-Russia relations](#). This paper was approved by **the EPP Foreign Ministers** and then introduced to the Political Assembly by the EPP foreign policy coordinator and MEP **Elmar Brok**.

"Russia is our largest immediate neighbour, a permanent member of the UN Security Council with the right of veto, and an important regional and global power. Therefore the European Union should be aware that international challenges such as Iran, the

Middle East, terrorism, the financial crisis, and climate change will not be overcome without a responsible and cooperative Russia. Also energy security is a central issue we have to cooperate on. At the same time, vested interests and weak democratic institutions of Russia are questions of concern and legal and political certainty.

"The reality is that EU-Russia relations have potential for improvement (i.e. energy, climate change). It is time for both sides to refresh their relations by coming closer together and by engaging in dialogue and discussions. In the meanwhile, Russia should realize European standards and values and respect the EU conditions for mutually successful cooperation.

"To achieve a balanced and stable partnership with Russia based on common values the EU should, as one of Russia's biggest trading partners, employ its economic weight. The partnership for modernization and the future partnership and cooperation agreement (PCA) are right steps in this direction. But more importantly, the EU Member States have to speak with one voice towards Russia by using the new foreign policy instruments provided by the Lisbon Treaty such as the High Representative/Vice President of the Commission (HR/VP) and the European External Action Service.

"Therefore, the European People's Party as the largest political force in Europe, has now published [a position paper on EU-Russia relations](#), which aims to contribute to a new and enhanced strategic partnership between the EU and Russia," Elmar Brok stated.

Note to editors:

The EPP is the largest and most influential European-level political party of the centre right, which currently includes 75 member-parties from 39 countries, the Presidents of the Commission, Council, and Parliament, 14 EU and 6 non-EU heads of state and

government, 13 members of the European Commission and the largest Group in the European Parliament.

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