

## **European Parliament**

### **VERKHOVNA RADA OF UKRAINE**

#### **Jean Monnet Dialogue |**

Conclusions adopted during the Ninth Jean Monnet Dialogue

Turya Pasika, Zakarpattia Region, Ukraine  
November 10-12, 2023

We, the leadership of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the heads and delegated representatives of parliamentary factions and groups of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the 9th convocation, have gathered for the Jean Monnet Dialogue for Peace and Democracy for the ninth time since October 2016, and for the third time during the tenure of the 9th convocation of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. This was the second in-person meeting since the beginning of the unprovoked full-scale military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

The fact that this meeting took place under such extraordinary circumstances underscores our unwavering and firm commitment to working together, regardless of political differences, to seek consensus, build trust, and strengthen the unity of democratic forces in Ukraine. Our goal is also to activate the necessary reform processes within the framework of the Jean Monnet Dialogue.

We sincerely welcome the positive and objective report of the European Commission on Ukraine's aspirations for EU membership and appreciate the recognition of the many efforts that Ukraine has already undertaken to meet the membership criteria of the European Union. We also acknowledge that there is still a significant amount of work ahead, requiring extraordinary efforts and effective cooperation among all branches of government.

We fully understand that a successful path toward the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance must be built on the broadest possible political consensus and public support. Therefore, the leadership, factions, and groups of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine will make concrete efforts to set an example of unity and inclusivity among all democratic forces in Parliament. We also believe that active and systematic involvement of civil society organizations in Ukraine's accession process to the EU and NATO is crucial and will contribute to better informing all segments of society about EU and NATO-related matters. The Verkhovna Rada should strive to create appropriate mechanisms for cooperation with civil society organizations.

We acknowledge that transparency and accountability of Ukraine's democratic institutions, especially the Verkhovna Rada, are of critical importance for Ukraine's successful accession to both the European Union and NATO. We agreed that the Verkhovna Rada should establish institutional and procedural frameworks that align with these goals and ensure compliance with the numerous obligations arising from the EU enlargement process and NATO accession. This includes strengthening the administrative capacity of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada through the adoption of a law on parliamentary service.

We have also taken into account best practices from previous EU enlargements, which demonstrate that inclusive parliamentary structures and consensus-based processes can enhance Ukraine's aspirations for EU membership. We recognize the importance of timely

and accessible information about the EU enlargement process for all political groups to enable well-informed decision-making and to foster unity and trust both within Parliament and in interactions with the executive branch. Parliamentary information resources should work towards ensuring political pluralism (proportional representation of parliamentary factions and groups) and freedom of speech.

As participants of the Dialogue, we express our commitment to achieving constructive solutions aimed at improving the efficiency of the legislative process in the second reading by optimizing and reducing the number of amendments and proposals submitted before and during the consideration of bills, as well as limiting the use of tools that block the adoption of such legislation.

We recognize the growing importance of parliamentary diplomacy in realizing Ukraine's aspirations for EU membership and NATO accession and, in particular, in fulfilling the functions assigned to the Verkhovna Rada. Political dialogue and exchanges of experience on EU-related issues with parliamentarians from EU countries and the Euro-Atlantic space are highly beneficial for all parties and contribute to a better understanding of the issues on the agenda.

Parliamentary diplomacy should aim for an inclusive approach, ensuring proportional representation in parliamentary assemblies, international forums, and interparliamentary diplomatic events. At the same time, parliamentary diplomacy must be carried out exclusively to protect Ukraine's independence and sovereignty, defend its interests and citizens, restore territorial integrity within the internationally recognized borders of 1991, and promote Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. It should strengthen Ukraine's image as a country committed to democracy even in the most challenging times.

Recognizing the deepening cooperation between the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the European Parliament, and in anticipation of a future document on expanding cooperation between the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada and the President of the European Parliament, participants of the Dialogue express their readiness to take an active part in cooperation, particularly in the format of parliamentary observation missions to the European Parliament and staff training programs for the Verkhovna Rada Secretariat.

We also agree to continue the institutional reform of the Verkhovna Rada with renewed vigor, strengthening parliamentary oversight functions, as reflected in the European Commission's report. We aim to reach consensus on the rights of the opposition and the adoption of an ethical code. We believe that timely decisions on these and other reform measures will not only enhance the effectiveness of the Verkhovna Rada but also increase public trust in it.

We are particularly aware of the strain placed on Ukraine's democratic institutions by the unprovoked full-scale military aggression of the Russian Federation. The introduction of martial law is a direct consequence of this aggression.

While the fight against the aggressor continues, democratic institutions—primarily the Verkhovna Rada and its deputies—must continue to fulfill their constitutional duties and make the necessary decisions to ensure Ukraine's military victory and pave the way for EU and NATO membership. We are therefore convinced that at this stage, ensuring the stability of the political system and democratic processes is of paramount importance.

To this end, the leadership of the Verkhovna Rada, parliamentary political leaders, and factions and groups of the 9th convocation commit to refraining from actions that could discredit the Parliament's activities both domestically and internationally. To ensure this stability until the next convocation of the Verkhovna Rada is elected, we have agreed to create mechanisms that will adequately reflect democratically elected parliamentary pluralism within the Verkhovna Rada.

We have also agreed that future free and fair national elections (parliamentary and presidential) should be held after the war ends and martial law is lifted, with sufficient time for preparation (at least six months after the end of martial law). These elections should be conducted based on the existing Electoral Code while preserving key elements of national and local electoral systems, including restoring provisions that ensure fair competition among candidates within party lists.

We are convinced that future national elections will be of great significance for Ukraine's democratic future and must be held in full compliance with international standards. However, we also acknowledge that due to the war and its consequences, conducting elections will pose unique challenges requiring broad political consensus to be successfully addressed. Therefore, in the next Jean Monnet Dialogue, we will continue discussions on principles that could become the foundation for future elections in Ukraine. Participants of the Dialogue agreed to work on drafting a special law to regulate the specifics of the first post-war elections.

During the exchange of views, we reached a broad consensus on the urgent steps needed to implement institutional reform in the Verkhovna Rada, including:

- Preparing and submitting for consideration by the Conciliation Council of parliamentary factions and groups a proposal to update the Verkhovna Rada's Resolution on measures to implement recommendations for internal reform and strengthening institutional capacity.
- Expediting discussions and adopting the Ethical Code at least in the first reading.
- Ensuring minority representation in the allocation of leadership positions in the Verkhovna Rada's Committee on Freedom of Speech.
- Expediting the adoption of the Law on Parliamentary Service.
- Expanding the Ukrainian Parliament's involvement in EU accession negotiations and cooperation with international financial institutions.
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of the Verkhovna Rada to align national legislation with EU law.

We also reached an understanding on the importance of establishing a legal framework for balancing the roles of the majority and minority in the Ukrainian Parliament in the long term, particularly in distributing leadership positions among committees and parliamentary bodies.