

Declaration of the Countries of the Community of Democratic Choice

(Kyiv, Ukraine, December 2nd, 2005)

We, the countries of the Baltic-Black-Caspian Sea region:

Expressing our adherence to the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Devoted to the ideals and values of democracy and human rights:

Having taken the responsibility of respecting, promoting and strengthening the core democratic principles and practices set forth in the Final Warsaw Declaration: Towards a Community of Democracies:

Consistently caring about the implementation of the Seoul Action Plan of the Community of Democracies, in particular in the sphere of regional cooperation:

Welcoming the creation of the UN Democracy Fund;

Emphasizing the unbreakable interdependence between peace, stability and development, and respect for the ideals of democracy and human rights:

Calling for the respect of all human rights - civil, cultural, economic, political and social, and their maintenance and promotion according to the international documents on human rights:

Feeling a common responsibility for the future and further development of democracy, and for the respect of human rights in the Baltic-Black-Caspian Sea region:

Striving to see Europe without dividing lines, violations of human rights, 'frozen' conflicts, or any spirit of confrontation:

Hereby declare the creation of a **Community of Democratic Choice** as a governmental and non-governmental Forum of cooperation for dialogue, through which the national leaders and representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations of our countries proclaim their intention:

- to cooperate closely towards achieving the common goal of establishing lasting peace, democracy and prosperity in the entire European continent;
- to cooperate for the development and strengthening of democracy, recognizing that different countries and societies within the region of attention of the Community of Democratic Choice are at differing stages of democratic development;
- to support the promotion of human values and standards in order to promote and establish democratic processes and institutions, and to encourage the exchange of experience in the strengthening of democracy and the respect for human rights;
- to assist in the developing of closer links between our governments and societies in different spheres, including in education for democracy;
- to cooperate with institutions and international organizations, civil society and governments in coordinating support to new and emerging democratic societies;
- to provide support for the further economic and social development, including eradication of poverty as the main impeding factor for development and protection of the democratic process;
- to encourage the respect for democracy and human rights and to address the threats to the democratic development of society, which are, among others, corruption, organized crime, money laundering, terrorism in its different forms, the existence of remaining conflicts in Europe and illicit trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings;

- to show an example of respect for democracy and human rights in our countries and to urge the political leaders of those countries on the way to democracy to encourage tolerance and mutual understanding, as well as to promote the respect for pluralism, to counteract ethnic and religious hatred, violence, separatism and other forms of extremism, and to support the development of civil society, non-governmental organizations and independent mass-media;

- to cooperate in all issues related to encouraging the development of a vibrant and stronger democracy, thus strengthening the format of the Community of Democratic Choice.

In proclaiming this Declaration, the countries of the Baltic-Black-Caspian Sea region declare that the Community of Democratic Choice will do its utmost to answer to the natural desire of all States and Societies, of every new generation and every human being to reach higher standards of sustainable development.

We devoutly hope that the far-reaching mission of the Community of Democratic Choice will serve to unite all of the countries of the region in their common efforts to strengthen our regional cooperation, promote democracy and protect human rights. We declare that we will continue our exchange of ideas on democratic transformations at various forums, including the Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership to be launched in Bucharest in Spring 2006, "Baltic and Black Sea Region Summit" in Vilnius in May 2006 and Forum in Tbilisi in Autumn 2006.