

H.E. Mr. Donald Tusk
President
European Council
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175
B-1048 Brussels
Belgium

19 April 2019

Belgrade, Skopje, Tirana, Sarajevo, Prishtina, Podgorica

Dear Mr. President Tusk,

Civil society organisations of the Western Balkans, citizens of our societies, express their hopes and expectations that the European Council will accomplish its promise to set a clear path towards opening the accession negotiations with the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Albania in June 2019, as stated in the Council conclusions on Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process, adopted by the Council on 26 June 2018.

We consider good neighbourly relations as one of the key drivers of consolidation of the Western Balkans and its faster integration in the European Union. We highly appreciate the courage and persistence of the leadership of the Republic of North Macedonia and Greece and the pattern of resolving open bilateral issues set by them. We believe that it will be conducive to the settlement of other disputes in the region bringing stability and European future to all of us.

We are afraid that further postponing of the accession negotiations with the two important Western Balkan Countries would seriously affect the pro-European attitude of the population all over the region and could affect the credibility of the European Union. Moreover, it could discourage political elites in the region to resolve other important bilateral disputes.

Two more candidate countries in the Western Balkans would bring a new energy, stability and hope to the region that suffered a decade of conflicts and two decades in confidence building and developing regional cooperation.

We believe in the project of the European Union, expect its internal reforms to make it even stronger and are ready to contribute to make the EU a real home to all the people of Europe.

Civil Society Organisations of the Western Balkans

Signatories:

1. Academy for Training and Technical Assistance (ATTA), Prizren, Kosovo
2. Agency for Cooperation, Education and Development (ACED), Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina
3. Albanian Institute for International Studies (AIIS)
4. Albanian Media Institute
5. Alliance of Antifascists of Serbia
6. Alliance of Antifascists of Vojvodina
7. Association of Women “Anima”, Djulici, Bosnia and Herzegovina
8. Association Women of the South, Pirot, Serbia
9. Atlantic Council of Serbia
10. Autonomous Women’s Center, Belgrade
11. Balkans Policy Research Group (BPRG), Prishtina
12. Beekeeping Association of Serbia (SPOS)
13. Belgrade Centre for Human Rights
14. Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP)
15. Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE)
16. Belgrade Open School (BOS)
17. Center for Applied European Studies (CPES), Belgrade
18. Center for Civil Liberties (CEGAS), Podgorica
19. Center for Democracy Foundation, Belgrade
20. Center for Development of Non-Governmental Organizations (CRNVO), Podgorica
21. Center for Foreign Policy (CFP), Belgrade
22. Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CeSID), Belgrade
23. Center for Regionalism, Novi Sad
24. Centre for Civic Education (CCE), Montenegro
25. Centre for Contemporary Politics – European Western Balkans, Belgrade
26. Centre for Public Impact (CPI), Tirana
27. Centre of Modern Skills, Belgrade
28. Citizens Association for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and all forms of gender-based violence “ATINA”, Belgrade
29. Civic Alliance (CA), Montenegro
30. Civic Platform, Belgrade
31. Civil Action Pančevo, Serbia
32. Coalition Margini (Coalition “Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities”), Skopje
33. Cooperation & Development Institute (CDI), Albania
34. CURE Foundation, Sarajevo
35. Equal Opportunities, Belgrade
36. EU Policy Hub, Tirana
37. European Movement in Albania
38. European Movement in Montenegro (EMIM)
39. European Movement in Serbia – Novi Sad
40. European Movement in Serbia (EMinS)
41. European Movement in the Republic of Macedonia (EM-MK)
42. European Policy Centre (CEP), Belgrade

43. European Policy Institute (EPI), Skopje
44. Finance Think – Economic, Research and Policy Institute, Skopje
45. Foreign Policy Initiative BH (FPI BH), Sarajevo
46. Forum 10, Novi Pazar, Serbia
47. Forum of Tuzla Citizens, Bosnia and Herzegovina
48. Foundation Open Society – Macedonia (FOSM)
49. Fund B92, Belgrade
50. Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), Belgrade
51. Gender Alliance for Development Centre (GADC), Albania
52. Group 484, Belgrade
53. Health Education and Research Association (HERA), North Macedonia
54. Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia (HCHRS)
55. Human Rights Action (HRA), Montenegro
56. Humanitarian Law Center (HLC), Belgrade
57. Humanitarian Law Centre Kosovo
58. Institute Alternative (IA), Podgorica
59. Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” – Skopje (IDSCS)
60. Institute for European Affairs, Belgrade
61. Institute for Territorial Economic Development (InTER), Belgrade
62. ISAC Fund (International and Security Affairs Centre), Belgrade
63. Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF)
64. Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC)
65. Link plus, Belgrade
66. Local Community Development Foundation – Stip, North Macedonia
67. Local Democracy Agency (LDA) Central and Southern Serbia, Knjaževac, Serbia
68. National Coalition for Decentralization, Niš, Serbia
69. Nena - Group for Peace and Women's Rights, Leskovac, Serbia
70. Open Centre “Bona Fide”, Pljevlja, Montenegro
71. Open Society Foundation Albania
72. Open Society Foundation Serbia
73. People for Secular Values, Novi Sad, Serbia
74. Politikon Network (PIN), Podgorica
75. Progress-Institute for Social Democracy, Skopje
76. SOS Line for Women and Children Victims of Violence, Vlasotince, Serbia
77. Tolerance of Serbia
78. Transitional Justice, Responsibility and Memory in Bosnia and Herzegovina
79. Urban-In, Novi Pazar, Serbia
80. Women Citizens for Constitutional Reform, Bosnia and Herzegovina
81. Women in Black, Belgrade
82. Women’s Government, Belgrade
83. Women's leadership academy, Belgrade
84. Women's Platform for the Development of Serbia
85. Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) Bosnia and Herzegovina
86. Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) Kosovo
87. Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) Montenegro
88. Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) Serbia

Individual signatories:

1. Ivan Vejvoda, Director - Europe project, Permanent Fellow - Institute of Human Sciences, Vienna
2. Goran Svilanović, Diplomat and politician, independent expert, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Serbia
3. Sonja Lokar, International gender expert, freelance, Slovenia
4. Vesna Pusić, MP, former Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Croatia
5. Fuada Stanković, Professor, University of Novi Sad, Serbia
6. Hedvig Morvai, Director, Strategies and Europe, ERSTE Foundation
7. Željko Jovanović, Director, Roma Initiatives Office – OSF
8. Nadežda Gaće, Editor-in-Chief, New Magazine, Serbia
9. Milica Delević, former Director of the European Integration Office of the Serbian Government, former Assistant Minister for European Integration
10. Spomenka Lazić, Ph.D, Economist, Agency Energofina, Novi Sad, Serbia
11. Nataša Kandić, Project Coordinator, RECOM, Belgrade
12. Vladimir Grečić, Professor, University of Belgrade, Serbia