



*25 Years of Cooperation*  
**GUAM**  
*Chairmanship of the Republic of Moldova*  
• 2022 •

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Programme of the Republic of Moldova's Chairmanship-in-Office  
of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM  
*1 January – 31 December 2022*

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## INTRODUCTION

On 1 January 2022, the Republic of Moldova takes over the annual Chairmanship of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM. This mandate coincides with 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the Presidents of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and the Republic of Moldova laid the foundation of our quadrilateral dialogue. The GUAM format has stood the test of time and continues to provide a valuable framework for fostering friendship and regional cooperation.

At the same time, this mandate is to be carried out at a challenging time for GUAM Member States, a period that continues to be affected by consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. The persistent socio-economic repercussions of the pandemic and increased uncertainty, linked to wider-regional security risks amplify the need for reinforced policy actions and greater ability to provide adapted adequate responses. Therefore, the Republic of Moldova's Chairmanship will pay special attention to activities aimed to strengthen resilience and boost economic opportunities.

Seizing the occasion of 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Chairmanship is committed to further increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and visibility of the GUAM Organization to achieve common goals and progressing on the priority areas set up in the agenda of the organization. In this regard, finalization and adoption of the Vision Paper will bring added value and fresh impetus to the cooperation within GUAM.

Thus, driven by the GUAM shared aspiration to deliver meaningful results for promoting regional stability and economic growth, the Moldovan Chairmanship will build on and ensure continuity of the objectives pursued by previous chairmanships, by promoting the following priorities:

- (1) Strengthening political dialogue
- (2) Deepening sectoral cooperation
- (3) Enhancing cooperation in the GUAM+ format

## **(1) STRENGTHENING POLITICAL DIALOGUE**

Acknowledging that the protracted conflicts in the GUAM area continue to endanger regional and international peace and security, and mindful of their adverse implications on the development of the GUAM Member States, the Chairmanship will continue coordinated efforts aimed at keeping this issue on the agenda of international fora.

In order to undertake further measures for facilitating the interaction of the GUAM Member States within international platforms, such as UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, international organizations in Geneva, the Chairmanship will continue to coordinate joint efforts on issues of mutual interest, particularly in the political and humanitarian spheres, as well as exploring the possibilities for strengthening multilateral cooperation in economic and trade areas. The Republic of Moldova will also continue to follow the practice of political consultations and to undertake further steps to capitalize the potential under the agenda item on political interaction within GUAM, including support and promotion of relevant UNGA resolutions.

By virtue of activities at the inter-parliamentary level, there is an active and structured cooperation between the parliamentarians of the four GUAM Member States, which enables them to have open discussions on various issues of concern to our region. In order to build on that potential, the Chairmanship will further encourage enhanced interparliamentary dialogue both between GUAM Member States as well as with other parliamentary organizations.

Moreover, as Chairmanship-in-office, the Republic of Moldova will endeavor to promote the need to closer coordination of the priority tasks and objectives of the GUAM Organization across its bodies. Stronger coordination among governmental and parliamentary dimensions will be the most effective means of achieving the proactive participation that is essential to successfully meet the challenges ahead.

## **(2) DEEPENING SECTORAL COOPERATION**

During the last 25 years, GUAM has promoted mutually beneficial initiatives in many different spheres, such as trade, economy, transport, tourism, energy, culture, law enforcement and cyber security. Based on this experience, aiming towards strengthening regional resilience and economic development, the primary goal of the Republic of Moldova's efforts as Chairmanship-in-Office will be to give a boost to synergies within GUAM framework by increasing economic links and connectivity among its Member States.

The sectoral cooperation priorities set by the Chairmanship-in-Office in 2022 will focus on capitalizing on the potential of the following areas:

### **I. CONNECTIVITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The experience of the pandemic has highlighted the importance of connectivity for the GUAM region. Enabling connectivity in its various forms accelerates the economic growth potential. It facilitates the exchange of goods, technologies and people-to-people contacts. In this regard, implementation of GUAM flagship initiatives in trade and transport, as well as development of multi-faceted cooperation in other sectors will require proper coordination among GUAM Member States.

Therefore, one of the main priorities of the Moldovan Chairmanship will be aimed at advancing on the **economic agenda** of the organization, namely related to the GUAM Free Trade Zone (FTZ) and the GUAM Transport Corridor (TC).

With regard to the development of a transport corridor aimed at increasing the volume of goods passing through countries the Chairmanship will explore possible modalities to acquire experience and know-how in development and management of transport infrastructure, issues of inter-operability and sustainability that can be applied in implementation of specific regional projects such as the GUAM TC.

With reference to **trade facilitation and customs interconnectivity**, the Chairmanship will give particular priority to strengthening synergies between trade and customs.

Being guided by this goal, the Chairmanship will continue to support the actions undertaken in the framework of the Trade and Transportation Facilitation Program, involving customs administrations, border control authorities and other relevant bodies to ensure smooth inter-institutional cooperation. Given that simplifications in customs procedures and controls will help facilitating the regional trade, the Chairmanship intends to pay particular attention to the implementation of the Protocol of intent on Authorized Economic Operators, which could provide a solid ground for the cooperation in this field to be further build upon.

**Digital transformation** in all spheres of life is unprecedented. Application of modern technologies should be the main drivers behind the development of cooperation in order to ensure modernization and competitiveness of GUAM economies. Therefore, the Chairmanship believes that more effort shall be invested for the implementation of a digital agenda.

## II. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SECURITY

Security challenges, including organized crime, human trafficking, terrorism, require close cooperation between the competent institutions throughout the GUAM region. Coordinated actions within the existing working groups and subgroups will continue to serve as useful tools towards the effective engagement in strengthening law enforcement and security cooperation.

In the context of the pandemic crisis and the changing technological landscape, the need for constant updating in the security cooperation framework is evident. In order to exchange views in this direction, the Chairmanship will suggest the organization of a meeting with experts from Interpol, Europol and SELEC.

## III. MOBILITY AND CROSS-BORDER ISSUES

**Tourism** is among the most affected economic sector by the Covid pandemic. Being a sector with great potential for the GUAM Member States, the Chairmanship will continue to encourage the establishment of cooperation with the World Tourism Organization, by signing the Memorandum of understanding between GUAM and UNWTO. The Moldovan Chairmanship will further support the activities of the working group on tourism in order to build up a common framework for dialogue of governmental structures with all parties concerned and jointly plan actions aimed at promoting joint tourist products.

The activities of the Chairmanship will also be dedicated to **environmental protection** and promotion of eco-friendly approach in our activities, as well as to the development of initiatives based on sustainability and responsible decision-making and innovation that minimizes negative impact and maintains a balance between ecological resilience and economic prosperity.

### **(3) ENHANCING COOPERATION IN THE GUAM+ FORMAT**

The positive experience of cooperation in the “GUAM+” format proves that the implementation of region-wide projects has only accelerated. To keep this trend, particular attention will be invested in maintaining and further developing the existing partnerships, which share fundamental values such as democracy, freedom, human rights, the rule of law, including norms and principles of international law, and market economy.

#### *Japan*

In 2022 we will mark 15 years of GUAM-Japan partnership and 30 years since the establishment of bilateral relations with each member state. Friendly bilateral relationship among all GUAM member states and their excellent individual cooperation with Japan have provided a good platform for GUAM-Japan cooperation which is fruitful and mutually beneficial in various areas.

The Moldovan Chairmanship-in-Office will continue efforts to maintain the high-level dialogue in the GUAM-Japan format and will actively promote the cooperation between GUAM and Japan in line with the “*GUAM-Japan Cooperation Program*” and plead for its further consolidations and promotion.

#### *Israel*

Signing the GUAM-Israel Joint Declaration will provide new opportunities of cooperation in the fields of mutual interest, hence the Chairmanship of the Republic of Moldova will contribute to its prompt signing and initiation of consultations with Israeli partners regarding the implementation of the “*GUAM-Israel Cooperation Program*”.

#### *EU*

Taking into consideration the results of the 6th Eastern Partnership Summit, as well as the intention to develop sectoral cooperation with the EU, in particular in transport sector, the Chairmanship will explore on the possibility of more substantial consultations with the EU institutions aimed at the establishment of a regular consultation format between GUAM and EU.