

MEETING OF THE DELEGATIONS OF THE COMMITTEES ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS OF THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS OF ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA AND POLAND

Molėtai Region, 4-6 September 2011

MEETING CONCLUSIONS

The representatives of the Committees on European Affairs of the national Parliaments of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, met in Molėtai Region on 4-6 September 2011 to exchange views on European Union policy issues of common interest, have arrived at the following conclusions:

Development of the European internal energy market

- *Welcome* the Polish Presidency initiative to continue inter-parliamentary discussions on creation of the internal energy market, aiming at the implementation of ideas, which were expressed in Jerzy Buzek and Jacques Delors' Declaration "Towards European Energy Community";
- *Stress* that an open, transparent, integrated and competitive EU energy market is needed in order to achieve competitive energy prices, security of supply and sustainability by 2015 [as it was decided by the European Council on 4th February 2011];
- *Emphasise* the significant role of BEMIP as a potential and already proven regional platform for consolidation of energy systems of the EU Baltic Sea region. This instrument proved to be significant and beneficial for the mobilisation of common efforts in implementing strategic European internal energy market goals;
- *Acknowledge* the need to strengthen external dimension of EU energy policy and congratulate the Polish Presidency in taking corresponding efforts. Solidarity and coordination mechanism in EU external energy policy should be strengthened and expanded;
- *Stress* the necessity for the third countries to consistently and unconditionally comply with the safety requirements set forth in universally recognised international legal documents when selecting sites, designing, constructing, operating and decommissioning nuclear facilities with prior comprehensive environmental impact assessment;
- *Emphasize* the need to put the external dimension of EU energy policy in a regulatory framework, to implement measures for third countries for imported electricity, and to increase investors' confidence to invest in our region.

Development of the European transport network

- *Consider* the Rail Baltica as a strategic EU Baltic Sea regional project and *reiterate* support for it as a contribution to the development of integrated European transport network and strengthening of the European internal market;
- *Call on* the national governments to keep on track with the implementation of the Rail Baltica project, and to take final decisions on the prospective route selection according to the proposals in the recent feasibility study;

Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy

- *Express* support for the recent European Neighbourhood Policy review – a New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood, and *note* that universal values such as a respect for democracy and human rights should remain the criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the reforms in the European Neighbourhood countries;
- *Consider* that the support for the European Neighbourhood countries should be based on the principle of differentiation, and *stress* that mobility and people-to-people contacts are essential, therefore the negotiations on visa facilitation and liberalization, according to the fulfilment of relevant criteria, as well as deep and comprehensive free trade agreements should be speeded up;
- *Call* for the ambitious and far reaching second Eastern Partnership Summit in Warsaw to give a new impetus for the relations between the EU and 6 EaP partners;
- *Note* the increasing role of national parliaments and parliamentary diplomacy, and *consider* involvement of national parliaments as a strengthening tool towards effective and efficient Eastern Partnership dimension;
- *Condemn* the actions of Belarus' authorities, which made use of mutual agreements on legal assistance and cooperation for the persecution of political opponents, and *invite* Member States and the EU institutions to take concrete efforts to prevent recurrence of such actions and pursue the release human rights defenders and political prisoners in Belarus;
- *Express opinion* that entering the Schengen area of third country residents, who have committed crimes against humanity or for other reasons are *personum non grata* in the Member States, must be rigorously assessed, and concrete sanctions of detention should be used;

Multiannual Financial Framework

- *Acknowledges that* the Commission's proposal on the next EU Multiannual Financial Framework is a good starting point for further debate;
- *Stress* that cohesion policy is an essential instrument and played an important role in fostering solidarity, reducing economic and social disparities among the Member States and achieving EU strategic goals, should remain focused on further growth and development of the least developed regions;
- *Consider* it inappropriate to cap the cohesion policy allocation which would result in a considerable reduction of investments in convergence countries;
- *Express an opinion* that the Common Agricultural Policy should remain a common EU policy financed from the European budget. The top priorities should be: to establish a direct payment system that would ensure fair and equitable competition conditions for all farmers of the European Union; to adjust the distribution of direct payments so as to avoid substantial differences between highest and lowest levels of direct payments; to ensure that the new direct payment system is fully set in place as soon as possible;
- *Welcome* the Commission's initiative to allocate a significant amount of EU budget for energy infrastructure projects during 2014-2020 and *stress* the particular importance of EU funding for

the projects of European interest which are commercially unviable but are essential for achieving EU energy policy objectives of well-functioning internal energy market and energy security. Such instruments, however, should bring added value not at the expenses of the cohesion policy or other current financing possibilities.