

CONCLUSIONS

of the video conference of the foreign affairs committees
of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Czech Republic,
the Hungarian National Assembly,
the Sejm and the Senate of the Republic of Poland
and the National Council of the Slovak Republic

8 June 2021

The 30th anniversary of the establishment of the Visegrad Group

The representatives of the parliamentary foreign affairs committees of the Visegrad Group countries (V4), gathered on the 30th anniversary of its establishment, recognize that in the past decades this format of cooperation has been good for the interests of our nations, being for them a vehicle for escaping Soviet domination, joining the NATO and the European Union and building their own international position as well as an expression of their central European identity and an instrument for promoting common interests. Believing that we are strong when we are united, we declare a need to continue this model of cooperation in the future – also at the level of parliamentary committees.

State of cooperation in the Visegrad Group, summary of the Polish Presidency and challenges for the future

1. We are happy to state the fact that since 2015 the Visegrad Group has been experiencing a period of consolidation visible in the solidary attitude of its states in relation to: challenges posed by illegal immigration into the European Union; the process of appointing the highest EU officials following the elections to the European Parliament in 2019; and, in recent weeks, also in the face of intensified hostile activities towards the V4 countries on the part of third countries.
2. We resolutely condemn all acts of terrorism. We express our solidarity with the Czech Republic in connection with blowing up of ammunition dumps in Vrbětice in the territory of the Czech Republic. We condemn the forced landing of a passenger plane in Minsk for the purpose of arresting the Belarusian opposition activist, Roman Protasevich and an attempt to murder Alexei Navalny. We condemn the use of any chemical weapon and, in particular, attempts to use it against human life and health.
3. We express our solidarity with the Belarusian people and we call for carrying out free and fair presidential elections in Belarus, releasing all political prisoners, including journalists and

representatives of national minorities, and prosecuting those who are responsible for the cases of human rights violation.

4. In order to express our solidarity with the Belarusian people as a co-creator of the Central European culture, we call for declaring, by each Visegrad Group state, the year 2022 as the year of Francysk Skaryna, doctor of liberal arts and a Renaissance man who created his works in Polotsk, Vilnius, Krakow and Prague. We also encourage to jointly propose, in the following years, to honour in this-way other-historical figures who made a significant contribution to developing the culture and joint heritage of the Central European states.
5. We sustain our objection towards the construction of Nord Stream 2 as an undertaking being in contradiction with the security interest of the European Union and our region and opening the way for energy blackmail and political corruption.
6. We consider cooperation within the Visegrad Group to be of key importance in response to the challenge posed by the coronavirus pandemic for our citizens, both in terms of its effects on public health and economic consequences.
7. While welcoming the fact that the Visegrad Group is the largest European trading partner for the largest European economy – the German economy, we stress the need to take action to make our trade and our markets comparably strong for each other. This task will be supported by the development of cooperation within the framework of the Three Seas Initiative in the field of digitization, energy infrastructure and transport and communication infrastructure, with particular consideration given to Via Carpathia, whose fastest possible completion could break the transport barrier of the Carpathians.
8. We appeal for stronger cooperation among the Visegrad Group Member States on developing and supporting initiatives with regard to adaptation of regional energy infrastructure, fair energy transition for fossil fuels to clean energy. We also encourage to support various forms of conservation of areas of natural value, increase the retention capacity of natural waters, carry out joint research programmes regarding the impact of climate change on regional biodiversity and search for clean and sustainable sources of energy and technologies of its storage.
9. We support the use of modern forms of electronic communication for creating and improving cooperation platforms and for the ongoing exchange of information and views among the Members of Parliaments of the Visegrad Group states.

**Visegrad Group in view of the discussion on the future of Europe
and related foreign policy issues**

1. The Conference on the future of Europe, which is to last until June 2022, provides an excellent opportunity to reflect on the European Union itself. It should take into account the need to strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the EU. Also, all efforts should be made to ensure that the opinion of societies of the states aspiring to the membership in or closely cooperating with the EU, including the Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership states, is not ignored in a discussion on the future of Europe. We are convinced that both parts of our continent, separated by the “iron curtain” in the past, are now a unity and attest to the strength of Europe which lies in diversity.
2. We express our continuous support for the Eastern Partnership policy and we stress its strategic importance within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy as well as for the European integration process of the Western Balkan countries.
3. We welcome the establishment of Associated Trio, a forum of closer integration, by Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia – three Eastern Partnership countries associated with the European Union and advanced in the process of reforms. In this act, we can see how the experiences of the Visegrad Group countries on their way to European integration are repeated. We declare our will to engage in a dialog with this forum in the Visegrad Plus format.
4. Given the large number of citizens of the Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan states who live and work in the European Union, often far away from their families who stayed in their home country, we call for including these states in the EU roaming system.
5. We remain strongly committed to and convinced that the process of enlarging the European Union to include the Western Balkans should be accelerated and given a new impetus sustaining and strengthening the belief and confidence in the EU and the reliability of the whole enlargement process, from the point of view of the Balkan region.
6. Given the tragic balance of last year’s military confrontation between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the continuing tension in the relations of both states, we support the calls of the international community for developing a permanent and comprehensive peace agreement aimed at reaching the stabilization in the region and future reconciliation. We highlight our full support for the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group and for the involvement of a personal representative of the OSCE Presidency.
7. We thank to all who, over the last 30 years, have been actively involved in the Visegrad Group activities – a visible sign that in this part of Europe, so much struck by history, we are able to organize ourselves in a way that still remains only a dream for many other countries.