

Conclusions

of the

Meeting of the European Affairs Committees of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic, the Senate of the Czech Republic, the Hungarian National Assembly, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, the Senate of the Republic of Poland and the Slovak National Council

The representatives of the European Affairs Committees of the Visegrad Group Countries:

On the Czech Republic's Presidency of the Council of the European Union

- welcome the information of the Czech representatives on the preparation of the Czech EU Presidency;
- deem the Czech EU Presidency as a possibility for greater engagement of the Visegrad Group countries at the EU political level;

On the Subsidiarity

- welcome the Annual report 2007 on relations between the European Commission and national parliaments;
- recall the decisive role of national parliaments for the subsidiarity control, which is the most important tool of the Member States to control the legislative initiative of the European Commission;
- underline the subsidiarity principle as a principle enabling effective administration of public affairs;
- emphasize the importance of the ongoing subsidiarity checks within the framework of COSAC for enhancing quality of the EU decision-making process and European legislation;
- welcome the use of modern information and communication technologies for improving communication both between the European Commission and national parliaments and national parliaments themselves and support further development of the communication tools in use;
- call on the European institution, especially the European Commission, to take into account the parliamentary holidays when submitting proposals which should be examined at the subsidiarity check;

On the climate change and energy security

- express their concerns about the likely consequences of the recent South-Caucasian conflict development, resulting in high instability of the region, that generates a real threat to the safety of the energy infrastructure within the region and endangers the security of energy commodities supplies heading to the EU countries in future;
- appreciate the actual discussion on impacts of the use of biofuels in transportation, further on setting the criteria for the sustainable use of biofuels and on the possible revision of the proposed target (10% in 2020), because they consider the supervision of the conditions under which biofuels are produced and used to be the key to secure the prevalence of the positive effect of the biofuels usage;
- state that a pace of the introduction of the EU ETS trading system of emission quotas should comply fully with specialities of the energy sectors in particular countries;
- due to notable fluctuation of the crude oil prices on world's markets and increasing dependence of the countries of Central Europe on crude oil imports, call for consistent application of measures leading to pushing up energy efficiency and for more effort to maximize

possible savings of energy commodities, as they consider energy savings to be the basis of EU's energy policy;

- welcome recent development of the discussion on possible use of nuclear energy, as they regard the use of nuclear power of great potential forward to both, the Central Europe and EU as whole, in an effort to safeguard secure electricity supply and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases at the same time;

- support the declaration adopted by the governments of the Visegrad group countries on 26th September in Warsaw on the climate and energy package;

- consider necessary to take duly account of the engagements of the new EU member states under the Kyoto Protocol, as well as more equitable burden sharing among the member states;

- support the gradual introduction of the quotas within the electric sector, as well as the enhanced recognition of the quota redistribution based on GDP per capita;

- with regard to the proposal of the Decision of the European Parliament and the Council on reduction of green-house-gases emissions recommend to accept year 1990 as the reference year;

On the Cohesion Policy

- confirm the willingness to continue and deepen the cooperation concerning the exchange of experience and information in the area of structural funds and the Cohesion fund, management and implementation, with an aim to contribute to safeguard better effectiveness and efficiency of financial contributions from the structural and cohesion funds;

- welcome the initiative of the European Commission which opened a broad discussion on the future of cohesion policy, as one of the fundamental instruments for the development and the deepening of the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the Member States and all regions of the European Union;

- are convinced that the persisting disparities among the Member States and regions created a real need not to underestimate the role of cohesion policy among the European Union policies. Therefore, cohesion policy should remain central pillar for achieving the EU sustainable development goals also after 2013;

- acknowledge the importance of cooperation in the area of formulation of common positions as an instrument to boost interests of the Visegrad Group countries;

On the financial crisis

- express their serious worries about the advancing financial crisis and express the need to respond to negative impacts of the crisis;

- propose a coordinated approach of the EU member states and call upon their governments to initiate joint action in order to combat global threats by EU measures.