

CONCLUSIONS

of the

**Meeting of the European Affairs Committees of 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**

Liptovský Mikuláš, 15 September 2009

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

Regarding the climate change and global agenda after 2012:

- support the conclusion of the new global agreement for regulation of elimination of negative impact of climate changes after 2012 – the Copenhagen Agreement, in December 2009;
- support the determination of the European Union to keep playing the leading role in the fight against climate change;
- support the approach of an effective coordination, cooperation and transparency of preparatory works in order to ensure a complete and coherent negotiating mandate during the Copenhagen summit in December 2009;
- stress the necessity to adopt a further commitment of reduction of greenhouse gas emissions until 2020, compared to 1990, after evaluation of accomplishment of current target, while maintaining the competitiveness of the European Union. Other industrially developed countries must react adequately;
- point out the necessity of developing countries to contribute to the overall emission reduction in an adequate amount.

Regarding the budget policy in consideration of global economic crisis:

- support the responsible and coordinated approach to solve the impacts of global economic and financial crisis;
- consider not to reduce expenses devoted to science, research and development as regards the EU budget revision;
- stress the need for economic recovery of EU Member States;
- measures taken to combat the global crisis in order to reduce its impact in recession time influence budgets of public finance, and it is necessary that all EU Member States continue in effort to consolidate public finance with reference to Stability and Growth Pact, as well as Maastricht criteria.

Regarding the reform of common agricultural policy with special attention on current situation in the milk sector:

- welcome all existing instruments adopted by the European Commission this year in the milk market, which helped to stabilize prices, but they continue to regard them still as insufficient and limited;
- point out to an unbalance in the relationship chain (primary production, processors, trade) and call on the European Commission to present no later than by the end of 2009 its proposal for concrete arrangements to reduce the monopoly of the trade network in the food chain in accordance with the conditions for undistorted competition;
- support the abolition or moratorium of the measure of the European Commission on gradual increases in milk quotas by 1% in the next 5 years due to excess in milk market;
- strike an effort in order to balance the payments and accomplish maximal simplification of the system, which should lead exclusively to subsidies based on the area;
- in spite of the current economic crisis support the conclusions of the European Commission adopted in order to support the measures aimed at the better competitiveness in the sector of agricultural production.

Regarding the state of play in the energy sector:

- welcome financial assistance to energy infrastructure projects within European Economic Recovery Plan endorsed by the European Council in December 2008 as the first real EU instrument designed to enhance energy security of EU Member States and EU as a whole;
- emphasize that energy efficiency and renewable energy sources are the key priorities for EU energy policy contributing to environment and security of energy supplies. Energy from renewable sources is an integral part of EU policies for combating climate change, contributes to sustainable development and creation of new jobs, solving tasks of diversifying sources and increase of security of supply;
- agree that energy efficiency is the cheapest means available for reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- welcome the signing of an intergovernmental agreement between 4 EU Member States (Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Austria) and Turkey on Nabucco natural gas pipeline project on 13th July 2009 that will provide diversification of natural gas supplies within the framework of V4 countries energy policy;
- call on the European Union to formulate a better definition of circumstances concerning energy security threat with reference to individual countries as well as the whole EU, and in the light of these circumstances to initiate the mechanism of solidarity based on the common action.

Regarding the Eastern Partnership:

- stress their continuing support for the strengthened European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) including both of its dimensions (i.e. Eastern and Southern one) and continue to draw the attention not only to the need for a balanced relationship between the two ENP dimensions, but also to the complementary nature of the Black Sea Synergy that should avoid overlapping with the Eastern Partnership in the interest of an effective implementation of both of these initiatives;

- hold in high esteem the Czech Republic for launching the Eastern Partnership during its EU Presidency in Prague on 7th May 2009 demonstrating thus the EU active engagement in its close neighborhood and applaud her to have succeeded in practical implementation of the Eastern Partnership through the opening of 4 thematic platforms that serve as the means to realize its multilateral framework;
- call on the Swedish EU Presidency to stay very actively engaged in the process of practical implementation of the Eastern Partnership including the cooperation and coordination with the European Commission and those Member States that wish to be actively involved in taking forward the Eastern Partnership, in this regard they welcome establishing the informal group of “Friends of Eastern Partnership” (led by Poland and Sweden) that should be governed by openness and cooperation as its main principles;
- appreciate that the Eastern Partnership was defined by the incoming Hungarian V-4 Presidency as its key priority;
- encourage the Swedish EU Presidency to be deeply focused on the negotiations concerning the new legal framework between the EU and Russia in order to continue to implement the strategic partnership between them, call on Russia to get actively involved in cooperation mechanisms under the Eastern Partnership via taking part in its respective projects and they maintain that it is necessary to perceive this strategic partnership between the EU and Russia as a cooperation mechanism coexisting in parallel to the cooperation framework developed between the EU and the Eastern Partnership countries;
- call on the Visegrad Group Countries to make common efforts to spend more resources in favour of the territories of the Eastern Partnership in the framework of their respective National Development Assistance and at the same time to make common efforts to achieve the revision of current priorities defined in the framework of the EU and the OECD Development Assistance;
- in the interest of strengthening the parliamentary dimension of the Eastern Partnership they encourage the members of the European Parliament to work on establishing an effectively functioning Parliamentary Assembly for Relations with the Countries of the Eastern Partnership (EURONEST) as decided by the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament on 15 January 2009 defining this as a forum to monitor and analyze events concerning the Eastern Partnership;
- encourage all the countries associated in the Eastern Partnership to follow the way leading to the democratization, particularly as regards Belarus, so as to enable to involve its representatives in all the levels of cooperation taking part under the Eastern Partnership, including the parliamentary level (i.e. EURONEST), as well as overall formal levels of cooperation between the EU and Belarus that will be reviewed by Council of the European Union in this December;
- pointing to the example of the Union for the Mediterranean they support creating the special secretariat of the Eastern Partnership on the territory of any of the V-4 countries with the aim of providing the assistance (with the ongoing help of other countries involved in the process – e.g. B-3 countries) to the Swedish EU Presidency (on the political level) and to the European Commission (on the level of logistics and coordination level) in the process of political and practical implementation of the Eastern Partnership.