

Prague, 14 September 2010

## CONCLUSIONS

of the

Meeting of the European Affairs Committees of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Parliament 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

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

### **As regards the process of reinforcing economic policy coordination:**

- declare their general support for the new enhanced economic policy coordination as laid out in the Communication of the Commission on reinforcing economic policy coordination, however, they point out that the authority and sovereignty of national parliaments to approve the budget must be respected;
- support the proposals to strengthen and streamline the functioning of the Stability and Growth Pact, the cornerstone of the fiscal cooperation in the EU, focusing both on preventive and corrective measures, taking into account that the stabilisation of finances of the eurozone has an influence on the economy of the whole EU;
- welcome the Polish initiative regarding a special treatment of the costs of pension reforms within the Stability and Growth Pact in order not to impede the necessary reforms of the pension systems in the member states;
- share the belief that the European Semester, i.e. submitting the convergence and stabilization programmes, including underlying assumptions for the budget of the given year, simultaneously with the national reform programmes, can contribute to creating a closer link between the budgetary policy and realization of the goals contained in the strategy EU2020;
- understand the need to set up a European mechanism of financial stabilization as an EU response to the sovereign debt crisis but the assistance provided under this mechanism must be strictly conditional in terms of corrective measures and the management of the mechanism should use, to the fullest extent, the best practices of the International Monetary Fund that has had long-standing experience in providing macrofinancial assistance;
- are aware of the fact that financial assistance provided on the basis of bilateral loans is a result of a sovereign decision by a member state which is to be respected as such;

### **As regards the new proposals on supervision of the financial markets:**

- strongly support the general approach reached by the ECOFIN Council on 2 December 2009 as regards the role and competences of the new European Supervision Agencies (ESAs);
- voice their concern over the final compromise reached during the negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council on 2 September 2010 that is in

sharp contrast to the compromise agreed in the Council, giving the ESAs more powers without passing the corresponding responsibility for their decisions, watering down the fiscal safeguard clause and enabling them to take individual decisions addressed to financial institutions;

- call upon the members of the European Parliament representing the V4 countries to stand up for the compromise agreed by the ECOFIN Council;

**As regards the budget review and its potential for boosting competitiveness of the member states:**

- recognize the delicacy of the task to strike the right balance between the EU objectives financed by the budget of the EU whose member states may have various, and partly diverging, interests;
- believe, however, that the goal of increasing the competitiveness as well as strengthening the cohesion of the EU in the global market economy is a common, community-wide aim;
- would like to see a real increase of funds earmarked for fostering competitiveness under the EU2020 strategy, instead of a mere re-labelling of the financial means available under the Heading 1a Competitiveness for growth and employment;
- emphasize that a favourable business environment without unnecessary regulation as well as completing of liberalisation of the internal market of the EU, including the free movement of labour, are the best incentives for increasing competitiveness;

**As regards the climate change negotiations after 2012:**

- support conclusion of the new global agreement on elimination of negative impacts of climate changes for the period after 2012, that will stress development of technologies as a key future direction;
- with regard to the outcome of negotiations at the Copenhagen conference in December 2009 express the hope that the conference in Cancun will bring a clearer outline of future realistic commitments of the participating countries;
- emphasize the importance of achieving a common position within the EU on these issues and support the approach of intensive cooperation of the member states in order to identify effective solutions as a preparation for the next key meetings;
- are convinced that no decision on increasing the EU's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions should be taken unless other global players commit themselves to participate in the international efforts on emissions reduction;
- share the belief that any discussion on increasing the EU's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions should be based on a thorough impact assessment for each member state prepared by the European Commission;
- are of the opinion that since some sectors could be in danger if excessively ambitious commitments were adopted, future deliberations and measures taken on EU level in the area of greenhouse gas emissions reduction should include a possibility of different burdening for individual sectors in order to maintain the competitiveness of European economies to the rest of the world;

- believe that investments in development of new technologies are of key importance to future reducing of greenhouse gas emissions;

**As regards the inter-parliamentary cooperation within COSAC:**

- recognize as a matter of principle the crucial role of national parliaments for deepening the democratic legitimacy in the decision-making process of the EU;
- share the belief that effective inter-parliamentary cooperation is a prerequisite for implementation of new powers conferred on national parliaments by the Treaty of Lisbon, especially as far as the subsidiarity control is concerned;
- emphasize that inter-parliamentary cooperation should not only focus on sharing the best parliamentary practices in general but should also enable an early exchange of views on particular legislative proposals; and therefore
- understand the need to indicate at an early stage (e.g. on the basis of Commission Work Programme) legislative proposals that could be of importance with regard to their adherence to subsidiarity principle, without any substantive consequences or binding nature of such indication;
- consider furthermore the involvement of specialized committees in the parliamentary scrutiny to be a useful tool for extension of a debate on parliamentary opinions on the EU legislative proposals;
- do not support the initiative regarding establishment of a new inter-parliamentary body responsible for Common Security and Defence Policy since the issue is sufficiently covered by the existing structures;

**As regards the cooperation in justice and home affairs:**

- are aware that the changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty to the area of justice and home affairs, in particular in the area of the former third pillar, enhance the demand for parliamentary scrutiny;
- remind the Commission to inform the national parliaments regularly on the state of evaluations of Eurojust and Europol decisions and consult them during preparatory works on new Eurojust and Europol regulations as regards laying down procedures for involvement of national parliaments in the evaluation of Eurojust's activities and in the scrutiny of Europol's activities;
- will pay due attention to implementation of Stockholm Programme and invite future V4 Presidencies to facilitate coordination in the formulation of V4 positions on the most important EU measures to be adopted in the area of freedom, security and justice;
- invite upcoming V4 Presidency to develop the cooperation within V4 on migration issues in the spirit of principles contained in joint Declaration "Building Migration Partnership" adopted at the ministerial conference held during the Czech EU Presidency in April 2009;
- advocate more balanced approach towards different geographic areas in the development of EU external migration policies.