

CONCLUSIONS

of the

Meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committees
of the Chamber of Deputies and 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

Bratislava, 25 February 2015

The Representatives of the Foreign Affairs Committees of the V4 countries reaffirm their commitment to continue and strengthen their cooperation. The Foreign Affairs Committees of the National Parliaments of the Visegrad Group countries agree that the most pressing challenges to current geopolitical situation are now external. The annexation of Crimea by Russia and the subsequent intervention in Ukraine represent the most blatant breach of the OSCE principles since the signing of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. The V4 Foreign Affairs Committees therefore call on Russia to respect its obligations under international law, refrain from the threat or use of force and respect the inviolability of frontiers and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The V4 countries and Russia have a long record of cooperation on issues of bilateral and international concern. Although the vision of the V4 countries for the relations with Russia was a partnership for prosperity and security, Russian intervention in Ukraine has affected mutual relations. In this respect, the Foreign Affairs Committees of the V4 countries reaffirm their support for the EU approach towards the military conflict in Ukraine, including the introduction of EU restrictive measures, and underline the need for maintaining a strong EU position based on unity. The V4 Parliamentarians stress that sanctions are used as an instrument; not a goal in itself.

The Foreign Affairs Committees of the V4 countries welcome that the OSCE-led Trilateral Contact Group, supported by Chancellor Angela Merkel and Presidents François Hollande, Petro Poroshenko, and Vladimir Putin, signed an agreement on a ceasefire and heavy weapons withdrawal in Eastern Ukraine based on the implementation of the September 2014 Minsk agreements. The Parliamentarians express hope that all parties to the signed Minsk II agreement on 12 February 2015 would respect the commitments and implement them as agreed.

The V4 Parliamentarians reaffirm their strong support for the full and unconditional implementation of the Minsk Protocol and its Memorandum as a basis for a sustainable political solution to the crisis, based on the respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. The Foreign Affairs Committees of the V4 countries once again reconfirm their commitment to the policy of non-recognition of the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula by the Russia.

The Foreign Affairs Committees of the V4 countries express their support for the European perspective of the Eastern Partnership countries.

The Middle East

The Foreign Affairs Committees of the V4 countries call attention to the fact that Europe's security is further threatened by a turmoil spreading in Libya, Syria and Iraq. They stress that the fight against ISIL represents a common struggle to protect our roots, heritage, way of life and our civilization achievements and values. Therefore, it is our common duty as well as our shared responsibility. For this fight to be effective and successful it must be consequent and multidimensional - military measures must be complemented by a whole range of other steps targeting the supply and logistics area.

The Foreign Affairs Committees of the V4 countries further emphasized that the politically fragile situation in Iraq, the war in Syria, later exacerbated by military activities of ISIL in both Syria and Iraq, have contributed to the largest wave of refugees since World War II. The efforts to deal with this humanitarian crisis have so far proven insufficient and inadequate. Therefore, the V4 Parliamentarians call on their governments to increase the support to sustain the needs of the refugees, internally displaced persons, as well as protect religious minorities, including Christians.

Expressing the interest in a peaceful co-existence of civilizations and readiness to be actively involved in solving existing problems by dialogue, the Foreign Affairs Committees of the V4 countries also pay attention to the Middle East Peace Process and expressed support for all the efforts aimed at creating the conditions for tangible progress in the peace process as well as improving the overall state of Israeli-Arab relations.

[Conclusions were adopted by acclamation]