

## CONCLUSIONS

of the

Meeting of the European Affairs Committees of the Hungarian National Assembly, the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Czech Republic, 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 Visegrád Group Countries

### **Regarding the stock-taking and mid-term review of the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy:**

- **note** with regret that the economic and financial crisis has slowed down progress towards the key goals of the Europe 2020 strategy, particularly with regard to employment and levels of poverty;
- **welcome** the achievements regarding the reduction of the overall primary energy consumption at EU level and as a partial consequence thereof in greenhouse gas emission as well, and the growing share of renewable energy in the energy mix;
- **highlight** therefore that the overall situation concerning the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy has been characterised by mixed, positive and negative elements together, but the recent signs of economic recovery are encouraging;
- **underline** that the long-term challenges (ageing society, inequalities in the societies, etc.) affecting growth in Europe have not been properly addressed so far and therefore fully agree that the structural reforms have to be implemented in order to lay ground for sustainable growth, job creation and competitiveness of European industry on international markets;
- **remind** that current EU financial framework for 2014-2020 should primarily serve the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy both at EU and Member State level;
- **emphasize** that the on-going review of the Europe 2020 strategy offers a good opportunity to bring it fully in line for the second half of the decade leading to 2020 with the relevant policy priorities set out in the Strategic Agenda for the Union in times of change adopted by European Council in June 2014.

### **Regarding the energy efficiency and its contribution to energy security and the 2030 Framework for climate and energy policy:**

- **point out** that the energy policy of the EU is determined by three primary objectives, namely sustainability, security of supply and competitiveness;
- **welcome** the European Commission's European Energy Security Strategy (EESS) and consider that in the present circumstances short term priority must be given to energy security, before the winter of 2014/2015 by fully exploiting the available gas storage facilities, interconnectors and by speeding up the diversification of energy supply and routes;

- **call** for increased efforts to reduce Europe's high energy dependency and in this respect underline the importance of energy efficiency, further development of domestic production and integrating the European energy market based on regional approach;
- **agree** with the principle that energy supply for consumers, industry and businesses should be ensured at affordable and competitive prices because the appropriate energy price constitutes a major element of the economic competitiveness;
- **support** that flexibility must be preserved for EU Member States as to how they deliver their commitments in order to reflect national circumstances and their freedom to determine their energy mix must be respected;
- **agree** that the introduction of any legally binding energy and energy efficiency targets at EU or national level is not desirable, in particular in the context of the proposal for the new governance system;
- **stress** that priority should be focused on energy security and the transition to a safe and sustainable climate friendly economy in the implementation of the EU financial instruments in the period 2014-2020 in particular using the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the Connecting Europe Facility, Horizon 2020 and the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument and Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance IPA II;
- **deem** it necessary to strengthen EU Member States bargaining power vis-à-vis external energy suppliers as well as the external dimension of EU energy policy and the link between energy security and foreign policy.

**Regarding the developing the cross border cooperation- a positive example:**

- **call** the attention to the importance of the numerous national and cross-border investments realized by financial assistance of the EU funds as they can contribute to the prosperity, job creation and foster people to people contacts;
- **highlight** the importance of infrastructure investments in this regard, with special focus on the future projects regarding the Abaújvár-Kenyhecs bridge and the Košice –Miskolc motorway.

Hernádyécse, 15 October 2014

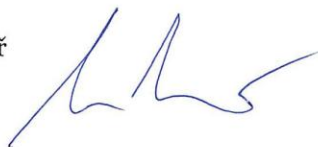


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