

**Declaration of the Prime Ministers of the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Republic of Poland
and the Slovak Republic on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Visegrad Group**
Krakow, February 17, 2021

We, the Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group (V4) countries – the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Republic of Poland and the Slovak Republic, having met on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Visegrad Declaration with the participation of the President of the European Council,

Recalling the Declaration on cooperation between the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Hungary in striving for European Integration of 15 February 1991,

Acknowledging with satisfaction that during the past 30 years the V4 cooperation has developed successfully based on ever-growing friendship and good-neighbourly relations between our nations, our shared values and interests, respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law as well as in accordance with the strategic principles that guided the foundation of the Visegrad Group in 1991, namely: overcoming the legacy of totalitarianism and communism, improving mutual understanding, cooperation and people-to-people relations among V4 countries as well as securing our countries' European Union and NATO accessions,

Noting that the Visegrad Group has become recognised in Europe and globally as a reliable partner and symbol of successful political and economic transformation, an important pillar of the historical project of Europe's reunification, as well as an example of effective regional cooperation within the European Union, contributing to its further development, including in particular policy areas, and to the continent's economic competitiveness,

Reaffirming the increasingly important role of the International Visegrad Fund, established in 2000 as an emblematic institution of the Visegrad cooperation furthering people-to-people relations, which allowed our civil society representatives to implement more than 6000 common projects in Central Europe, the Eastern Partnership region and the Western Balkans, and to strengthen the mobility and cooperation between our students, scientists, innovators, artists as well as local authorities,

Further recalling the creation in 2015 of the Visegrad Patent Institute with the aim of strengthening regional cooperation in intellectual property and innovation,

Welcoming the continued strong added value of the Visegrad Group not only in strengthening mutual understanding and cooperation between our countries and societies, but also as a platform effectively promoting our common interests as active and reliable members of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation,

Declaring our readiness to further jointly contribute to the success of the European project based on our common goal of a secure, prosperous and stable European Union, composed of strong and resilient Member States and supported by effective European

institutions, acting in line with the principles of equality, mutual respect, subsidiarity and proportionality,

Underlining the V4 countries' strong support for the integration of the Western Balkans into the European Union as well as active contribution to the initiation and development of the European Union's Eastern Partnership as an important pillar of the European Neighbourhood Policy,

Underlining the commitment of the V4 countries to achieve a climate neutral EU by 2050 using all available low and zero emission technologies,

Underscoring NATO's essential role in the security of the Euro-Atlantic area and contribution to strengthening its deterrence, collective defence and response to threats from any direction as well as the need to further strengthen the transatlantic partnership and our support to the continuous adaptation of NATO's deterrence and defence posture as well as to reinforcing military mobility across our region,

Recognising the value and importance of regional cooperation and European solidarity, especially in times of crisis, which has been demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic through joint humanitarian assistance to third countries and the setting up of the V4 Information Exchange Centre on COVID-19 as well as during the migration crisis through common V4 position to strengthen the external borders of the EU , and assistance and development projects in Africa,

Taking into consideration our joint efforts to strengthen connectivity in our part of Europe, including in particular the relevant North-South European corridors in transport and energy infrastructure, facilitating the cross-border transport connections and deepening the transport cohesion between regions also through our common participation in the Three Seas Initiative,

Further recognising the contribution of regional cooperation projects to the European integration,

Convinced of the added value of inclusive cooperation with other European and non-European partners within the V4+ format,

1. *Reaffirm* our intention to facilitate further strengthening of our mutual intergovernmental and people-to-people cooperation for the benefit of our citizens, our countries as well as the European Union and NATO, and to ensure effective communication of our joint actions, including through online presence;
2. *Agree* to continue close Visegrad cooperation in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and to facilitate post-pandemic recovery;
3. *Determine* to further pursue close collaboration in areas of common interest, including through coordination and elaboration of common positions within the EU, in order to jointly address the challenges our societies are facing and contribute to shaping common European goals, including in the following areas:

Society, economy and innovation

- further extension and deepening of the EU Single Market, removal of barriers stifling growth,
- youth, mobility, education and skills for the future,
- digitalization and the EU digital agenda,
- research, development and innovation,
- fostering social and territorial cohesion, including regional and urban cooperation,
- further development of the cooperation across borders under Interreg programmes, to remove existing barriers at the border crossing points and give a strong impetus to stimulate territorial cohesion of the V4,

Environment, energy and transport

- development of energy and transport infrastructure in Central Europe, including common projects located particularly on the North-South axis, cross-border transport connections, improvement of intraregional transport cohesion,
- promoting energy diversification and security of supply as well as clean and technology-neutral transition of the economy in line with the EU's climate neutrality target by 2050 in order to contribute to the Paris Agreement goals and climate policy which is inclusive, socially acceptable and ensures the role of EU member states to choose its energy mix, including the use of nuclear power,
- Environment, including water management, sustainable forestry, clean air and biodiversity,

Internal and external security

- restoration of the proper functioning of the Schengen Area,
- stemming migration flows, proper border protection and cooperation on asylum,
- consensual reform of the Common European Asylum System,
- joint security and defence cooperation and V4 defence capability development in the framework of NATO and the EU,
- enhancing cooperation in regional security formats,
- cooperation on V4 critical infrastructure identification and protection,
- resilience building and risk management in the framework of NATO, the EU and the UN,

International cooperation and solidarity

- strengthening and further deepening of the transatlantic relations,
- upholding the rules-based international order as well as the principles of multilateralism, also by supporting Poland's OSCE Chairmanship in 2022,
- acting together for the promotion and strengthening of the observance of international law, including of human rights and rights of persons belonging to national minorities, also by supporting Hungary's Chairmanship at the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 2021,
- promotion of the merit-based process of EU and NATO enlargement,

- further development of the Eastern Partnership as well as support for the European aspirations and choices of the partners and deepening of cooperation with EaP countries,
 - cooperation with the Western Balkan countries and support for regional cooperation as well as for their European perspective and Euro-Atlantic integration in line with the V4 Statement on the Western Balkans adopted at the V4+Western Balkans summit in Prague in September 2019,
 - active V4 cooperation within the Common Foreign and Security Policy,
 - close V4 cooperation on the Common Security and Defence Policy initiatives,
 - common V4 humanitarian and development projects;
4. *Acknowledge* the importance of V4 cooperation in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe;
 5. *Declare* the intention to build on the experience of the V4 Information Exchange Centre on COVID-19 to further exchange information and good practices in the area of civil protection, crisis, disaster and risk management, including the COVID-19 pandemic as well as coordinating V4 emergency response capacities;
 6. *Declare* our willingness to increase from 2022 the annual budget of the International Visegrad Fund to 10 million euros in order to enable the further development of its operational activities in the area of youth mobility (“Generation V4”) and to increase its visibility in order to promote the V4 among future generations.

For the Czech Republic:

For Hungary:

For the Republic of Poland:

For the Slovak Republic: