

**Joint Declaration of the Prime Ministers
Czech-Polish Intergovernmental Consultations
20 April 2015, Prague**

On 20 April 2015, the third intergovernmental consultations between the Czech Republic and Poland took place in Prague. Upon the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, the following government members participated in the meeting:

For the Czech Republic:

Mr Bohuslav Sobotka, Prime Minister,
Mr Martin Stropnický, Minister of Defence,
Mr Milan Chovanec, Minister of the Interior,
Mr Dan Ťok, Minister of Transport,
Mr Richard Brabec, Minister of the Environment,
Mr Ivo Šrámek, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Mr Pavel Šolc, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade,
Mr Vladimír Bártl, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade,
Mr Jindřich Šnejdrla, Deputy Minister of Agriculture.

For the Republic of Poland:

Mrs Ewa Kopacz, Prime Minister,
Mr Tomasz Siemoniak, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence,
Mrs Teresa Piotrowska, Minister of the Interior,
Mr Maciej Grabowski, Minister of the Environment,
Mrs Maria Wasiak, Minister of Infrastructure and Development,
Mr Rafał Trzaskowski, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Mr Tomasz Tomczykiewicz, First Deputy Minister of Economy,
Mrs Zofia Szalczyk, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the high level of bilateral relations in all areas, including the high-level political dialogue. They also welcome deepening and enhancing the

parliamentary cooperation. Both countries achieved progress in formulating and promoting their common interests at the bilateral as well as the European levels.

Prime Ministers state that Czech-Polish bilateral relations are of strategic importance in the context of the Central European region as well as the European Union. The Prime Ministers confirmed the effort of both sides to cope with the serious deterioration of the security situation as well as the economic challenges which are faced by the both countries in today's Europe, and their commitment to building up their mutual trust.

The preparedness for deeper cooperation was expressed in the agreement of both sides to coordinate preparations for their upcoming presidencies of the Visegrad Group (Czech Republic in July 2015 – June 2016 and Poland in July 2016 – June 2017). The Prime Ministers agreed that cooperation within V4 was crucial for the stability and prosperity of Central Europe.

The following fields of cooperation were discussed during the consultations:

- **European Union**

The Prime Ministers discussed the key topics of the upcoming European Council (June 2015). They expressed their support for the inclusion of the topic of the Common Security and Defence Policy on the agenda. In the light of the latest developments in the direct vicinity of the EU and worldwide, the Prime Ministers support the debate on the review of the European Security Strategy, and expect that the debate will take into account the current security risks and challenges, including the new geopolitical situation in the Eastern neighbourhood of the EU. In the field of the Common Security and Defence Policy, the European Council should discuss especially the progress of the Train&Equip initiative, the increasing of the deployability of EU Battlegroups, the civil dimension of the Common Security and Defence Policy, and broader representation of small and medium-sized enterprises in European defence industry supply chains.

As regards the situation in Ukraine and relations with Russia, the Prime Ministers agreed that it was crucial that all sides of the conflict, including the Russian Federation, comply with and

fully implement the Minsk Agreements. In this context, they support the European Council decision of interlinking the economic sanctions against Russia with the complete implementation of the Minsk Agreements. Both Prime Ministers underscored the important role of joint European action and expressed their determination to maintain the unity of the EU and within the transatlantic partnership. The Prime Ministers stressed the need to leave an open space for dialogue and find a diplomatic solution to the conflict. At the same time, they noted that Russia in the past months did not act as a reliable partner and member of the international community and that potential future cooperation would primarily depend on the extent to which Russia observes the international law and implements the Minsk Agreements.

The two Prime Ministers expressed their support for the right of Ukraine to a sovereign and free decision of its political and economic future and strongly condemned the actions by Russia aiming at undermining Ukraine's territorial integrity. The Prime Ministers expressed their political support for the efforts to speed up the political and economic reforms. While recognizing that reform efforts are complicated by the difficult security and economic situation, they pointed out that tangible results in this regard were much needed. Both sides support the plan of the European Union to provide third package of macro-financial assistance to Ukraine in the amount of EUR 1.8 billion and are prepared to negotiate its possible increase. The Prime Ministers stressed that it was important to make rapid progress towards ratification of the association agreement, including provisions on deep and comprehensive free trade area by all EU Member States.

The Prime Ministers discussed also current projects of cross-border cooperation and expressed their support for the planned creation of a European grouping of territorial cooperation consisting of the regions Liberec, Hradec Králové, Pardubice and Olomouc on the Czech side and the Lower Silesian Voivodeship on the Polish side.

- **Economy and Energy**

Both governments highly appreciated the fact that both countries are today prominent business partners. Currently the Czech Republic represents for Poland the third largest market for its products. At the same time, Poland is the third country where Czech goods are mostly

exported. The Governments noted with satisfaction that, in the period starting with the establishment of the Czech Republic, the growth of the Czech Republic's foreign trade with Poland was higher than with any other neighbouring country. Both sides are prepared to maintain this trend. Concerning mutual direct investments Poland is the 13th country in order of investing countries in the Czech economy and is the biggest investor among countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Both sides are ready to effectively support this trend, including support for bilateral dialog of business communities.

Both governments emphasized the crucial importance of investments for growth and creation of sustainable jobs. In the context of supporting investments in the EU, the focus should be mainly on removing barriers for investors and implementation of the projects with high multiplication effect. European structural and investment funds are an essential source of public investment in the Czech Republic and Poland. In accordance with the conclusions of the European Council from December 2014, it is necessary to ensure maximum use of financial resources of 2007-2013 programming period. Both countries also confirmed their interest in starting as soon as possible the implementation of cohesion policy in the programming period 2014-2020. Regarding their bilateral cooperation, both countries promoted the establishment of cross-border projects and their funding from the common Operational Programme Cross-border Cooperation Czech Republic - Poland.

The Governments agreed that the two countries intend to develop intensive cooperation in the field of energy industry, both at the EU and bilateral levels and in the context of Visegrad cooperation. Both governments appreciated mutual cooperation in 2014, when common political support contributed to the possibility to use European resources, especially through the CEF, for preparatory works on the STORK II gas pipeline. In order to reaffirm the ongoing support for the project, the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Poland on the cooperation in the natural gas sector aimed at implementation of the Czech Republic - Poland Interconnection Project was signed during the consultations. In the context

of cooperation within the Union, the main priority is an efficient coordination of mutual steps in implementing the Energy Union concept in all its dimensions. Key priorities will be to ensure reliable and affordable energy supplies for citizens and for the industry through a well developed energy market, compliance with the principle of technological neutrality, effective use of domestic energy resources and further development of clean coal and nuclear energy sectors. At the regional as well as European levels, an important issue is to work together in addressing the current challenges in the field of energy security, in particular with regard to the situation in Ukraine.

- **Internal Affairs**

The Prime Ministers consider it as a good signal for the general public of both countries that government experts have achieved progress in solving the issue of the Czech Republic's territorial debt to Poland. Based on the information provided by the relevant ministries, a standard procedure will be launched shortly to negotiate an agreement to this effect.

The Governments confirmed their interest to enhance cooperation in the fight against the spread of methamphetamine in Europe. In this respect, the Czech Republic appreciates the steps taken by the Polish Government to introduce new legislation imposing restrictions on the free availability of pseudoephedrine-containing pharmaceuticals, used for the illegal manufacture of methamphetamine.

The Governments confirmed that they were willing to increase their assistance to Ukraine as regards migration and refugees, including their support for the establishment of the EU Regional Reconstruction and Development Programme.

- **Security and Defence**

The Governments assessed the existing level of cooperation, in particular cooperation aimed at development of military capabilities and implementation of the NATO Readiness Action Plan. They agreed that NATO Summit in Warsaw should conclude the implementation of decisions taken in Newport in 2014 as an answer to new threats and challenges coming to Euro-Atlantic community from the East and South and should open a new chapter of long-

term strategic adaptation of the Alliance to the new security environment. They discussed also cooperation in the field of the defence industry.

With the aim to meaningfully develop Visegrad defence cooperation in the context of the worsening security situation in Europe and its neighbourhood and in the effort to further enhance cooperation within the Visegrad Group, the Ministries of Defence confirmed their readiness to consult and harmonize priorities of their consequent V4 presidencies in 2015 to 2017.

The main priorities include creation of a joint Visegrad modularforce, which could be, besides others, deployed within NATO and EU rapid reaction forces, and coordination and mutual exchange of information in the area of defence planning and acquisitions. This approach will be applied in the broader context of NATO and the EU.

The Governments confirmed the importance of good coordination of their positions and priorities before the June European Council, where the issue of common defence and security will be discussed.

- **Transport**

The Governments agreed to continue intensive cooperation in the field of interconnecting transport infrastructure in line with the Trans-European Transport Networks development plan. The two sides support coordinated approach to the implementation of joint cross-border projects and close cooperation in using European funds, especially from the CEF instrument, to this end.

A shared priority is the modernization of railways for passenger and cargo transport within the North-South railway corridor. The existing close cooperation on the schedule and project documentation for the construction of cross-border connections of R11 and S3 expressways will continue, together with the negotiations of other outstanding issues related to agreements in the field of transport.

The two sides express their readiness for closer coordination of activities, i.a. within the framework of regional cooperation to reduce initiatives that may hinder the functioning of the EU single road transport market.

- **Environment**

The Governments highly appreciated the fact that the new Agreement between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of the Republic of Poland on cooperation on transboundary waters in the field of water management was signed on the occasion of the intergovernmental consultations.

The Governments confirmed that the improvement of air quality in the region of Silesia was a chief priority for both Ministries of the Environment. The Czech Republic and the Republic of Poland prepare a series of strategy documents aimed to improve air quality at the national and regional levels and to reduce pollutant emissions.

The Governments highlighted active cooperation in the field of nature protection, in particular at the level of national parks. In 2014, the Krkonoše National Park administration signed a new agreement on cooperation with Karkonosze National Park administration. The two national parks run a number of joint projects, using successfully the funds from the Czech Republic-Poland Cross-Border Cooperation Operational Programme.

- **Agriculture**

The Governments agreed to take into account global challenges and growing expectations of the European citizens concerning multifunctionality of agricultural sector. Maintaining its competitiveness and sustainability requires investments and support of the sector from the EU budget.

The Governments share commitment of simplification of the Common Agricultural Policy, especially in the context of its implementation after the reform agreed in 2013. They agreed to coordinate positions in the context of current discussion on simplification of the CAP at the EU level.

The Governments confirmed their agreement on the need to jointly reinforce consumer protection, ensure fair conditions of competition and food trade, prevent fraudulent actions in the food sector, as well as promote food of high quality. The Governments equally declared the will to strengthen cooperation between relevant food control authorities in this field. At the same time, the Governments believe the principal of free movement of capital, goods and persons in the Single Market is of paramount importance.

The Governments welcome the cooperation in the field of agricultural research, sharing of knowledge and experience between scientific institutions and their application in practice.