

PRIME MINISTER
OF THE CZECH
REPUBLIC

PRIME MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC
OF POLAND

PRIME MINISTER
OF HUNGARY

PRIME MINISTER
OF THE SLOVAK
REPUBLIC

16 October 2019

Dear President,

Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

Yesterday the EU, yet again, failed to respect its commitments to our partners in the Western Balkans.

The General Affairs Council was to agree on opening the accession process with the Republic of North Macedonia and Albania on Tuesday 15 October. To our great disappointment, that did not happen. Despite the important advancements we have made together, some Member States continue to obstruct the very opening of the accession talks, although it is only the first step in the long and demanding accession negotiations. At this stage, it is clear that an overwhelming majority of Member States and the EU institutions are willing to honour their commitments and to work more intensively with the two Balkan countries on further progress in their European journey.

As confirmed by the Commission's assessment, the Republic of North Macedonia and Albania have achieved significant results by launching complex domestic reforms as well as by improving relations with their neighbours. Yet, as of today, the EU is still unable to clearly materialize the European perspective through opening the accession talks with these states.

We agree with the President-elect of the European Commission von der Leyen that the EU has to act more geopolitically and advance more vigorously its interests on a global scale. Further delay in making the positive decision will cause a serious deterioration of the stability in the region and will to large extent limit our ability to take an active role in our own neighbourhood. This development goes directly against our interests.

Despite the let-down that we witnessed at the General Affairs Council, we are proposing a decisive discussion at the European Council this week, where we should work together on

unblocking the current situation. We must realize what is at stake: the decision that we are to take this week will irreversibly affect our credibility in the region and even more importantly, it will have serious and long-lasting consequences for our own stability and security. We have to honour our commitments; the time to act geopolitically is now.



Andrej Babiš



Mateusz Morawiecki



Viktor Orbán



Peter Pellegrini

To:

Donald Tusk, President of the European Council

Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission

Heads of States and Governments, members of the European Council