

## JOINT STATEMENT

of the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Environment Ministers of the Visegrad Group Countries  
7-8 March 2011, Šamorín – Čilistov , Slovak Republic

The Minister of Environment of the Czech Republic, Minister of Rural Development of Republic of Hungary, Under-Secretary of State of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Poland, Minister of Environment of the Slovak Republic representatives of the Visegrad Group Countries

- reaffirming the importance of the cooperation of the Visegrad Group countries in the field of environmental protection within the European Union,
- bearing in mind the previous meetings of the Visegrad Group Environment Ministers,
- considering the conclusions of the European Council in December 2010 and realizing the need for a coordinated action,

have agreed as follows:

1. The Ministers exchanged their views on **international climate negotiations** in Cancun and underlined all positive outcomes that represent necessary steps forward. They emphasised that the Cancun Agreements constitutes a good basis to build an operational architecture for a comprehensive post-2012 framework, which ensures the continuation of the Kyoto Protocol and all its mechanisms, including Joint Implementation.
2. The Ministers acknowledged the establishment of the **Green Climate Fund**. They recognized the sensitivity but at the same time high urgency to start discussions on all decisive elements of the financial architecture and potential public, private and innovative sources of finance, criteria to define the scale and key for countries' contribution. Moreover, they stressed the significance for engagement and open dialog among public and private stakeholders from the very beginning.
3. Our positions on future financial architecture should reflect also experience with the on-going **fast-start financial mechanism**, which is an important step toward establishing the long-term framework. It is necessary to keep open dialog and exchange of experience gained from the practical implementation of the fast-start projects within the V4 group.
4. The Ministers agreed that it is necessary to re-enter in the discussion on the principles for countries' contribution to the international climate financing in the context of the establishment of the Green Climate Fund.
5. The Ministers are aware of a politically tense debate on **internal EU redistribution** of financial commitments; however they call for starting it without any delay. It is important that the EU will within short time agree on the format of this discussion so that wide participation and transparency will be ensured. One of possible option is to consider re-launching of the Friends of the Presidency Working Group on EU Internal Burden Sharing of Climate Financing.

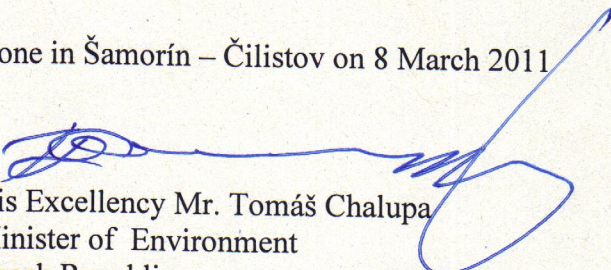


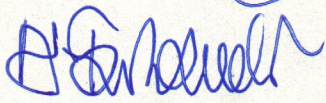
6. The Ministers exchanged their views on the urgent need for a common EU position on the carry-over of AAUs from the first to the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. The Ministers stressed that the EU should not support any ban on carry-over as this would penalize Parties for their overachievement of reduction targets. They also agreed that the EU should not support any carry-over option which would threaten the environmental integrity of the Protocol.
7. The Ministers also expressed the need to analyse alternative and innovative options of managing the surplus of AAUs and they invite experts to further explore them.
8. The Ministers agreed that the domestic offsetting mechanisms are useful and cost-effective tools to reduce GHG emissions within the EU. They agreed to invite the Commission to elaborate on the rules for projects, which would reduce emissions in the non-ETS sector, as stated in article 24a of the revised emission trading directive.
9. The Ministers support the Cohesion Fund to further fulfill the environmental targets within the EU.
10. The environment ministers of the V4 countries share common view on the preparation and adoption of the 7<sup>th</sup> **Environmental Action Programme** of the European Union which should be adopted as soon as possible and before the final preparation of the new financial strategy of the European Union after 2013. Environmental objectives should be strongly mainstreamed especially in the cohesion and common agricultural and fishery policies. There should be a strong synergy developed between the environmental policy and efforts of the EU in the area of economic prosperity and competitiveness e.g. via resource efficiency, eco-innovation, enhancement of green economy. It is necessary to ensure the appropriate interlinkages and harmonisation between the 7<sup>th</sup> EAP and the Europe 2020 Strategy both on the EU and the national levels (e.g. through the National Reform Programmes) having in mind the overarching EU Sustainable Development Strategy.
11. The environment ministers of the V4 countries promote that the environmental aims and objectives should be taken into account in the **post-2013 financial strategy**, however without jeopardizing the amount of money invested via cohesion policy.
12. The environment ministers of the V4 countries will jointly promote natural resource efficiency, the inclusion of the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services, water, and adaptation to climate change in the 7th EAP. The V4 countries will focus on the protection against flooding, droughts, extreme weather events and other nature disasters.
13. Any priority defined within the framework of the 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme can only be successful if the corresponding tools and conditions are provided.
14. The ministers consider cooperation within the Visegrad countries in a **field of air quality** as a priority and due to their similar conditions they will coordinate their actions to improve the air quality.

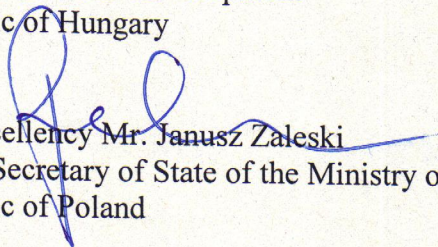


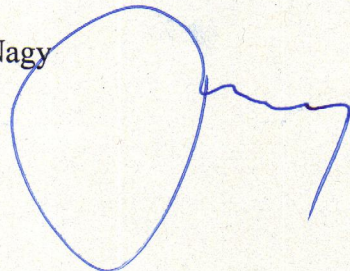
15. V4 countries should seek a common approach concerning **source apportionment of PM 10/PM 2,5**, with the aim to provide a comparable information for thorough assessment of transboundary air pollution.
16. The Ministers believe that such cooperation will help to jointly plan actions aimed at the reduction of the concentration of PM 10/PM 2,5 in ambient air in problematic areas.
17. The ministers also agree to examine possibility of joint work on further development of dispersion models.
18. The Ministers declare that issue of **contaminated sites** is differently solved in new and old Member States, where companies have always been privately owned and it is easy to identify responsibility for contaminated sites and it is important to search for solution how to fulfill the "polluter pays" principle.
19. The V4 Ministers agreed that soil contamination is a problem of multiple dimensions: environmental, social and economic. Having in mind the common efforts towards smart sustainable and inclusive growth, the rehabilitation and revitalisation of the contaminated areas could have an important role in the enhancement of resource efficiency, protection of natural resources, introducing new technologies, meanwhile creating new jobs and strengthening green economy. Therefore V4 Ministers underline the importance of taking measures as concerns keeping the possibilities of financing reclamation of contaminated sites in future financial mechanism.

Done in Šamorín – Čilistov on 8 March 2011

  
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