

JOINT STATEMENT

on the Meeting of the Speakers of Parliaments of the Visegrad Group States

3 February 2023

The Speakers of the parliaments of the Visegrad Group states (V4)

1. **Recognize** the V4 as an important format of regional cooperation and an effective tool for supporting common interests based on European values as well as a significant contributor to the transatlantic security. **Confirm** that more than ever, our cooperation must follow the principles of human rights, freedom, democracy, rule of law, good neighbourly relations and commitment to the European integration and transatlantic cooperation.
2. **Condemn** in the strongest possible terms Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine and **reaffirm** full support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, as well as for Ukraine's inherent right to self-defence against the Russian aggression and to negotiate the end of war on its own terms. **Reaffirm** commitment to providing further political and military support and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine as long as it takes, based on the sovereign decisions of each V4 country.
3. **Reaffirm** that NATO remains the backbone of security of the V4 countries. **Underscore** the need of further strengthening deterrence and defence posture of the Alliance and its military adaptation in order to better respond to the dramatically changed security situation in Europe and beyond. **Emphasize** that the transatlantic bond remains the backbone of the North Atlantic Alliance and the European security.
4. **Reiterate** that the V4 countries share a common interest in a strong, coherent and effective European Union and NATO. **Consider** the unity and effectiveness of the EU and NATO policies are essential to address the scale and complexity of the challenges we face, including those ushered forth by the Russian aggression in Ukraine, in areas ranging from security and defence, through foreign policy to economy and energy. **Reaffirm** support for the EU and NATO enlargements as well as strengthened cooperation between both organizations. **Endorse** the efforts made within the EU to bolster European defence by improving the coherence and increasing the use of EU's defence initiatives.
5. **Emphasize** that unity and solidarity among EU member states are essential to face the energy crisis. Diversification of energy sources and supply routes will contribute to further reducing the EU's energy dependencies. In this regard, **reconfirm** the commitment to phase out our dependency on Russian fossil fuels, while **recognizing** the challenges of the diversification in the regional context. Acceleration of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects supports energy security measures. All low-emission energy sources, including nuclear, are needed in the long term to secure affordable electricity for households and industries as well as to fulfil our ambitious climate goals.

6. **Express** concern over significantly increasing illegal migration to the EU. It is evident that this challenge goes beyond the borders of a single country. Therefore, measures such as surveillance, equipment and smart infrastructure taken by Member States aimed at better protection of the external border of the EU should be eligible for financial support from the EU where applicable. **Consider** as essential to strengthen the protection of the external border of the EU, including by making full use of the potential of FRONTEX in line with its core mandate and appropriate border infrastructure, and by restoring in the shortest timeframe possible the proper functioning of the Schengen area. **Express** support for further expansion of the Schengen area.