

HUNGARIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE VISEGRÁD GROUP
JULY 2017 – JUNE 2018

**Joint Declaration of the Agricultural Ministers of Visegrad Group as well
as Bulgaria, Romania on the
Renewable Energy Directive after 2020**

Visegrád, Hungary 21 September 2017

Having regard to the meeting in Nadarzyn on 2 June 2017 the Visegrad Group's agriculture ministers of Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and additionally Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia agreed on the impact of the changes related to promotion of renewable energy sources on the agricultural sector.

Therefore:

We are CONVINCED that the utilization of renewable energy sources of agricultural origin, enhances energy security and plays a crucial role in the sustainability of Europe. We further UNDERLINE the importance of these resources as a vital tool to increase both jobs and growth within the EU; especially in rural areas.

We HIGHLIGHT the importance of renewable energy sources of agricultural origin, as a market stabilizing instrument, which helps to reach the goals of the Common Agricultural Policy as they are declared in the Article 39 TFEU. We also EMPHASISE the importance of renewable energy sources of agricultural origin as a crucial element to increase the level of production of high protein European animal feed.

We AGREE that, especially in light of current and expected crop surpluses in Europe, efforts to phase out biofuels produced from agricultural crops will adversely impact European energy security, will reduce European feed security, will result in even lower rural incomes, will force investors to flee Europe, in addition to making the attainment of climate goals more difficult.

We AGREE that any decision on renewable energy sources should be based on GHG savings, their role in the European economy and on the actual level of technological development. On these bases, we are CONVINCED that the actual level of the renewable energy sources of agricultural origin should be maintained or if possible increased after 2020.

We AGREE that due to the global societal challenges, sustainability is only achievable with increased awareness to the macro-regional level, and that we should continue to put great emphasis on research, innovation and cross-border cooperation, with a view to promoting knowledge-based development.

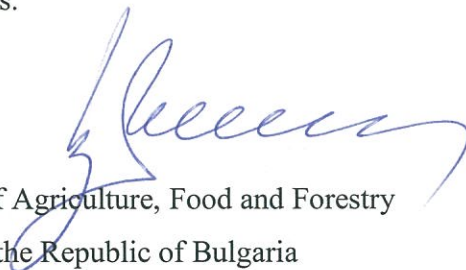
We ENCOURAGE the European Commission to once again comprehensively analyze this issue and to consider keeping the present requirements related to the use of food and feed crops for production of biofuels in EU countries and in third countries. The import of the biofuels and raw materials should be analyzed having regard to meet the same requirements as for EU production.

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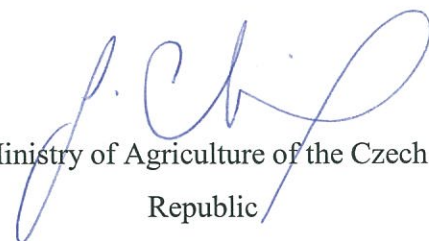
WE ASK the PRESIDENCY to discuss the agricultural aspects of the proposal of the Commission at COUNCIL level and to take into account the agricultural aspects in the Council position.

We AGREE to the objectives of the directive that biofuels that do not meet the requirements of sustainable development cannot be used.

We WISH to represent our common position both individually and together in future negotiations.



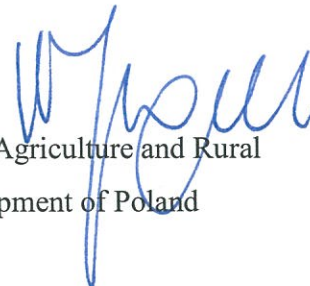
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry
of the Republic of Bulgaria




Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech
Republic



Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary



Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development of Poland



Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development of Romania



Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development of the Slovak Republic