

JOINT DECLARATION

THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE FROM THE VISEGRAD GROUP COUNTRIES HUNGARIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, POLISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, SLOVAK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, CZECH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, REPRESENTED BY **DR. LÁSZLÓ PARRAGH**, PRESIDENT OF THE HUNGARIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, REPRESENTING THE VISEGRAD GROUP

ON THE OCCASION OF THE HUNGARIAN V₄ PRESIDENCY 2021

and

THE WESTERN BALKANS 6 CHAMBER INVESTMENT FORUM, AS JOINT ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE FROM THE WESTERN BALKANS REGION, UNION OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF ALBANIA, FOREIGN TRADE CHAMBER OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, KOSOVA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, ECONOMIC CHAMBER OF NORTH MACEDONIA, CHAMBER OF ECONOMY OF MONTENEGRO, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF SERBIA, REPRESENTED BY **MR. MARKO ČADEŽ**, CHAIRMAN OF THE WESTERN BALKANS 6 CHAMBER INVESTMENT FORUM

hereinafter referred to as the V₄ Chambers and WB6 CIF Chambers, confirm the common desire to contribute to the further development of regional economic cooperation between V₄ and WB6 countries.

The V₄ Chambers and WB6 CIF Chambers desire to cooperate and contribute to the enhancement of the business and investment climate and development of the private sector in the Visegrad Group countries and the Western Balkans region.

Underlining the importance of the stability and the economic growth of the region, V₄ Chambers are committed to supporting the EU accession of the WB6 countries and the integration of the WB6 economies in the European Single Market.

The V₄ Chambers and WB6 CIF Chambers are dedicated to actively contributing to the economic restart of the region after the COVID-19 pandemic to handle economic challenges and consequences of the crises.

The V₄ Chambers and WB6 CIF Chambers emphasize the importance of sustainable economic growth, the digital and green transformations of the industry and energy security.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned goals, the V₄ Chambers and WB6 CIF Chambers agree on the followings:

- The V₄ Chambers and the WB6 CIF Chambers are committed to contributing to the further development of the V₄-WB6 regional economic cooperation, and to supporting SMEs in their efforts to establish new business connections and boost economic growth in V₄ and WB6 countries. The parties will support connecting companies in regional supply chains, partly building upon the activities of the WB6 CIF for mapping of suppliers in the WB6 region, and development of the Regional Supplier Development Programme, as set out in the Common Regional Market Action Plan;

- The V4 Chambers and the WB6 CIF Chambers strongly support the need for establishing an effective legal framework agreement with the aim to integrate the rules governing the free movement of goods, services, persons, and capital, especially the need to secure fast flow of goods between the two region. Highest priority should be given to the issues of shortening border lines, reducing waiting times and technical formalities at the border crossing points connecting the V4 and the WB6. For these reasons, the parties give priority to the issue of expanding the Green Lines to the Border crossing points between Hungary and Serbia, as stated in the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans and the Common regional Market Action Plan;
- The V4 Chambers and the WB6 CIF Chambers support work on improving connectivity between the two regions, with special regard to the North-South transport links, as well as to promote railway as a sustainable means of transportation between the regions;
- The V4 Chambers and the WB6 CIF Chambers underline the importance of further cooperation in regional projects of common interest in the fields of energy, electrification, gasification, renewable energy and the energy transition. The chambers especially commit to working closely together on the issue of energy transition process and decarbonization process of the Western Balkans in line with the EU Green Agenda for the Western Balkans Action Plan, supporting the private sector;
- The V4 Chambers and the WB6 CIF Chambers commit to contribute to common solutions to post-pandemic economic restart and recovery, and especially to share good practices and exchange of experience especially in areas of new digital trends as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- The V4 Chambers and the WB6 CIF Chambers are devoted to work closely together in supporting the EU integration processes of the WB6 countries, by providing chamber expert support, transfer of knowledge and experience, as well as guidance in the process of supporting the WB6 private sector to prepare to work in the EU single market;
- The V4 Chambers and the WB6 CIF foster cooperation in economic development projects in Europe, utilising the available dedicated EU financial means, and enhance activities in the business sector cooperation, with the support of the Western Balkan Fund and the Visegrad Fund.

Signed in two copies, in English on 3 November 2021 in Budapest, at the meeting of the Presidents of the V4 Chambers and the WB6 CIF.



Dr. László Parragh
on behalf of V4 Chambers



Marko Čadež
on behalf of WB6 CIF Chambers