



Bratislava / Bucharest / Budapest / Prague / Sofia / Warsaw, 8 September 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

Dear Ministers,

as Europe is facing an unprecedented combination of multiple crises – ranging from the war in Ukraine, soaring energy prices, to the climate and environmental emergency – we, representatives of civil society from all of Central and Eastern Europe, address the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union as a key actor which can contribute to a European transition towards independent, clean, peaceful, and affordable energy.

With soaring energy prices, overcoming the next winter is the most pressing issue at the moment. But the Czech Presidency also has a great opportunity to steer Europe towards a more independent, autonomous, and climate-neutral energy supply in the near future. This would be a great contribution towards European energy security in the long-term, would help prevent more energy crises in the coming years, and protect households from energy poverty caused predominantly by Europe's dependence on fossil fuels.

In order to achieve that, it is vital to support ambitious climate and energy policy starting immediately, including massive investments into reducing energy consumption, improving energy efficiency, and a massive rollout of renewable energy as soon as possible. These are all key measures in tackling both the climate crisis and rising prices of energy while also strengthening European energy security, all at the same time. Therefore, ambitious climate

policy is also a matter of solidarity with people in Ukraine and with people endangered by soaring energy prices.

Energy security must not serve as an excuse to undermine climate targets and prolong our dependence on fossil fuels. As the Russian invasion of Ukraine has painfully exposed, the understanding of energy security mainly as acquiring sufficient supplies of fossil fuels is obsolete. It is necessary that governments also communicate this very clearly and present the energy transition as a way towards a peaceful, affordable, clean, and secure supply of energy for Europe as a whole.

We therefore urge you to:

- make ambitious climate policy including the Fit for 55 package and REPowerEU a top priority of the Presidency;
- offer strong structural support mechanisms for people impacted by high energy prices, making sure no one is left behind with inefficient housing dependent on fossil fuels and vulnerable to energy poverty;
- promote solutions based primarily on reducing energy consumption, energy efficiency, and renewable energy, which help reduce dependence on fossil fuels;
- reject any attempts to water down the ambitions of the climate package leading to postponing the transition and extending Europe's dependence on fossil fuels (such as extending the phase out of free allowances, lowering climate ambitions or allowing investments into fossil fuel infrastructure);
- avoid solutions locking Europe into more dependency on fossil fuels in the long run;
- communicate the climate policies and energy transition as an essential part of European energy security and a way towards a more affordable, healthier, and safer future for Europeans;
- foster cooperation and solidarity among European member states in order to achieve an energy transition compatible with the Paris Agreement.

We hope that with the support of the Czech presidency, Europe can soon overcome all the current crises and come out of them stronger than before.

Yours Sincerely,

Signatories

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