



March 6, 2014

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner,

As events in Ukraine bring back the memories of the Cold War from which all of our countries suffered terribly, we are writing to highlight the overall importance of U.S. engagement in Central and Eastern Europe, and more specifically in the area of energy security and reliable supply of natural gas.

On March 4, the Prime Ministers of the Visegrad countries reiterated their strong interest in maintaining the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine and called on Russia to respect its international commitments and legal obligations, including the Budapest Memorandum.

Despite significant diversification efforts, our dependence on natural gas imports from a single supplier is still anywhere between 70-100% in the region and the gas crises of 2006 and 2009 have shown that the region is more vulnerable to energy security risks than most of the European countries. It is not hard to see that energy security remains to be a critical aspect of the region's geostrategic stability and independence.

With recent infrastructural investments in Central and Eastern Europe, it became possible to build "reverse gas flows", which have allowed sending gas from Poland and Hungary to Ukraine at a cheaper price than what Ukrainians had to pay. As a result, in 2013 alone, Ukraine imported almost 2 billion cubic meters of natural gas from Poland and Hungary. Reverse flow capabilities could be further enlarged and a potential Slovak-Ukrainian direction could be added. As we know, after two months of decreased gas price, on March 4 Russia again unilaterally increased the price of gas supplied to Ukraine. Earlier today, the European Union Heads of State and Government confirmed that the EU stands ready to assist Ukraine in securing its energy supply.

Gas-to-gas competition in our region is a vital aspect of national security and a key U.S. interest in the region. It is for this reason that we now ask for your support. With the current shale gas revolution in the United States, American companies are seeking to export gas, including to Europe. But the existing bureaucratic hurdles for the approval of the export licenses to non-FTA countries like the Visegrad countries are a major hurdle. As a recent report of the House Energy and Commerce Committee highlighted, the US now has a window of opportunity to act.



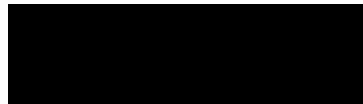
Hungarian Presidency 2013-2014 of the
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The presence of US natural gas would be much welcome in Central and Eastern Europe, and Congressional action to expedite LNG exports to America's allies would come at a critically important time for the region. Energy security is not only a day-to-day issue for millions of citizens in our region, but it is one of the most important security challenges that America's allies face in Central and Eastern Europe today. Furthermore US export of LNG would not only meet the energy security challenge of the Visegrad countries but that of the wider region as well.

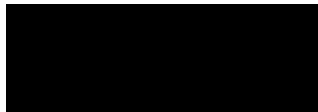
Yours sincerely,



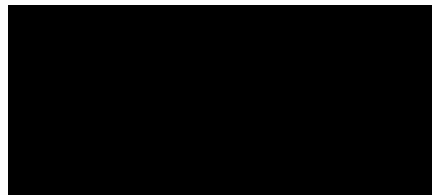
György Szapáry
Ambassador of Hungary,
Chair of the Visegrád Group



Ryszard Schnepf
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland



Petr Gandalovič
Ambassador of the Czech Republic



Peter Kimec
Ambassador of the Slovak Republic