

DECLARATION OF HUNGARIAN-ITALIAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Hungary and the Republic of Italy

reinforcing their agreement that, in the spirit of traditionally friendly relations binding their countries and peoples, they jointly take up commitments in the interest of a unified, free and democratic Europe,

expressing readiness to work together on advancing their peoples' prosperity and strengthening Europe's role in the world, while observing international basic charters protecting human rights and minority rights, and contributing to the management of global challenges in the 21st century as well as advancing dialogue between civilisations,

confirming their countries' vested interest in economic and commercial cooperation, including specific areas fine-tuned to aid sustainable development, as well as their committed efforts to increase their joint presence on third markets,

relying on the conviction that joint Hungarian-Italian initiatives in the region spanning decades have significantly contributed to the democratisation and political integration of the Central European region, as well as to strengthening a diverse and multicultural European identity

and aware of the fact that they share basic values and interests in Europe and the world

agree

that Hungary and Italy will embark on the path of strategic partnership, and, alongside the above goals, will develop the following areas of mutual interest and deepen continuous cooperation.

1. Political dialogue

Hungary and Italy will engage in enhanced political dialogue at the foreign ministerial level, and between state secretaries and top-level officials through bilateral consultations covering key areas of mutual interest. They will closely consult on European Union affairs and within the framework of NATO, the UN, the OSCE and the European Council. The levels, date, location and agenda of the meetings will be negotiated through diplomatic channels.

1.1 Cooperation within the European Union

Hungary and Italy—embracing the idea of a strong Europe based on solidarity and mutual interests—strive to engage in intensive political dialogue on the future of the European Union and priority issues on the EU's agenda (Lisbon Treaty, enlargement, the European integration process of Western Balkan countries, EU-Russia relations, European Neighbourhood Policy encompassing the Eastern Partnership and the Euro-Mediterranean Policy, energy security, environmental policy, the fight against climate change). They hold regular consultations on these topics and initiate best-practice opinion fine-tuning and a joint representation of Community policies.

Both parties are committed to the enlargement of the European Union. Hungary and Italy will consult on their endeavours in international forums, too, on the subject of crisis management, and in the interest of developing cooperation with Western Balkan countries. Highlighting the importance of European prospects for Western Balkan countries, they will move forward the launch of joint administrative “twinning” programmes in these countries.

Acknowledging the importance of subsidiarity in the hierarchy of European structures, the two countries prioritise their efforts to boost civil initiatives, twin-region and twin-city cooperation.

1.2 Cooperation in internal and judicial affairs

They make joint efforts in cooperation within the EU’s internal and judicial affairs at a bilateral level, as well as in the fight against organised crime, illegal immigration, human trafficking and the exploitation of people, with particular regard to minors. They strive to move forward the training of police forces, as well as their exchange of experiences, while supporting the stabilisation and effective operation of existing resources and institutions (Europol, Frontex, units serving abroad, workgroups of police leaders, European Police Academy). At the same time they move to intensify cooperation on justice, both in the area of criminal and civil law. They help to enhance relations in the area of disaster management and citizen protection.

The two countries pledge to cooperate closely in connection with their European Union rotating Presidencies.

1.3 Enhanced dialogue on security and defence policy, and military policy issues

Understanding joint security interests, Hungary and Italy—as members of the European Union, the North-Atlantic Alliance and the UN—welcome progress in the area of security and defence policy (EBVP) and efforts to modernise NATO, and they pledge to make contributions to global efforts in the interest of security, as well as strengthening the EBVP and NATO.

In targeting these goals, they pursue consultations on security and defence policy issues, changes in the security environment, preventing terrorism, opportunities for cooperation in the development of military capabilities, defining/developing doctrines and structures, and they strengthen cooperation in the preparation and implementation of NATO and European Union-led operations.

In the framework of partnership in the defence sector, they strengthen ties between international arms manufacturing companies and support joint research on defence equipment and modernising military technology.

They continue cooperation in nurturing joint military traditions, in connection with the maintenance of military graves and military historical research.

2. Economic cooperation

Hungary and Italy are to elaborate a special cooperation programme on such strategic areas as energy and the environment, agriculture, infrastructure and transport, with special emphasis, as regards the latter, on the Fifth European Transport Corridor. Joint action will be taken in endeavours

aimed towards European competitiveness and innovation, sustainable development and environmental protection, strengthening business ties between the two countries—with particular attention to small- and medium-enterprises, investments and boosting joint ventures in sectors of the market where there is the greatest demand—and supporting further cooperation between industrial and commerce chambers.

A prominent element of the partnership between the two countries is the formation of a unified European energy policy (the diversification of energy resources, alternative energy and security of supply), energy efficiency and escalating the Hungarian-Italian contribution to the EU energy-climate package. They support the current energy-mix review which aims to attain the three goals (climate, energy security, competitiveness) and harmonise substantive norms and regulations.

The two countries express interest in solidifying the modern European model for sustainable farming, food production as well as integrated regional development. They toughen their resolve to increase the role of food safety and consumer protection. They determine to hold regular consultations on advancing approximation with regard to major common farm matters of the Union, as well as stimulating quality food production and cooperation related to the geographical origin of food products.

The relevant institutions and public administrative organisations will agree on the modalities of holding periodic professional meetings to meet this goal.

3. Scientific-technological cooperation

On the basis of already existing bilateral agreements, Hungary and Italy are to elaborate cooperative programmes in the spheres of renewable energy (bio-energy, civil-purpose nuclear and renewable energy), and the safety of the food chain, bio-nuclear medicine, nanotechnology and environmental protection. Contributing to this goal are research institutes and connections between industrial and technological areas, institutional and private players and the formation of joint working groups responsible for determining 3-5-year goals.

They will promote the cooperation of higher-education and research institutes, industrial researchers and scientific communities, and within the framework of the Budapest bid to headquarter the European Innovation and Technology Institute (EIT), encourage the joint utilisation of the large European research infrastructures.

4. Cooperation in the area of labour and social integration

Hungary and Italy are to put cooperation and experience-sharing in the area of labour on a more intensive footing—particularly as regards the safety of workers and illegal employment, taking into account the need to socially integrate the citizens of the Union and those outside the Union while making use of Community means at their disposal.

5. Cultural cooperation

Hungary and Italy express their intention to assist the two countries' cultural, artistic, archival and library heritages in making themselves known to a wider audience through advancing teacher,

student and cultural exchanges as well as in cooperation between universities via high-level artistic institutions and research institutes.

The Hungarian presidency of the European Union in 2010 provides an exemplary opportunity for mutual presentations of the two countries' cultural and scientific riches and achievements (the exchange of museum, library material, concerts during Liszt year, conferences).

They will encourage the exchange of experiences in restoration, in the areas of preservation and utilisation of art and antique treasures. They will assist the organisation of high-level cultural events with special devotion to contemporary art, architecture and design.

They will help spread the Italian and Hungarian languages in bilingual schools and universities, covering the two countries' cultural institutes.

6. Cooperation between institutions, local organisations and civil society

The two countries are committed to more intensive public-administrative cooperation with Community means at their disposal as well as the realisation of action programmes related to signing technical agreements. They will further strengthen relations at parliamentary level and between civil society and local organisations.

The strategic partnership supplements the already existing cooperation forms, the July 6, 1991, Friendship and Cooperation Agreement signed in Budapest, as well as the affected players, national institutions, public-administrative bodies, the civil sphere and companies and local governments.

The validation of the current Statement as well as the implementation of the initiatives undertaken by the two countries will be reviewed by the foreign ministers at regular monitoring sessions.

