

# FOUNDING CHARTER OF THE VISEGRAD YOUTH CONFEDERATION

## Preamble

*We, the youth of the Visegrad countries*, delegates of youth organizations from these countries at the II. Visegrad Youth Conference, after having assembled on this ninth day of March in the year two thousand and two in the city of Visegrád in the Republic of Hungary, at the same place where cooperation between our nations first started in the year 1335 AD, we do hereby establish a new Confederation in order to strengthen the cooperation and eternal friendship between our nations and ourselves.

We feel that the Visegrad cooperation can only be successful on the long term and can only gain true content if cooperation can be extended to civil societies in the four countries through direct and regular contacts between citizens – particularly between young citizens. Otherwise cooperation will remain trapped at the intergovernmental level, creating a virtual political cooperation without social basis.

This opinion of ours is reinforced by the 6<sup>th</sup> clause of the Declaration of the Meeting of Prime Ministers in Prague dating 9<sup>th</sup> June 2000, and by the 10<sup>th</sup> clause of the Declaration of the Meeting of Prime Ministers in Cracow dating 1<sup>st</sup> June 2001. We would like to deepen our cooperation partly as a reaction to the aspirations displayed here. We would like to elaborate reciprocal cooperation between the Confederation and the intergovernmental cooperation, where the exchange of information would enable us to communicate the opinions of the Visegrad youth.

## Chapter 1: The Name and the Language of the Confederation

1. The official name of the Confederation is: Visegrad Youth Confederation (in the following, mentioned as “Confederation”).

The official abbreviation for the Confederation is: VYC.

2. The name of the Confederation in the Czech language is: Konfederace visehradské mládeže.

The abbreviation for the Confederation in the Czech language is: KVM.

3. The name of the Confederation in the Hungarian language is: Visegrádi Ifjúsági Konföderáció.

The abbreviation for the Confederation in the Hungarian language is: VIK.

4. The name of the Confederation in the Polish language is: Konfederacja Młodzieży Wyszehradzkiej.

The abbreviation for the Confederation in the Polish language is: KMW.

5. The name of the Confederation in the Slovak language is: Konfederácia višehradskej mládeže

The abbreviation for the Confederation in the Slovak language is: KVM.

6. The official language of the Confederation shall be English.

7. Any document which is created during the functioning of the Confederation in the English language, including this very document, is valid and bears the same legal power and authenticity as it would if it were in the Czech, Hungarian, Polish or Slovak language. Therefore, translation of these documents to these national languages is not necessary, although possible. In case there is difference between the English and a national translation of a document, the English version is the one to be considered valid in all cases.

8. For this same reason, whenever it is possible, the official English name and abbreviation should be used when referring to the Confederation.

## **Chapter 2: General provisions**

1. The Visegrad Youth Confederation shall be an international alliance of nonprofit and non-governmental youth organizations in the Visegrad countries: in the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland or the Slovak Republic.
2. Since the Confederation is an alliance of these organizations, it is not a detached legal subject of either international law or the law of any state, and does not have its own bureaucratic system.
3. The Confederation must always remain politically neutral, and must never participate in the inner politics of any state in connection with a political party.
4. The official logo of the Confederation features the contour of the outer borders of the Visegrad countries with the common borders wiped off. The four capitals are connected by lines of various colours. The official depiction is attached to the present Charter.

## **Chapter 3: Goals and principles**

The following goals and principles must always remain among those that are supported and represented by the Confederation, and to the realization of which it shall always contribute according to its best abilities:

1. The ensuring of eternal friendship between our nations.
2. The strengthening of regional cooperation, integration, cohesion, mobility and solidarity among our nations.
3. Advancement of the Visegrad notion and the Central European identity, building on our common cultural and historical roots.
4. The advancement of euroatlantic integration in the case of each Visegrad country, with the goal of accession to the European Union in view.
5. The advancement of stability, social welfare and security, and the peaceful and democratic development.
6. The further spread and strengthening of civil society.

## **Chapter 4: Functions and activities**

1. Ensuring the annual organization of Visegrad Youth Conferences, and the coordination of their preparation.
2. Creation of a forum for regular contact and coordination in order to deepen our cooperation.
3. Coordination of the work and future projects of member organizations in the field of Visegrad cooperation.
4. Supporting the work of member organizations, utilizing improved potentials due to regional cooperation.
5. Encouragement and supporting of common projects.
6. Summarizing and publishing the events and programs organized by member organizations in every presidential period.
7. Representation of the common views and interests of the Visegrad youth, and its further involvement in the cooperation of our countries.

8. In connection with this, the Confederation shall provide unitary representation of member organizations towards international organizations (e.g. EU, NATO), own and foreign governments. We trust that by the joining of the forces of these organizations their opinion receives increased importance.
9. Helping member organizations in providing financial basis for the realization of the Confederation's goals, trusting that the joining of forces will increase chances for receiving financial support.

## **Chapter 5: Membership**

1. Any organization may be a member of the Confederation, which
  - a) resides in one of the Visegrad countries
  - b) identifies itself as a youth organization
  - c) is non-profit and non-governmental
  - d) is politically neutral
  - e) accepts and agrees to be bound by this Charter
  - f) obliges itself to work for the goals and according to the principles specified in this Charter
  - g) is accepted as a member by the latest Visegrad Youth Conference.
2. The members of the Confederation shall be those organizations specified above, instead of those individuals who constitute the membership of these organizations. After the Confederation is consolidated, the alliance must include as many such organizations as possible.
3. The accession of new member organizations and the termination of membership of existing member organizations is decided upon by the annually organized Visegrad Youth Conferences, using the usual method and rules of decision-making.
4. Rights of member organizations:
  - a) There can be no sanctions imposed on a member organization other than the termination of membership.
  - b) Fair representation at Visegrad Youth Conferences. In case a member organization represents its country alone, it shall send 8 delegates. If there are 2 organizations from one given Visegrad country, they shall send 14 delegates altogether. If there are 3 organizations from one given Visegrad country, they shall send 18 delegates altogether. If there are 4 organizations from one given Visegrad country, they shall send 20 delegates altogether.
5. Obligations of member organizations:
  - a) Every member organization must actively contribute to the realization of the goals of the Confederation.
  - b) Member organizations are obliged not to act against the provisions of this Charter.
6. This chapter, governing issues of membership, is concluded for a maximum of four member organizations from each Visegrad country. When this maximum is reached, these rules must be reconsidered by the next Visegrad Youth Conference according to the present situation.

## **Chapter 6: Structure and decision-making**

1. The main decision-making body of the Confederation is: the body of delegates at the annually organized Visegrad Youth Conferences.

2. All decisions of the Visegrad Youth Conferences are made with the approval of two-thirds plus one of the delegations of member organizations present during the voting, each having one vote.
3. In case of absence of legal representatives of a member organization during the voting, this legal representative delegates the right of representation to another member of the delegation of the participating organization by means of verbal annunciation to the presidential organization or a written document. In case there is no such delegation of the right of representation, this given organization is not counted in the voting.
4. The main decision-making body of the Confederation, the body of delegates at the annually organized Visegrad Youth Conferences may make written amendments to this Founding Charter.
5. Decisions of the Confederation between Visegrad Youth Conferences are made by the presidential organization after unanimous approval of legal representatives of member organizations.
6. The representation of the whole Confederation shall be the responsibility of the current legal representative of the presidential organization.
7. The presidential organization organizes the next annual Visegrad Youth Conference, building voluntarily upon the help of member organizations from the same Visegrad country.
8. The presidential organization coordinates the activities of the Confederation and carries out its functions listed in Chapter 4.
9. The presidential organization is selected each year out of member organizations from the Visegrad country determined by the official rotation of the intergovernmental level by member organizations of this given country.
10. The mandate of the presidential organization lasts until the end of the Visegrad Youth Conference closing the presidential period. At this time, the previous presidential organization hands over the rights and duties of presidency to the next presidential organization.

## **Chapter 7: Wealth and finances**

1. Since the Confederation is not a legal subject, it cannot possess its own wealth and thus cannot conduct financial activities. The Confederation uses the wealth of member organizations to the degree to which the member organizations concede their wealth (based on their own judgement and decision) for the common purposes of the Confederation.
2. Although the Confederation itself cannot possess its own wealth and cannot conduct financial activities, it supports individual member organizations according to its best abilities by the joining of forces in the case of common projects, hence increasing their chances to receive financial support.

## **Chapter 8: Final provisions**

1. This Founding Charter enters into force on the day of its signing, and the organizations by whose representatives this Charter is signed become founding members of the Confederation.
2. All parties declare that they conclude this Founding Charter from their free will, they have read its content and as an evidence of their consent with its wording they voluntarily sign it as correct.

Done at the city of Visegrád on this ninth day of March in the year two thousand and two.

Signed by: