

Brussels, 15 October 2015

**Joint Declaration by the Heads of State and Government of Estonia,
Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the President of the European Commission
on Ending the Gas Isolation of the Baltic Sea Region**

We, the Heads of State and Government of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the President of the European Commission, welcome the signing of the grant agreement under the Connecting Europe Facility programme for the Gas Interconnector Poland – Lithuania, which establishes a stable financial framework for the implementation of the project and ensures its realisation by 2019.

We acknowledge the strategic role of the project which will be instrumental in integrating the gas systems of the Baltic Sea region in the internal EU gas market and reduce its dependence on individual suppliers. We recognise the Gas Interconnector Poland – Lithuania project as key for strengthening the resilience of European energy markets which is one of the objectives of our common Energy Union Strategy. We also welcome the positive impact of the Poland – Lithuania interconnector on the possibility for further integration of the regional gas markets through other projects, such as the Balticconnector.

We call on all concerned parties to implement the project not later than by 31 December 2019. We mandate the Ministers in charge of Energy Policy in our countries to monitor the implementation of the project and to undertake actions necessary to ensure its implementation in good time.

We reaffirm our commitment to further strengthening our strategic cooperation on the Union's Energy Policy objectives, including within the framework of the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP). We declare our commitment to work together towards implementing further strategic energy infrastructure projects and discuss various technical aspects required to end the energy isolation of the Baltic Sea region by reinforcing its integration into the internal European Union energy market, including the objective to ensure the synchronisation of the electricity grids of the Baltic States as stressed in the BEMIP Memorandum of Understanding.