

## **Joint Statement on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the “Weimar Triangle”**

10.09.2021 – Pressemitteilung

Joint statement by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Jean-Yves Le Drian (France), Heiko Maas (Germany) and Zbigniew Rau (Poland), on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the “Weimar Triangle”

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the “Weimar Triangle”, we, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Germany, France and Poland reaffirm our readiness to join efforts and take responsibility to strengthen the European Union in its capacity to act and to promote peace, security, democracy and human rights as well as protect its own interests and founding values.

We look back on 30 years of successful cooperation, based on the Joint Declaration adopted by Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Roland Dumas und Krzysztof Skubiszewski in Weimar on 29 August 1991, that laid out the objective of overcoming borders, strengthening links between people and countries in all aspects of life as well as promoting sustainable common structures in Europe. The accession of Poland and its neighbours to NATO and to the European Union were important milestones on this path.

Today, Germany, France and Poland are partners within a European Union of 27 Member States. The Union faces unprecedented challenges – including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and a number of serious crises and conflicts both in our neighbourhood and beyond. We are convinced that by strengthening mutual understanding, coordinating positions and launching joint initiatives the Weimar Triangle can play a more important role than ever in advancing European answers to the challenges of today and tomorrow. We will make use of this close coordination in the Weimar Triangle ahead of the upcoming French Presidency of the Council of the EU and the Polish Chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Based on an in-depth exchange of views on issues of particular importance to our three countries as partners in the European Union we state:

We seek to continue our support for the Afghan people, particularly by providing assistance to alleviate the current humanitarian emergency. We will promote a joint EU approach on possible engagement with the Taliban, based on an assessment of established benchmarks. We also stand ready to support efforts by the European Union to foster cooperation with and among neighbours of Afghanistan to prevent destabilizing effects in the region. We will promote to include the regional knowledge and thematic expertise of the OSCE in our efforts to that aim.

We share serious concerns regarding the continuous disrespect of the Belarusian authorities for human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Belarus, most recently exemplified by the wholly unfounded verdicts against Maria Kolesnikova and Maxim Znak. We call on Belarus to release all political prisoners, including members of the Polish minority.

We condemn the instrumentalization of vulnerable refugees and migrants for political purposes by the Belarusian regime and we commit to face it in a united manner. We express solidarity and full support for the EU Member States (Poland, Lithuania, Latvia) directly affected by Belarusian actions at the borders.

As regards relations with Russia we share deep concerns about Russian disrespect for the rules-based international order and for Russia's international commitments and obligations. Russia's actions continue to undermine Euro-Atlantic security. We remain deeply concerned with the continuous deterioration of the human rights situation, and the systematic crackdown on the opposition. We remain committed to the support of and engagement with civil society in Russia. We continue to call for a selective dialogue and cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

We remain committed to the territorial integrity and security of the Eastern Partnership countries and declare our commitment to the peaceful solution of all protracted and pending conflicts on their territories, in line with the OSCE's principles and commitments. We are looking forward to closely cooperating with the Polish OSCE Chairmanship 2022 in this regard. To solve the conflict in and around Eastern Ukraine, there is no alternative for us to the implementation of the Minsk agreements. Insofar we are ready to further support the Normandy format as well as negotiations under the OSCE's Trilateral Contact Group. We support the OSCE SMM mission in fulfilling its mandatory tasks. We support the establishment of the Crimean Platform as stated in the Joint Declaration adopted during the Platform's summit on 23 August 2021. We will continue to foster Ukraine's reform process, which has already achieved significant results. However, further efforts will still be necessary.

We express our ongoing support for the Neighborhood policy, we confirm its strategic importance. In this regard, we are looking forward to our cooperation in ensuring a successful Eastern Partnership Summit in December.

Regarding our relationship with the People's Republic of China the European Union has to stand strong and united. We will defend our interests and values in line with the European Commission's and the European External Action Service's Joint Communication "EU-China: A strategic outlook", as reaffirmed in the conclusions of the European Council of 1 and 2 October 2020. We will continue to promote strong EU unity and to stand in solidarity with Member States facing pressure from China. For developing our relationship with the region as a whole we strive for an inclusive approach, in which the European Strategy for the Indo-Pacific and an ambitious implementation of the EU Connectivity Strategy are going to play a central role.

Europe has vital interests in the Indo-Pacific, such as open markets, functioning and secure sea lanes, but also the protection of climate and environment. With an ambitious Indo-Pacific strategy, the EU can strengthen its role as an active partner and a security provider in the region and help to strengthen and protect multilateralism and rule based principles.

NATO has a fundamental role for the collective defense of the Allies in the Euro-Atlantic area. As committed members of both the EU and NATO, we strive for an ambitious strengthening of EU-NATO cooperation. Shared security threats and new emerging security challenges facing EU and NATO members alike make a closer cooperation ever more important, in full complementarity. Finally, our countries' engagement through operations, also within the

framework of the EU, and our efforts within the Sahel Coalition to restore state authority and access to public services throughout the Sahel region demonstrate our strong and continued commitment to the stability of the Sahel.

Based on the joint commitment to the fundamental values which underpin our democratic and societal models and provide the basis for freedom, security and prosperity in Europe we want to give our trilateral cooperation a new momentum:

To strengthen cohesion in the EU we consider it important to allow for a broad, transparent and inclusive discussion related to the future of Europe, with the aim to ensure pluralism by involving national and regional levels as well as civil society. We support the Conference on the future of Europe as a chance to develop the EU further and will engage to facilitate concrete and tangible results. To facilitate post-pandemic recovery, strengthen resilience and Europe's sovereignty, promote sustainable growth, and fulfil the EU's leading role in climate policy we will promote the implementation of the new priorities set in the current Multiannual Financial Framework and in the EU Recovery Instrument. We also welcome the ambitious proposals by the European Commission in the "Fit for 55"-package to advance implementation of the European Green Deal, call for swift and targeted negotiations of the package that will enable a truly just transition of our economies.

To foster European sovereignty and raise the attractiveness of the EU as a global partner committed to a rules-based multilateral international order we will contribute to promoting concrete measures to strengthen the EU's capacity to act for instance in foreign, security and defense, trade or digital policy.

30 years after the foundation of the Weimar Triangle, Germany, France and Poland remain committed also to further strengthening contacts and cooperation between their civil societies, especially the youth, to bolstering scientific exchanges and student mobility, with the aim of increasing respective knowledge and fostering mutual understanding to the benefit of a Europe united in diversity.

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