



SEJM
OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE



SEIMAS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

ADDRESS

OF THE CHAIRMEN OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEES

20 MARCH 2007

- Underlining the importance the EU is attaching to the development of transport infrastructure within the EU;
- noting that Via Baltica is the project of major importance to the entire Baltic, Nordic and Central European regions aimed at connecting the Baltic transport system with the European Union transport market via Poland;
- indicating the growing public interest in the implementation of the Via Baltica project;

The Chairmen of the Polish and Lithuanian Foreign Affairs Committees:

1. take all due respect of the concern expressed over the Via Baltica bypass of the Polish town Augustów;
2. recognise the necessity to protect the unique environment of the Rospuda National Park;
3. stress that the chosen project route has a minimal impact on the environment;
4. draw attention to the fact, that statistically approx. 1 500 000 heavy vehicles pass the town of Augustów annually, and that the termination of the project would cause increased congestion in Augustów;
5. note that the number of road traffic casualties is extremely high in this particular route stretch;
6. emphasize that a balance is needed between both protecting wild nature and improving environmental conditions in the populated areas; it is also necessary to increase safety and health standards of the population living in Augustów;
7. note that the inhabitants of Augustów are still waiting for the construction of the Augustów bypass that would offer a solution to the acute problems in the area;
8. believe that the European Commission when making a decision will take due note of both environmental aspects, i.e. the protection of Natura 2000 area as well as the need to reduce air pollution in Augustów, so that the public health standards were ensured and road accident casualties were minimised.

PAWEŁ ZALEWSKI

JUSTINAS KAROSAS

Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
Sejm of the Republic of Poland

Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs
Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania