



Brussels,

Dear Minister,

I have the pleasure to invite you to the Stability Pact's upcoming Regional Table meeting, which will take place on 16 November 2005 in Prague. The government of the Czech Republic has kindly offered to host this meeting, which will be preceded by sessions of the three Working Tables the day before.

The Stability Pact is currently at an important junction. Considering the tasks that have been set for the Pact - stabilising the region after the conflicts of the 1990s, supporting the countries of the region on their path towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration, and enhancing regional co-operation - much has been achieved in the past years.

Nevertheless, considering that the Stability Pact has always been conceived as a temporary instrument, our priority for the coming years has to be to ensure sustainability of the co-operation processes which have been started within the Pact. Enhancing regional ownership of these processes clearly is the key requirement to succeed in this endeavour.

In view of this need, I have initiated a 'regional ownership process', which started out with an open and fruitful discussion at the Regional Table in Sofia, Bulgaria, in May 2005.

Further to this initial discussion I requested the countries of the region to assess their own involvement in regional co-operation and their priorities with regard to regional activities. Secondly, I have initiated the creation of an external Senior Review Group headed by Ambassador Alpo Rusi of Finland to make recommendations on the process of enhancing regional ownership and readjusting the priorities of the Stability Pact. And finally, an internal review of the degree of regional ownership in the different Stability Pact task forces and initiatives has begun focusing on strategies to enhance the political leadership of the countries of the region in the different initiatives as well as the financial and personnel contributions from SEE.

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The upcoming Regional Table meeting in Prague will build upon the results of these consultations aiming at a concrete mid-term strategy on regional ownership as well as a readjusted set of priorities for the work of the Stability Pact based on the continued needs in the region as well as the requirements for European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

I need your continued political support if we are to succeed in our endeavours and would thus be honoured if you could join me in Prague.

I look forward to welcoming you at the Regional Table.

Yours sincerely,

Erhard Busek