

STATEMENT OF THE RIIGIKOGU

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS RELATED TO THE GAS PIPELINE PLANNED IN THE BALTIC SEA

The Riigikogu expresses its concern regarding the possible environmental impact of the gas pipeline planned by Nord Stream AG.

The Riigikogu stresses that the research conducted by the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has confirmed the particularly sensitive environmental status of the Baltic Sea.

The Riigikogu notes that the assessment of environmental impact initiated on the basis of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) has not sufficiently taken into consideration all the risks connected to the project and that the permits necessary for carrying out the project cannot thus be issued in respect of the generally recognised precautionary principle of international environmental law.

The Riigikogu considers it vital that the competent authorities of the countries bordering the Baltic Sea seriously consider all the environmental risks of the project, taking into account the most comprehensive scientific data available and not basing their decision solely on the deficient information provided by the developer.

The Riigikogu calls on the parliaments of all countries bordering the Baltic Sea to carry out parliamentary supervision over the assessment of environmental impact and the processes of issuing permits, in order to ensure that the relevant scientific data is fully taken into account and that the general public contributes efficiently to the process.

The Riigikogu attaches great importance to the need for the members of the parliaments of the countries bordering the Baltic Sea to discuss the project in depth at public forums, and proposes that a parliamentary conference dedicated to discussing the building of the Baltic Sea gas pipeline be organised.

The Riigikogu recognises the work of all the scientists who have truthfully described the environmental risks connected to the Baltic Sea gas pipeline and have brought these to public attention.

Tallinn, 27 October 2009