

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
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COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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Prime Minister Viktor Orbán opens the 18th plenary session of the Hungarian Standing Conference

On Friday, the 18th plenary session of the Hungarian Standing Conference (MÁÉRT) was held in Budapest. Opening the event, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán spoke about the need for Hungarian ethnic parties, the economic development of territories with Hungarian populations in the Carpathian Basin and the protection of the self-identity of Hungarian communities. In his introductory address, the Prime Minister said after the debates and experiments of recent years, it has been ascertained beyond doubt that mixed parties cannot, meaning that only purely Hungarian ethnic parties are able to adequately represent the interests of Hungarian communities in the neighboring countries. Therefore, on behalf of the motherland, Mr. Orbán reassured representatives of the organizations attending the meeting of the MÁÉRT of the government's continued support, highlighting that, in addition to political cooperation, they are paying ever more attention to the economic development programs of Hungarian-inhabited territories which are equally good and valuable for Hungary, the given neighboring country, members of the majority nation living there and the Hungarian minority. The Prime Minister highlighted that it is important to make our neighbors understand that Hungary's national and economic development is not a threat but, on the contrary, an opportunity for them, and this development increases the significance of Central Europe in the European Union.

Zsolt Semjén: purely Hungarian ethnic parties must be supported

Speaking at the closing press conference of the plenary session of the Hungarian Standing Conference (MÁÉRT), Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén said that the MÁÉRT reaffirmed that it is the forum of purely Hungarian ethnic parties. The Deputy Prime Minister announced that the closing declaration of the session was adopted by full consensus, including every parliamentary party of Hungary and Hungarian parties abroad, except the Democratic Coalition (DK) the representatives of which – although they were invited – were not present at the meeting. Mr. Semjén stressed that there was a general consensus that Hungarians living abroad are entitled to Hungarian citizenship and right to vote, as well as a form of autonomy which is in line with European standards. Speaking at the press conference, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that the thematic year of 2020 will be the year of strong Hungarian communities abroad. He added that they plan to realize this year together with their Hungarian partner organizations abroad, joining the programs of the Year of National Cohesion adopted by the Hungarian National Assembly. In the closing declaration adopted at the end of the plenary session, the members of the MÁÉRT state that they expect the political parties of Hungary to support those parties and candidates abroad which represent Hungarian communities in neighboring countries.



Viktor Orbán: we are anti-immigration because Hungarians can only be replaced with Hungarians

Hungary continues to need an anti-immigration policy; “Hungarians can only be replaced with Hungarians,” Prime Minister Viktor Orbán stated at the 9th plenary session of the Hungarian Diaspora Council held on Thursday in the Castle Garden Bazaar in Budapest. The Prime Minister said a country with a diminishing population cannot deceive itself that it can solve the problem of population decline without its own efforts. He said the government will continue the fight related to migration because this world phenomenon “is here to stay”, “Africa is only just beginning to move”. Mr. Orbán highlighted that pro-immigration forces accuse the Hungarian people of having a heart of stone, but we have to state loud and clear that Hungary is a generous country, the Hungarians are generous people, and are also prepared to take action for good causes. However, help must be taken there, instead of bringing problems here. In this context, he informed his audience about a number of Hungarian projects which seek to provide assistance in areas affected by migration, including Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Nigeria and Ethiopia. Mr. Orbán further highlighted that Hungary now has enough strength to not only talk about, but to also take action for enabling Hungarians to remain in their homeland. This is why they have embarked on a responsible neighborhood policy as Hungary has a vested interest in its neighbors developing at the same pace as Hungary itself, and to this end they are pursuing joint economic development programs with several neighboring states, he said. Regarding Hungarians living in diaspora, the Prime Minister pointed out that there are around 2.5 million of them; most of them live in the United States and Canada. The Hungarian government is offering a number of programs which seek to connect scattered communities to the blood circulation of the Hungarian nation, he said, mentioning that a further goal is to create a Hungarian emigration and diaspora center.

Zsolt Semjén: diaspora Hungarians are part of the nation “with equal weight and respect”

Speaking at the 9th plenary session of the Hungarian Diaspora Council, Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén said that since 2010, Hungarians living in diaspora are part of the Hungarian nation “with equal weight and respect” as Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed that diaspora Hungarians had been regarded as “enemies” during the communist era and neglected afterwards between 1990-2010. He added that since 2010, when the Fidesz-KDNP alliance came to power, all members of the diaspora have been welcome in Hungary. Mr. Semjén welcomed that more than 1.1 million Hungarians have acquired or re-acquired Hungarian citizenship thanks to the simplified naturalization procedure. He thanked the diaspora for always supporting Hungary and Hungarians. Speaking at a press conference in the break of the plenary session, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi stressed that 2.5 million Hungarians live in



diaspora in different parts of the world, a number approximately equal to the number of Hungarians in neighboring countries. He added that the successful programs helping the diaspora – Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program, Mikes Kelemen Program, the diaspora program realized by the Rákóczi Association – will continue.

Péter Szijjártó: Respecting historical facts is not revisionism

Speaking at a meeting of the Committee of National Cohesion of the Hungarian national Assembly, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó said that respecting historical facts cannot be referred to as revisionism. During the meeting, the minister emphasized that although the same historical events might be viewed completely differently according to different perspectives, Hungary expects every neighboring country to respect that some events 'belong to the darkest pages of Hungarian history'. He added that the question of Hungarian communities has witnessed a general improvement in the past 5 years in the Carpathian Basin, yet many issues remain to be resolved. Mr. Szijjártó added the 'policy for Hungarian communities is crucial within foreign politics, and as Hungary's geographic and national borders are not the same, this policy must be in the center of foreign politics'. The minister emphasized that when working out foreign political strategies, the main goal is to continuously improve the situation of Hungarian communities living abroad.



Second round: RMDSZ counts on people's common sense, Hunor Kelemen votes for Klaus Johannis

The Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) expects people to be reasonable when voting for their preferred candidate in the second round of the presidential election in Romania, while president Hunor Kelemen expressed his intention of putting his trust in the current head of state. As Mr. Kelemen pointed out to Hungarian news site Krónika, they examined all possible results of the second round, and as neither Klaus Johannis, nor Viorica Dăncilă asked for the support of RMDSZ three days after the first round, they won't vote for any of them. 'RMDSZ counts on Hungarian votes, even though they didn't express that', said Klaus Johannis on Wednesday, during the press conference of the National Liberal Party (PNL) in their headquarters. Mr. Johannis seeks to renew his mandate as head of state this year. He added: "I count on Hungarian votes. I genuinely believe that the vast majority understands what's at stake. I received their votes in 2014, as well, without having to explicitly ask them. I expect them to vote for a normal Romania."

István Grezsa: it's good to be Hungarian in Backamadaras, too

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Hungarian nursery school in Backamadaras/Păsăreni in Romania which was built as part of the Hungarian Government's Carpathian Basin Nursery School Development Program, Ministerial Commissioner responsible for the program István Grezsa said that "For a hundred



years, we've been weeping about losing our people, our strength and our values. Now we see the Hungarians of the Carpathian Basin as one and we plan the future with our head held high. The Hungarian Government seeks to help every Hungarian and non-Hungarian resident of the Carpathian Basin'. Mr Gerzsa, alongside the residents of Backamadaras, is proud and happy to provide children the possibility of playing and singing in Hungarian in this modern building. He added that he thinks it possible that a nursery program will follow, as obviously there is an increasing need for nurseries all over Transylvania.

Soltész: Communities in the Carpathian Basin can only survive if they stick together

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the parish of the local Catholic church in Csúz/Dubník, State Secretary for Churches, Minorities and Civil Affairs Miklós Soltész stressed that "Communities in the Carpathian Basin can only survive if they stick together." Mr Soltész pointed out that the new parish will serve Hungarian and Slovakian communities equally, helping the coexistence of different nations. He added that "Our duty is to remain faithful to our nation and stick together as Catholics." He also mentioned that a millennium of shared history and coexistence in the Carpathian Basin prove that different communities can only survive if they stick together.

Hungarian-Serbian Joint Economic Committee sign cooperation agreement

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Hungarian-Serbian Business Forum in Budapest, Parliamentary State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Levente Magyar said that "Hungarian-Serbian relations are dynamically improving, both countries are eager to benefit from the business opportunities that come along". Mr. Magyar emphasized that both countries are in an excellent position for economic growth and Hungary has exact plans concerning the upcoming period. He pointed out that Hungary provides a financial background for investments in Serbia – investors may receive a 50% support not only in Vojvodina, but in Middle and Southern Serbia, as well. According to Levente Magyar, this financial opportunity concerns Hungarian and Serbian investors, too. He encouraged the public to seek out for opportunities bravely, and to take business risks.

It is time for a higher level of communication between Ukraine and Hungary

Speaking to journalists after the closed session of the National Assembly's foreign affairs committee, the head of the committee Zsolt Németh said that 'It is time for a higher level of communication between Ukraine and Hungary',ay. As he put it, 'Hungary is ready for a fresh start with Ukraine.' Mr. Németh pointed out that



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legislation will have a crucial role, and so will the Committee of Foreign Affairs, which is ready to take part in maintaining a relationship with Ukraine. Secretary of State for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Levente Magyar mentioned that Hungary's interest lays in a strong, stable and secure Ukraine.



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