

# Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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## Basescu removes Hunor Kelemen from office

On Thursday President of Romania Traian Basescu formally removed the leader of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen from office as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture. Mr. Kelemen resigned from his posts on 1 August 2014. At a press conference held on Thursday, President Basescu said he had waited three months in vain for Prime Minister Victor Ponta to appoint a new minister to replace Mr. Kelemen. According to the coalition agreement, the RMDSZ is entitled to nominate the new Minister of Culture, who will also occupy the post of Deputy Prime Minister. Previously, the RMDSZ had nominated the head of the RMDSZ's Council of Representatives senator Rozália Biró, but President Basescu had found her unsuitable.

Prime Minister Ponta temporarily became head of the Ministry of Culture, although – according to the news agency Mediafax – the person performing duties in connection with the operation of the ministry and with the right to sign official documents is State Secretary for Culture Csilla Hegedűs.

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## Cooperation between the Hungarian government and the MKP is successful

Hungary's new Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó made his first official trip as minister to Pozsony/Bratislava, where he said that Hungarian-Slovakian relations are of strategic importance and are also an important element of wider, Central European cooperation. Concerning the question of citizenship and other "hot topics" between the two countries, Mr. Szijjártó said that these issues should be treated in a civilized, European manner and solutions to them could be reached by relying on joint success stories.

During his official trip to Pozsony, Mr. Szijjártó visited the headquarters of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP), where he held talks with the leaders of the party. The head of the MKP József Berényi expressed his pleasure that the tradition of Hungary's new minister of foreign affairs visiting the MKP has not been broken. Mr. Berényi said that during the talks the parties reviewed ongoing issues and he also informed Mr. Szijjártó of the MKP's good "condition" in the run-up to Slovakia's approaching local elections. The President of the MKP added that his party's aim is to repeat the results it achieved four years ago.

Giving an interview to the Slovakian Hungarian newspaper Új Szó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó said that the Hungarian government continues to consider the MKP its partner.

## Conference on the atrocities committed against Hungarians in Vojvodina

On Saturday the Alliance of Hungarians in Vojvodina (VMSZ) and the Délvidék Research Center held a conference in Serbia's Szabadka/Subotica entitled "70 years



ago... Atrocities against Hungarians in the historic Délvidék”. The conference was attended by prominent researchers, historians, archivists and ethnographers in the field. Speaking at the conference, the head of the VMSZ István Pásztor said that “It must not happen again that anybody pays with their life, freedom or possessions because they belong to a certain community – either ethnic, religious or any other.” He added that “Hungary and Serbia have reached a level at which we can freely discuss this period of history, although ignorance concerning this issue is still notable. Hungary’s and Serbia’s presidents’ gestures of reconciliation, the tribute they paid last year to the Hungarian and Serbian victims and the work of the Serbian-Hungarian Academic Committee are considered steps forward in this field.”

Mr. Pásztor highlighted that last year the Parliament of Serbia adopted a resolution condemning collective guilt. At the time same he emphasized that there is still much to do in this field: the resolution declaring the residents of three Vojvodina towns – Mozsor/ Mošorin, Zsablya/Žabalj and Csúrog/Čurug – collectively guilty has not yet been repealed, and there are also problems on issues concerning rehabilitation and restitution of property.

### The Year of Hungarian senior elementary school children abroad continues in Vojvodina

After Szabadka/Subotica the “2014 – Year of Hungarian senior elementary school children abroad” continued in Zombor/Sombor. Children of the Nyugat-Bácska/ Zapadnobački okrug school took part in a spectacular interactive program held in the Népszínház, which was full of pupils. In the framework of the program “Travelling Physics Show” – based on József Öveges’ methods used in his radio and TV programs – the children had an opportunity to get acquainted with the mysteries of this area of science in a playful and illustrative way.

The “2014 – Year of Hungarian senior elementary school children abroad” program focuses on Hungarian senior elementary school children (5th-8th grades) and their communities.



### Charity organizations collect donations for Transcarpathians

Hungary’s charity organizations have announced that they are organizing a joint fundraising initiative for the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia. Organizations taking part in the program are Hungarian Reformed Church Aid, Caritas Hungarica, Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA), the Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta, Hungarian Baptist Aid and the Hungarian Red Cross. On the occasion of the organizations’ announcement, State Secretary for Churches, Minorities and Civil Affairs at the Ministry of Human Capacities Miklós Soltész said that Hungarians have already proved several times their charitable nature when they supported the victims of tsunamis, floods or Hungary’s red mud catastrophe.



On 8 October the head of Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA) László Lehel, the aid's goodwill ambassador (and wife of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán) Anikó Lévai and State Secretary for international cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ádám Zoltán Kovács made a visit to Transcarpathia's Beregszász/Berehove. Anikó Lévai presented aid packages to twenty of the one hundred school children taking part in the inclusion program.

During his stay in Transcarpathia, State Secretary Kovács had talks with the county leaders and the head of the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ), and on Thursday officially handed over a Hungarian nursery school in Munkács/Muachevo which had been renovated as part of the Eastern Partnership Program. Concerning his talks with the leaders in Transcarpathia, Mr. Kovács said that he experienced openness on their part in the field of strengthening cooperation.

