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Árpád János Potápi: vocational training is of strategic importance

Speaking at the opening conference of “2015 – the year of Hungarian vocational education abroad” in the House of Hungarians (Magyarság Háza), State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that vocational institutions are of strategic importance and their development must be harmonized in Hungary and in neighboring countries. At the event, which was attended by the representatives of 180 Hungarian vocational institutions and members of teachers’ associations abroad, the State Secretary said that vocational training is one of the priority fields of educational policy in every neighboring country. He added that their aim is to draw the attention of the representatives of social and political life to this field. Mr. Potápi said that the Hungarian government has allocated 500 million HUF (EUR 1.6 million) to the program, which is coordinated by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad. He emphasized that the size of this amount proves that the Hungarian government pays special attention to this area. Mr. Potápi added that “attention should be drawn to the fact that vocational institutions are of strategic importance, the basis of the development of Hungarian-language vocational education abroad must be laid down, and this activity must be harmonized in Hungary and in neighboring countries.”

European Parliament Intergroup for Traditional Minorities is reestablished

On Thursday the European Parliament’s Intergroup for Traditional Minorities was re-established in Strasbourg and MEP Kinga Gál (EPP-Fidesz) was elected one of its Co-Presidents. The Intergroup for Traditional Minorities is one of the EP’s oldest and most active working groups, and its reestablishment was initiated by Ms. Gál. As previously, the main aim of the intergroup is to keep the problems of traditional national minority communities on the agenda at an international level, since this is the only forum in the European Union in which the interests of these communities can be presented.



Commemorations on the 25th anniversary of the Temesvár revolution

During the past week, several commemorations were held both in Hungary and Transylvania to mark the 25th anniversary of the revolution in Temesvár/Timișoara which led to the end of the communist regime in Romania. Addressing an event at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán highlighted the role played in the revolution by Reformed Church pastor and Member of the European Parliament László Tótkés, saying that “The national communism of Ceausescu failed in a place where the ramparts of freedom were still present, and this place was a reformed parish.” The Prime Minister emphasized that in 1989 a ray of light appeared which shone across the whole of Europe. Mr. Orbán added that today this light is hardly seen, and quoted Lajos Kossuth, saying that “We want not just to be free, but to



be free Hungarians.” The Prime Minister added that in the house of democracy, Hungarians have always had their own entrance door. Speaking at the event, MEP László Tótkés said that the fact that borders dividing our nation have been removed has a serious impact not just on our past, but also on our present and future. Mr. Tótkés stressed that the revolution in Temesvár was an important milestone not only in the history of Romania, but also in that of Hungary, and that as a blessing it reconciled the two nations for a short time. He added that “the events which took place twenty-five years ago brought not just the end of communism, but also the liberation of minorities and the unification of the nation.” Mr. Tótkés emphasized that the Hungarian nation was united by unprecedented cohesion without borders. The President of the Hungarian American Coalition Maximilian Teleki said at the event that in overseas countries László Tótkés is known as the spark which lit the flame of freedom for several generations. At a commemoration in Temesvár, President of Hungary János Áder said that “1989 was the year of miracles, but miracles will not happen by themselves – we have to work for them.”

Transylvanian Hungarians send petition to the Romanian government

Hungarians who have been demonstrating in Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe during the week have sent a petition to the Romanian government, calling on it to stop denouncing Hungarian symbols. Throughout a whole week, hundreds of people gathered every day in front of the prefecture building in Sepsiszentgyörgy, singing the Hungarian National Anthem and protesting against the fact that Hungarians had been fined by the prefect of the county (who has since then been removed from office) for singing the Hungarian National Anthem. In the petition which was read out in Hungarian, Romanian and English, the demonstrators called on the Romanian government not to incite conflict between Romanians and Hungarians living in Szeklerland by denying members of the Hungarian community their fundamental rights.



Seven parties would win seats in the Slovak Parliament

According to a survey by the Focus agency, the parties MKP and SNS would win seats in the Parliament, while the SDKÚ, SaS and NOVA parties would not, since they would not reach the necessary five percent threshold. The survey suggests that Robert Fico’s Smer-SD would win in the elections with 34.2 percent of the vote. Háló (Siet’) would come second with 11.4 percent, while the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) would come third with 10.8 percent. The party named Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (OL’aNO) would have 8.3 percent, while Most-Híd would be on 7.4 percent. According to the survey, the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) would acquire 5.2 percent, and would therefore also win seats in the Parliament. The Slovak National Party (SNS) would be the smallest party in Parliament, with 5.1 percent.



Péter Szijjártó: Hungary needs a stable and strong Ukraine

Speaking after talks with his Ukrainian counterpart Pavlo Klimkin in Kiev on Friday, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó said that Hungary needs “an economically and politically stable and strong Ukraine” as a neighboring country. Mr. Szijjártó added that Hungary is taking part in the Ukrainian mission of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) with 21 representatives, and will contribute 100,000 euros to the body’s operation. The Hungarian Minister added that he agrees with his Ukrainian counterpart that border crossing procedures between Hungary and Ukraine need to be speeded up, adding that preparations had been made for joint border control. In connection with this issue, Pavlo Klimkin said that Ukraine plans to build a new border crossing point in the near future.

New strategy for the preservation and development of Hungarian education in Transcarpathia

At the 12th session of the Hungarian Teachers’ Associations in Transcarpathia (KMPSZ) held in Beregszász/Berehove on Saturday, the association announced that it would develop a new strategy for the preservation and development of Hungarian-language education in Transcarpathia, with respect to the current events in Ukraine – especially the planned reform of the Ukrainian public educational system. The event, which was organized at the Ferenc Rákóczi II. Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute, was attended by representatives of Hungarian teachers’ associations from the Carpathian Basin, members of the Hungarian government and representatives from the KMPSZ’s partner organizations.

