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Viktor Orbán: Not a single issue should be taboo

At the second world meeting of the Friends of Hungary Foundation held in Budapest on Saturday, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said that in order to be successful, to remain a sure and reliable reference point in an unpredictable world, Hungarians cannot afford to treat a single issue as taboo. The Prime Minister said that, instead of “ideological fixations”, we must deal with the problems reality presents us with, and “must give our own answers to the problems that concern us”. Mentioning Hungarian inventions, Mr. Orbán pointed out that the peculiar Hungarian way of thinking not only prevails in the realms of science and culture, but also filters into the world of politics. The Prime Minister argued, pointing out that the country must see beyond its borders and be open and perceptive to what is happening in the world. Those who fail to pay attention will not understand the changes and will therefore lose out on them, he said. Mr. Orbán briefly summarized some signs of the crumbling world order and highlighted the fact that the world economy’s center of gravity is increasingly shifting towards the East.

The Friends of Hungary Foundation came into being in 2011, with an aim of forming a bridge between Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin and those of the diaspora, keeping Hungarians around the world informed and involving people globally in the successful social, cultural, economic and academic activities of members of the Hungarian nation.

House Speaker: Minorities’ representation in the Hungarian Parliament could be a model for Europe

Speaking to the public channel Duna TV on Sunday, the Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament László Kövér said that the form of parliamentary representation Hungary now offers to its national and ethnic minorities should be a minimum for other European nations. The House Speaker said that in most European countries minorities have fewer parliamentary powers than in Hungary. Mr. Kövér added that he would support Hungary’s public media drawing attention to the thirteen nationalities living in Hungary and presenting their culture – on at least one occasion a year. He stressed that “Hungary has remedied a constitutional debt it owed its minorities over the previous 20 years, and it only achieved this with the help of a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly.” Under Hungary’s new election law adopted in December 2011, minorities have the right to delegate a spokesperson to Parliament. Mr. Kövér added that, although the spokespersons are still trying to “find their way”, they have proposed several initiatives recently.



A further “no” to autonomy

After talks with his Hungarian counterpart in Budapest on Thursday, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Bogdan Aurescu declared that ethnically-based autonomy is incompatible with the Romanian constitution, it is not in accord with European



norms, and therefore cannot be accepted. The Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Péter Szijjártó said that the task of the Hungarian government is to support Hungarian communities abroad in achieving their aims. The Hungarian minister added that cooperation between Hungary and Romania should be rational, and disputes over minorities should remain grounded in order to solve them. Mr. Szijjártó added that Hungary is committed to resolving disputes concerning minorities in line with European norms. Concerning Hungary-Romania relations, he said that the joint committee for minority affairs has not held a session since 2011, but now he agreed with his Romanian counterpart that the body's co-chairs would continue to coordinate the most crucial issues and convene the next session of the committee as soon as possible. Mr. Szijjártó added that the Hungarian community living abroad is important for Hungary, as well as the Romanian community living in Hungary.

[Romanian parliament adopts new municipal election law](#)

At its session on Wednesday, the Romanian parliament adopted a part of the election reform package, including the party law, the law on party financing and the new municipal election law. According to the new municipal election law, the heads of county councils will be elected not directly but subsequently by the body of representatives, who will elect them from among its members. Mayors will be elected in one round by a simple majority. The Romanian parliament has not adopted the proposal of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) of reducing the election threshold to three percent, and as a result only those organizations will remain to be able to win mandate in local governments which receive at least five percent of the vote.

[The analysis of the Research Institute for Hungarian Communities Abroad about the Kolozsvár conference on protection of minorities](#)

In its latest analysis, the Research Institute for Hungarian Communities Abroad (NPKI) wrote that the remarks of the President of the Venice Commission at a conference in Kolozsvár (Cluj Napoca) on the protection of minorities weaken the functioning and efficiency of the control mechanisms for the European protection of minorities. On 30 April, the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Babeş-Bolyai University (BBTE) organized a conference in Kolozsvár on the protection of minority rights, which was attended by the President of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe Gianni Buquicchio. Speaking at the conference, the President of the Venice Commission said that the protection of minority rights in Romania is exemplary. The NPKI highlights in its analysis that the Romanian "model" of minority protection – which is characterized by regular and everyday conflicts between the majority nation and national minorities – can hardly be considered exemplary. Furthermore, conferences like the one in Kolozsvár – which try to whitewash the reality – further reduce the chances of finding solutions for problems in this area. The NPKI stresses that while the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs declared that the country's minority policy can serve as a model for other states and stressed that the



sense of this policy is the inclusion of the parties concerned in decision making, the advocacy organization of the largest national minority in Romania, the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) was not invited to the conference. Similarly, no invitation was sent to the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities (Romania's state research institute dealing with minority policy), which is based in Kolozsvár.



The use of the Hungarian language to be monitored by a committee

The town council of Dunaszerdahely/Dunajská Streda has established a special committee to monitor minority language use in the town. The aim of the committee is to promote the use of the Hungarian language in administrative procedures. The proposal was presented to the body by Ákos Horony. According to the proposal, the committee will operate as an advisory branch of the town council, and its task will be to examine the enforcement of laws dealing with minority language use, as well as to make proposals on minority language use to the town council and its other institutions. Mr. Horony added that the committee's aim is to assess the additional costs of minority language use, since the most frequent reason cited for rejecting bilingualism is lack of funds.



Action plan on minority engagement

Serbia's EU integration, more effective operation of courts, judicial reform and minority rights were among the main topics of talks in Belgrade between Hungary's Minister of Justice László Trócsányi and his Serbian counterpart Nikola Selaković. Concerning the rights of national minorities, the parties discussed the role of Serbia's Hungarian community in the field of the justice system and other fields of public life. In connection with this issue, the Hungarian minister said that by the end of the year an action plan would be completed, for which Hungary has offered its help. After the talks, the parties signed an agreement on the two countries' cooperation in the field of justice.

In Újvidék/Novi Sad, Minister of Justice László Trócsányi has held talks with the head of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) and president of the Vojvodina Provincial House of Representatives István Pásztor on issues affecting minorities and minority national councils. At a press conference held after the meeting, the Minister stressed that among the national councils operating in Serbia, the Hungarian National Council of Vojvodina is the strongest one, since this council represents the largest national minority group in Serbia – the 250,000-strong Hungarian community. The head of the VMSZ said that economic and social issues affecting Vojvodina Hungarians were also discussed during the talks, as well as negotiation processes on Serbia's accession to the EU.