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Hunor Kelemen: Romanian-Hungarian ethnic peace should be based on historical truth

Speaking in connection with the anniversary of the so-called Black March – violent incidents which took place between Romanians and Hungarians in Romania’s Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş 26 years ago – the president of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen said that long-lasting ethnic peace between Hungarians and Romanians should be based on historical truth. The president of the RMDSZ said that Hungarians’ demands – which led to ethnic conflicts 26 years ago – were legitimate. Mr. Kelemen added that “the debt we owe the heroes of Marosvásárhely is to continue to stand up for the goals drawn up 26 years ago, and to defend – even for the thousandth time – what belongs to us.” He added that “if Romania’s justice system wants to repay its debt to Marosvásárhely, it should reveal the truth and credibly examine the events which happened in 1990.”

In Marosvásárhely on 19–20 March 1990 bloody clashes took place between local Hungarians and Romanians. In the violent incident, several people died and many were injured. The roots of the incident were in a demonstration by Hungarians in the town in support of education in their mother tongue. In response to this, the chauvinist organization Vatra Românească, supported by the Romanian government, transported to the scene of the demonstration Romanians who ransacked the town center and attacked peaceful Hungarian protestors. The incident became known as Black March. The Romanian authorities have still not revealed the names of those who planned the bloody incident.

The organizers of the Szekler Freedom Day march are fined

Romanian police have fined the organizers of the commemoration, march and demonstration held on 10 March, the Day of Szekler Freedom. In a statement on Thursday, the mobile unit of the local police announced that, after a thorough examination of the video records made at the commemoration and march, they had fined 84 people 70,800 lei (EUR 15,900). According to the statement, 50 people were fined 61,000 lei (EUR 13,650) because they “organized a mass event which was unannounced, prohibited or not registered, and as organizers they did not take action when they saw evidence of acts capable of disturbing public order and peace.” The main organizer of the event, the president of the Szekler National Council (SZNT) Balázs Izsák was also fined 10,000 lei (EUR 2,240).

The head of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Hunor Kelemen condemned the collective fining of the organizers of the March 15 commemoration and Day of Szekler Freedom. In his statement, Mr. Kelemen wrote that the “RMDSZ finds it unacceptable and outrageous that the representatives of the Romanian authorities in Marosvásárhely and Kolozsvár have restricted Hungarians’ rights to assemble and use their symbols freely.” He added that “Due to institutional abuses which violate fundamental rights and freedoms, Hungarians’ compromised sense of security will further decline.”



The new Slovak government coalition is formed

After talks held on Wednesday, the head of the Smer (Direction – Social Democracy) party announced that the four parties which will form the new government of Slovakia – Smer, the Slovak National Party, Most-Híd (“Bridge”) and Siet’ (Net) – have reached an agreement on the distribution of posts within the Government. Smer will delegate the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, the ministers of interior, financial affairs, foreign affairs, health, economy, culture and labor. The Slovak National Party (SNS) will receive the ministerial posts of the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Agriculture. The Most-Híd Slovakian-Hungarian party will delegate the minister of justice and the minister of the environment, while Siet’ will nominate the minister for transport.

In recent days Most-Híd has been heavily criticized after the opportunity of being in a government coalition with the Slovak National Party arose. As a result of this, the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP) has refused an invitation from Most-Híd to engage in talks. Nevertheless Most-Híd, led by Béla Bugár, decided to enter the new government coalition together with Smer, the SNS and Siet’. In addition to the minister of justice and minister of environment, Most-Híd might also have five state secretaries; however, it will lose its vice-chair and one of its Members of Parliament Zsolt Simon, who – following his earlier announcement – will leave the party.



The Hungarian-Serbian Joint Economic Committee holds meeting

The Hungarian-Serbian Joint Economic Committee has held its eighth meeting. The Hungarian and Serbian Ministers of Agriculture and the delegations of the two countries met in one of Budapest’s biggest Hungaricum gift shops to hold talks on bilateral economic and trade relations, as well as future goals. Hungary provides advice and assistance to its southern neighbor. Speaking at the event, the Serbian Minister of Agriculture said that “Budapest has already travelled along the path Belgrade is now taking”, and that Hungary’s help is extremely important for Serbia. Speaking after a Hungarian-Serbian business forum held on Thursday, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó said that relations between the two countries are at their historical peak. Mr. Szijjártó said that as a neighbor of the Western Balkans, peace and stability in the region is important for Hungary, and the best and most effective path leading to peace and stability is European integration. He added that last year trade between the two countries amounted to EUR 1.8 billion, which is a 4 per cent increase.





Prime Minister Viktor Orbán holds talks in Brussels with President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko

Before a meeting of the European People's Party in Brussels, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán held talks with President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko. At their meeting, the two politicians reviewed the challenges faced by Europe and the state of Hungarian-Ukrainian bilateral relations. The Prime Minister asked President Poroshenko to enable the Ukrainian state to contribute towards faster implementation of the Transcarpathian development programs supported by the Government of Hungary. He also emphasized the importance of visa-free travel in the EU for Ukrainian citizens. According to the Prime Minister, Ukraine should be the first in line to receive this opportunity from the EU.

Anti-Hungarian incidents in Transcarpathia

On 13 March about 300 members of several Transcarpathian Ukrainian nationalist organizations – including the Karpatska Sich, the Right Sector and the Azov civil body – held a demonstration to celebrate the anniversary of the proclamation of Carpathian Ukraine. The demonstrators marched through the streets of Ungvár/Uzhhorod, and when they reached the Petőfi statue, they started shouting anti-Hungarian slogans, such as “Blade to Hungarians’ throats!” In a statement, the members of the Karpatska Sich charged Transcarpathian Hungarians with separatism and vandalism, stating that with their claim to establish a Hungarian electoral district, Hungarians are threatening the unity of Ukraine, while an increasing number of them are applying for Hungarian citizenship under Hungary’s simplified naturalization procedure.

The two largest Transcarpathian Hungarian organizations, the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) and the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Ukraine (UMDSZ), released statements condemning the anti-Hungarian actions of the Transcarpathian Ukrainian nationalist organizations. The Transcarpathian County Prosecutor's Office and the Transcarpathian Department of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) have launched an investigation into the incidents. The Governor of Transcarpathia Hennadiy Moskal also condemned the incident.