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Zsolt Semjén: the interns of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program and the Petőfi Sándor Program represent the entire Hungarian nation

On Monday, at the closing conference of the 2015 phase of the Hungarian government's Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program and the Petőfi Sándor Program in Budapest, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for Hungarian communities abroad Zsolt Semjén said that the interns of the two programs are sent to "lookout posts" where they represent the entire Hungarian nation. The Deputy Prime Minister recalled the establishment of the Hungarian Diaspora Council and said that it is clear to the Hungarian government that Hungarian émigrés need special attention. Mr. Semjén stressed that the interns sent to the diaspora play a huge role in the popularization of the simplified naturalization procedure, and this is very important from the point of view of the whole nation. Speaking at the event, State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that one hundred young people were sent to the Hungarian diaspora – including the USA, Canada, Latin America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The state secretary stressed that community life has revived in many of the Hungarian communities, due to the interns' work. Mr. Potápi added that the 50 interns of the Petőfi Sándor Program achieved similar success. Addressing the event, government commissioner István Grezsa emphasized that "the kin-state thinks of the Hungarian nation as a unity, therefore, if someone is Hungarian, it does not matter in which part of the world he or she lives."

Commemorations on the Day of National Cohesion in Hungary and abroad

On 4 June, the anniversary of the signing of the Peace Treaty of Trianon and the Day of National Cohesion, several commemorations were held in Hungary and beyond its borders.

On Friday, the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér said that 4 June continues to be a day of mourning in Hungarian history. The House Speaker stressed that it is still difficult to come to terms with the tragedy of the Trianon Peace Treaty and to eliminate its consequences. He added, however, that Hungarians' vigor and will to survive and remain in their homeland is exemplary and can be considered a form of success.

At a commemoration held in Óbuda, Minister for National Economy Mihály Varga said that Hungary must be strong in order to be able to support and help Hungarians living outside the kin-state. He added that "Hungary is on the right track" in this field.

At the central commemoration in the House of Hungarians in Budapest on the Day of National Cohesion, Deputy State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Péter Szilágyi said that 4 June is a day of commemoration, evaluation and strength. He added that 4 June 1920 is a symbol of gross injustice. Mr. Szilágyi stressed that self-esteem and respect for the nation oblige us to act. He added that together, uniting our forces, we have more opportunities to represent the issue of the extended family of our nation. The Deputy State Secretary added that in 2010 the Hungarian government



made it clear that it will do everything for Hungarian communities living in the Carpathian Basin and the diaspora, in order to recreate what was lost as a result of the Trianon Treaty.

Speaking in Hungary's Jász Kisér, the president of the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania (EMNT) MEP László Tőkés said that Hungarians living in countries detached from the kin-state under the Peace Treaty of Trianon must regain autonomy. Mr. Tőkés added that this is also the goal the Hungarian government is fighting for.



Local elections in Romania

The Romanian Central Electoral Commission has made public the preliminary results of local elections held on 5 June. According to these results (after 57.32 % of the votes were processed), mayoral candidates of the various parties won the following percentages: Social Democratic Party (PSD) 44.52 %; the National Liberal Party (PNL) 34.6 %; the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE) 4.92 %; the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) 4.87; and the People's Movement Party (PMP) 4.03 %. In the counties of Transylvania the turnout was lower than the national average. Among the major Transylvanian towns, the turnout was highest in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş (51.28 %), Székelyudvarhely/Odorheiu Secuiesc (42.25 %) and Szatmárnémeti/Satu Mare (41.41 %). The joint mayoral candidate of Hungarians in Marosvásárhely, Zoltán Soós, did not manage to defeat his rival, the former mayor of the town Dorin Florea, who is known for having anti-Hungarian views. After four years, however, Hungarians won in Szatmárnémeti, with the mayoral candidate of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) Gábor Kereskényi. The mayor of Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe Árpád András Antal and the mayor of Csíkszereda/Miercurea Ciuc Róbert Ráduly, who have been persecuted by the Romanian authorities, also won with landslides.

On Monday, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for Hungarian Communities Abroad Zsolt Semjén congratulated Hungarian communities living in Romania on their success in the local elections. Mr. Semjén stressed that more than 200 Hungarians managed to win mayoral seats in Romania. The Deputy Prime Minister expressed special congratulations to the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) for its victory in the two largest towns of Széklerland: Csíkszereda and Sepsiszentgyörgy. Mr. Semjén stressed that this victory is especially important, since the number of expressions of anti-Hungarian sentiment has increased recently.

The Székely Mikó High School remains state property

Deputy State Secretary Enikő Laczikó announced that the Székely Mikó High School of Sepsiszentgyörgy remains the property of the state, after the restitution committee refused the restitution request of the Reformed Church on Tuesday. Ms. Laczikó – the representative of the Office of Interethnic Relations and a member of the restitution



committee – told the Hungarian news agency MTI that she is the only member supporting restitution of the building, while the other six members of the committee voted against it. The bishop of the Transylvanian Reformed diocese Béla Kató said that the committee’s decision did not surprise him. He added that despite this fact, the committee’s decision is important for the diocese, since on the basis of it the church can launch a lawsuit, and bring the issue of the Székely Mikó High School to court.

Hungary allocates HUF 250 million for the renovation of the Kölcsey Ferenc High School

On Tuesday Deputy State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Péter Szilágyi announced that the Hungarian government is allocating HUF 250 million (EUR 800,000) for the renovation of the building of the Kölcsey Ferenc High School in Szatmárnémeti/Satu Mare. The financial aid will be spent on restoration of the building’s facade and replacement of the building’s windows. Mr. Szilágyi added that the Hungarian government is planning to allocate further sums for renovation of the school. The deputy state secretary recalled that Hungary has also supported renovation of the Hám János Nursery School.



István Pásztor re-elected president of the provincial parliament of Vojvodina

On Thursday, the new parliament of the province of Vojvodina was formed in Úvidék/Novi Sad and the head of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) István Pásztor was re-elected president of the body. This is Mr. Pásztor’s second mandate as the president of the provincial parliament, and the first occasion that someone has been elected head of the body for the second time. The nomination was justified by the fact that, during his political career, Mr. Pásztor proved his suitability and commitment several times, and did an excellent job in the previous term as the president of the provincial parliament.



László Kövér: Transcarpathia suffered the “harshest fate” with the Treaty of Trianon

On Saturday, at a commemoration in Transcarpathia’s Ungvár/Uzhhorod marking the Day of National Cohesion, the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér said that, of all the Hungarian territories ceded to neighboring countries with the signing of the Peace Treaty of Trianon after World War I, Transcarpathia suffered the harshest fate. The House Speaker added that, out of all Hungarian minorities, Transcarpathian Hungarians are also the ones who have accomplished the most, by sacrificing so much to retain their national identity and remain in their homeland. On



behalf of the Hungarian government and all Hungarians, Mr. Kövér expressed his gratitude to Hungarians in Transcarpathia for their efforts and success in remaining a community.



Hungary launches HUF 500 million economic development program in Muravidék

Speaking in Slovenia's Dobronak, the president of the Hungarian National Assembly's Committee on National Cohesion Károly Pánczél said that Hungary is planning to launch an economic development program of HUF 500 million (EUR 1.5 million) in Slovenia's Muravidék. The aim of this would be to strengthen the local economy and young farmers, increase employment and help Hungarians prosper in their homeland. Mr. Pánczél added that the Hungarian National Assembly will decide on this question during talks on the 2017 budget. At a press conference held after the extramural meeting of the Committee on National Cohesion, Mr. Pánczél said that part of the program would be the establishment of an educational farm in order to promote the production of local produce and its availability on the market. He added that the economic development program would contribute to young entrepreneurs' prosperity in their native land and the strengthening of the local Hungarian community. Mr. Pánczél added that the establishment of a Hungarian-language kindergarten group and a Hungarian school is also included in the plans.



House Speaker László Kövér officially opens Hungarian House in Croatia

On Wednesday, the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér and his Croatian counterpart Zeljko Reiner officially opened a new Hungarian House in Croatia's Vukovar. Addressing the event, Mr. Kövér said that the Hungarian House shows that "rebirth is possible". He added that the strength of a town is never in its walls, but in the spirit of its defenders. Mr. Kövér said that this was so in the bloodiest conflict of Europe's recent history, in the Yugoslav Wars of 1991–1995, during which the town of Vukovar was completely destroyed.