



OPEN LETTER

to the Members of the Hungarian Parliament

There is an ever-growing concern among many Hungarians over the foreign policy our present government conducts. That prompts us, members of former governments, former parliamentarians, actors in the scientific and artistic life, to address an open letter to you, as our compatriots who bear a heavy responsibility for the future of Hungary.

We urge the Hungarian Parliament to ratify immediately the enlargement of our defense alliance, NATO, with Sweden and Finland. There is no excuse or reason for delay, the two countries would strengthen the defense alliance of which we are a member, and would enhance its European character.

Not since the most dramatic events of the Cold War has Europe been in as much danger as it is now. The causes of all political conflicts are manifold, but the country responsible for war is always the one who starts it. The only person responsible for the Russian-Ukrainian war is President Putin and his idea of Russian imperial expansion, the goal of which is the restoration of the former Soviet Union, at least partially, and of the former Soviet bloc.

On the basis of the upcoming Resolution you are to pass, you should induce the government of Hungary to make a clear statement in which it names the Russian aggressor and declares its solidarity with the Ukrainian people invaded by Russia. Hungary should join our allies in demanding that Russia retreat behind Ukraine's state borders so that a lasting and just peace could be achieved. We expect the government-controlled Hungarian media to stop uncritically spreading Russian propaganda.

The West – of which Hungary is an integral part – supports Ukraine, which defends its statehood and independence, with weapons for the sake of sustainable peace and security. An immediate ceasefire would leave one-fifth of the territory of Ukraine under Russian control and seriously damage the territorial integrity of the country, which was also guaranteed by the Russian Federation in 1994. Accepting the current situation on the front line would be a violation of international law, specifically Article 2 of the UN Charter, encouraging aggression by stronger powers on a global scale.

Only a truly just peace will be lasting and acceptable to the international community. Turning the current Russian-Ukrainian frontline into an international border would not guarantee lasting peace, on the contrary, in other areas, such as the Far East, it would easily lead to a war in which the United States and China would face each other. Another Cold War would put many other threats to humanity in the background, from climate change and environmental destruction to political and religious fundamentalism and terrorism.

In the present tense situation, Hungarian foreign policy is about to be judged. The peace, development and prosperity of our country can only be ensured by the unity and strength of our alliances system. However, the current foreign policy of the government isolates our country, turns it against our allies, alienates our friends, weakens our security and economic interests, all of which harms Hungary's future. We need an immediate turnaround in our foreign policy. It is in our fundamental interest to restore friendly and trusting relations with the member states of NATO and the European Union, and especially with the United States. Propaganda hostile to them must be stopped, and efforts must be made to settle existing conflicts and differences of opinion together as soon as possible. This is a fundamental national interest.



Our country must not be exposed to the influence of autocratic powers in the East. The new nuclear reactor based on Russian technology and fuel, the gas power plants required for energy-intensive battery production in Hungary would only increase our dependence, when reducing this is precisely in our national security interest. Increasing cooperation with China, the number one rival of the democratic world, has dubious benefits economically and is rather harmful politically.

Members of the Hungarian Parliament!

When you vote on NATO enlargement, we ask you to take into account the broader context of the issue!

Budapest, March 20, 2023

Members of the V21 group:

Péter Balázs, economist, EU Commissioner (2004), Minister of Foreign Affairs (2009–2010)

Ákos Péter Bod, economist, Minister of Industry and Trade (1990–1991), Governor of the Hungarian National Bank (1991–1994)

László Andor, economist, EU Commissioner (2010–2014)

Péter Bárándy, lawyer, Minister of Justice (2002–2004)

András Bozóki, political scientist, Minister of Culture (2005–2006)

Ákos Érsek, economist and lawyer, Government Relations Director, Hungarian Railways (2005–2006)

Kinga Göncz, psychiatrist, Minister of Social Affairs (2004–2006), Minister of Foreign Affairs (2006–2009)

Éva Hegyesiné Orsós, educator, President of the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities (1995–1998), Deputy State Secretary for Social and Family Affairs (2002–2003)

László Herczog, economist, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour (2009–2010)

Attila Holoda, oil engineer and economist, Deputy State Secretary for Energy (2012)

Géza Jeszenszky, historian, Minister of Foreign Affairs (1990–1994)

József Kajdi, lawyer, Head of the Prime Minister's Office (1990–1994)

Zoltán Nagy, economist, State Secretary at the Ministry of Finance (1992–1994), President of the Economic Competition Office (1998–2010)

Erzsébet Pusztai, physician, State Secretary for Social Welfare (1992–1994), State for Health (1998–2000)

György Raskó, agricultural economist, State Secretary for Agriculture (1991–1994)

Tamás Székely, physician, Minister of Health (2008–2010)

Furthermore:

Gábor Bojár, physicist, entrepreneur

László Csaba, economist, university professor



Gábor Csizmár, sociologist, Minister of Labour (2004-2006)

Balázs Forman, economist geographer, ambassador of the Regional Studies Association

Balázs Gulyás, political writer, founder of Gulyáságyú Media

Dóra Györffy, economist, university professor

János Gyurgyák, historian, book publisher

János Herman, diplomat, government spokesman (1992–1994), Ambassador to NATO (2000–2005) Ambassador of the European Union to Norway (2009-2013) and Georgia (2014-2018)

András Inotai, economist, former director of the Institute of World Economic Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Béla Kalmár, media and IT specialist, Chief of Staff at the Ministry of Transport, (1998–2000) director of the National Media and Communications Authority (2006–2010)

Miklós Király, jurist, university professor

András Márton, actor, Consul General at Los Angeles (1991–1995), director of the Hungarian Cultural Center in New York (2001–2005)

József Pálinkás, nuclear physicist, university professor, President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (2008–2014)

György Szakolczai, economist, university professor

István Szent-Iványi, foreign policy expert, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs (1994–1997)

András Tóth, physician and diplomat, Ambassador to Kenya (1997-2001), to Denmark (2007-2010)

Zsófia Zachár, literary historian, editor, editor-in-chief of the journal Hungarian Quarterly (1990–2012)

István Zalatnay, theologian and philosopher, Deputy President of the Office for Hungarians Beyond the Border (1990–1994)