

László Tőkés was elected Vice President of the European Parliament



László Tőkés, ethnic Hungarian Member of the European Parliament (MEP) of Romania, representing the European People's Party (EPP), was elected as a Vice-President of the European Parliament on 15 June 2010. He is the first Vice-President from a country that became an EU member in 2007.

The vote was organized following the departure of former Hungarian Vice-President Pál Schmitt, also of the EPP, who was elected as Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament following their last general elections.

MEP Tőkés sits in the Culture and Education Committee, as well as, the subcommittee on Human Rights and is a part of the Parliament's delegation for relations with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo.

In 2007, he won a seat in the European Parliament, as an independent candidate. Before becoming a Member European Parliament (MEP), László Tőkés

was a Bishop in the Reformed Church in Romania.

In Romania, in the autumn election of 2007, László Tőkés received his first mandate in the European Parliament. He identified the specific issues of the former communist countries of East-Central-Europe as his primary challenge for representation. With the accession of the former Soviet bloc countries, the European Union (EU) inherited the problems of the ongoing democratic transition and the moral crisis of post-communism, as well. Therefore, the East-Central-European regime change issue is now a common European one, just like the global financial crisis.

The courage and faith of László Tőkés led him to oppose the inhumane communist dictatorship in Romania. The admiration of the people and his unshakable resistance led a revolt against atheist despotism in the multiethnic and multi-religious city of Temesvár (Timișoara). This resulted in the fall of the dictatorship in Romania on 22 December 1989. Since then, László Tőkés has been

internationally known as an emphatic representative of Christian values and defender of human rights.

The decision to appoint Tőkés as Vice President was supported by the centre-right side of the Romanian delegation to the European Parliament, comprising 11 MEPs and three parliamentarians from the ethnic Hungarian RMDSZ (Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania) party. Romanian post-communists and extreme nationalists were naturally against his election.

In spite of the fact that Parliament President Jerzy Buzek had proposed a vote by acclamation, ultranationalist MEP Corneliu Vadim Tudor, leader of the Greater Romania Party (PRM), proposed a formal vote. Finally, Tőkés was elected with 336 votes in favor, 160 against and 207 abstentions.

"This is the first day that I have felt ashamed as a member of the European Parliament," Romanian ultranationalist Vadim Tudor stated.

Romanian Senator Lia Olguța Vasilescu, from the opposition Social Democratic Party (PSD), called the election of Tőkés "regrettable and shameful," the Romanian press wrote. Vasilescu argued that Tőkés' election was not going to be "a historic chance for Romanian-Hungarian reconciliation," as Romanian EPP-affiliated MEPs had wanted. On the contrary, she said relations would suffer, because in her words "Tőkés was an advocate for the autonomy of Romanian regions with an ethnic Hungarian population."

In dEPutation: the Union – with Transylvania



Plenary session in the European Parliament

"With representation in the European Parliament for the Hungarians of Transylvania, a new means opens to address their case and offer new prospects. Formerly, Europe was apolitical to their situation. In a broader context, for the sake of its stability, the European Union needs to seriously deal with the protection of ethnic and religious minorities. This should be a priority.

One in eight European citizens is an ethnic minority. While equality of chance, subsidiarity, and self-government are fundamental principles of the EU structure, its operating contracts and documents remain unclear about certain rights. Namely, we cite the specific rights of

the national minority communities and their constituents, within the EU.

Upon my election as MEP of Romania, I also considered a priority to draw attention to particular issues which characterize the former Communist Bloc of the East-Central-European region. It is clear today that the fall of the Communist regimes and our membership in the European Union do not automatically mean our "re-Europeanization." Almost two decades after the 1989 changes of regime in East-Central-Europe a virtual "Berlin Wall" still divides our post-communist societies from the free, democratic Western European

societies. Topically, we cope with the heritage of Communist dictatorships and the need for lustration of communist agents, as well.

I have always been strongly devoted to the guiding principles and standards of Christian spirituality, which enhanced Europe's might and reverence: respect for human dignity, solidarity, social security, honouring traditions related to family and nation, protection of the spiritual and natural environment, organic social and economic progress. I am sure that Europe will become the entity it once used to be – one of the great powers defining the future of humanity – if it returns to her Christian roots. My program entitled "For a Christian Europe" primarily aims to strengthen the Union's Christian identity in a constantly transforming Europe.

As MEP of Christian background, I have been trying to involve Christian churches in the issues of the European Union more directly. I have been in consultation with European churches and ecumenical organizations. I wish to connect and serve in the European Parliament the endeavours of the Holy See, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Conference of European Churches, and the World Council of Churches."

Romanian Post-Communist Political Elite Get Hysterical Over Autonomy

On 20-25 July 2010, the Bálványos Summer University was held in Transylvania, Romania. Organized for the 21st time, the summer university is one of the most popular events in the region. Its aim is to bring people together from around the entire Carpathian Basin in order to network, exchange views, and debate on issues of social, cultural,

and political dimension, with a focus on national and European integration.

Offering a wide range of seminars and engaging debates, the event ended with a panel discussion entitled: "Central Europe — the Centre of Europe?" The panel participants included: Viktor Orbán,

Prime-Minister of Hungary, Traian Basescu, President of Romania, and László Tőkés, Vice-President of the European Parliament (EP).

Moderated by Zsolt Németh, Secretary of State of Hungary, the speaker panel focused on strengthening Romanian-Hungarian bilateral cooperation within a

► strong European Union, which is a common interest for both Member States. Reconciliation between the two countries is essential. It is necessary to build a competitive, self-sufficient, and healthy Central European region, with the help of Brussels. The speakers agreed on these points.

The theme of several different seminars was building strong regions, within a strong Central Europe. In the closing panel, EP Vice-President Tőkés, President of the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania, echoed this theme and raised the issue of autonomy. Mr. Tőkés considers autonomy the most appropriate form of self-governance for the Hungarian community living in Transylvania. Within the Szekler Land (Székelyföld), the ethnic Hungarian population includes 80% of the total population.

On numerous occasions, in a variety of national and European forums, Mr. Tőkés has consistently spoken in support of cultural and territorial autonomy, respecting the national integrity of the State. Inspired by Kosovo, he shared it as an example. In 2008, the ethnic Albanian community of Kosovo succeeded in declaring its independence from Serbia.

Citing this case, Mr. Tőkés said the Szekler Land in Romania should continue its fight to gain territorial autonomy within the country. The Szekler Land is similar in size to Kosovo. Likewise, Mr. Tőkés raised the model of Catalonia (north-eastern Spain). Through peaceful street demonstrations, the people exercised their democratic right to demand autonomy.

In drawing these parallels, Mr. Tőkés expressed his full support for constitutional, democratic, and peaceful means for the Szekler Land people to voice their demands. By pursuing a stronger security and stability region-wide, Transylvania will develop and prosper.

After these events, the Romanian media disseminated a series of accusations, containing flawed and misleading interpretations of Mr. Tőkés statements. These statements were issued by different national political parties.

Accordingly, Mr. Tőkés encouraged the Hungarian community of Transylvania to go out on the streets and protest. As a sign of violent nationalism, this could secure their own autonomy; the same way the Albanians in Kosovo gained their independence from Serbia.

Within Romania, the leaders of all major political parties publicly condemned EP Vice-President Tőkés. They characterized him as an "extreme nationalist."

Titus Corlatean, Vice-President of the Social Democratic Party (PSD), said that the party would request the removal of Mr. Tőkés from his position, as Vice-President of the European Parliament. Mr. Corlatean claimed that his appointment "endangers not only Romania, but the entire Europe." Further, he stated that the "separatist" comments of the Vice-President are "a clear and strong offense against Romanian statehood, as they stand for incentive to violent action."

Going further, Corlatean condemned the President of Romania, Traian

Basescu and the Democratic Liberal Party (PDL), member-party of the EPP, for their supporting the election of Mr. Tőkés as Vice-President. "Romania is a unified, undividable, and sovereign nation state, so neither autonomy nor independence can be reached by democratic means," he added.

According to Mihai Voicu, the spokesman of National Liberal Party (PNL), the statements of Mr. Tőkés were against the law and anti-constitutional, so he expects the PDL to cease its political support for the Vice-President.

Furthermore, Horea Uioreanu, deputy of PNL in Cluj, accused Mr. Tőkés of treason for demanding autonomy.

Marius Nicoara, a senator of PNL requested the President immediately convene the Supreme Defense Council to discuss the case; a step that would be entirely justified considering the danger it might bring. In the same context, PNL asked the state authorities to reclaim the Order of the Star of Romania that László Tőkés was awarded in 2009.

Bogdan Diaconu, Vice-President of the Conservative Party (PC), stated that VP Tőkés publicly recommends that Europe "be decomposed into tribes following the model of the Huns and their leader, Attila, thus ►



The closing panel of the Bálványos Summer University with Viktor Orbán, Prime-Minister of Hungary, Traian Basescu, President of Romania and László Tőkés, President of the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania (from left)

- ▶ openly attacking the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Romania.”

“Great and united Europe should be divided into small ethnic enclaves like Kosovo, a model Tőkés recommends to Spain, as well. To reach this, ethnic minorities should get out on the streets, an expression of violent nationalism, seems to be the most suitable solution to Tőkés, who has the nostalgia of the wars in Bosnia,” he added.

Corina Cretu, member of the Social Democratic Party and Member of the European Parliament, announced that in the fall of 2010 she would formally request the EP to remove Mr. Tőkés from his position as Vice-President, as his statements are “a direct attack against Romanian national integrity.”

As a response to the above mentioned offenses, just a few from

those widely disseminated in the press, Mr. Tőkés made it clear that Szekler Land strives for autonomy and not independence.

It is regrettable, that twenty years after the fall of communism in Romania, neither the media, expected to serve public opinion with reliable and fair information, nor the large part of the political elite were able to go beyond their anti-Hungarian mentality stemming from national communism.

Political resistance and repression of minority communities still continue to hinder development and the peaceful cohabitation of different communities within our country.

Europe is made out of regions of great cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Therefore, it is in Europe's interest and responsibility to make the best use of this diversity in the spirit of subsidiarity, so that decisions

are taken as closely as possible to the citizen. As the case of Catalonia illustrates, within the Spanish state, self-governance leads to better administration, and enables protection of minority and linguistic rights, respecting European values such as democracy, rule of law, and respect of human rights.

In the same way, several other EU Member States allow the democratic development of autonomy in their territory, serving as viable models for the Hungarians in Romania, such as Belgium, Italy, or Finland.

Keeping all the above in mind, it is clear that the biased attacks and accusations against Vice-President Tőkés lack any real foundation, and are nothing but the rough manifestation of the still persisting – traditional – Romanian nationalism and the national-communism inherited from the Ceausescu-regime.

Letter to Mr. Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament

Dear Mr. President,

During the September plenary session in Strasbourg, on Monday, 6 September Mrs. Corina Cretu (S&D), Member of the European Parliament, vice-chair of the Development Committee, launched unacceptably aggressive and personal attacks against myself, regarding my qualification as Vice-President of the European Parliament (please find attached the speech of Mrs. Cretu in its original version).

The attack of Corina Cretu reflects the intention of the Romanian post-communist Social-Democrat Party (PSD) to request my removal from the Vice-Presidency at the beginning of the fall plenary session, already openly expressed this summer. In her speech, the Romanian socialist Member reiterated this request.

We were informed by the Romanian press that Daniel Constantin, President of the Conservative Party (PC), approached you with a similar letter.

At the same time, there are pieces of news circulating in my country, of uncertain source, that some Members of the European People's Party belonging to the Romanian Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) lodged a complaint against me, on the grounds that I spoke out for the autonomy of the Hungarian community in Romania.

May I, Mr. President, on this occasion bring to your attention and information an account relating on the ever increasing Romanian nationalist-chauvinist attacks, illustrating that the accusations brought against me lack any real foundation.

At the same time, please allow me to remind you of the harsh anti-Hungarian attack that Corneliu Vadim Tudor, non-attached Member, brought against my election as Vice-President to the European Parliament on 15 June 2010 in the June plenary session. Back then, Mr. President, you cut off the extreme nationalist speaker, member of the Great Romania Party (PRM), his speech hereby attached.

I write the present letter to provide you with truthful information, as well as, to protect my honour. Should you have any questions relating to the above, please let me know and I will be happy to provide you with further information.

With warm wishes,
Brussels, 10 September 2010

László Tőkés



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EURÓPSKY PARLAMENT EVROPSKI PARLAMENT EUROOPAN PARLAMENTTI EUROPAPARLAMENTET

The President

Mr László TÖKÉS
Vice-President

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

318079 18.11.2010

Dear Vice-President,

Dear László,

Thank you for your letter of 16 September 2010 informing me that you have been criticised by various Romanian Members on account of certain comments you have made.

As Members of the European Parliament, our conduct must be characterised by mutual respect, be based on the values and principles laid down in the basic texts on which the European Union is founded, respect the dignity of Parliament and not compromise the smooth conduct of parliamentary business or disturb the peace and quiet of any of Parliament's premises, as is laid down in Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure.

I am fully confident that you abide by such standards of conduct at all times and that you always display the utmost respect for our shared European values of democracy, rule of law and respect for human dignity and fundamental rights. I would like to take this opportunity to assure you that I have full confidence in you in your capacity as Vice-President of the European Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

*with deep personal
regards,*

Jerzy Buzek

Letter

to Mr. Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission
Commissioner Responsible for Justice, Freedom, and Security

Dear Vice-President,

On 22 December 2009 the Romanian parliament gave a vote of confidence to a new 15-member cabinet led by Premier Emil Boc, raising hopes that the paralyzing three-month political stalemate was finally over.

Opposition leaders announced that the new government was given easy backing, as all the political parties were interested in having a functioning government, as soon as possible. This would allow the country to restart talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to unblock the next 1.5-billion-euro tranche of a 20-billion-euro aid package, badly needed by cash-strapped Romania.

Boc's government was made up of members of Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) and of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DAHR), as well as, of a number of independents.

Government sources revealed that Romanian Orthodox Patriarch Daniel objected that the Romanian Orthodox Church would be subject to a Minister of "another religion."

The will of Patriarch Daniel seems to be an "order" for Prime Minister Emil Boc. As Patriarch Daniel did not want an "alien" – a non-Orthodox, ethnic Hungarian – to poke his nose into the funds received by the Romanian Orthodox Church from the state budget, the Department for Religious Denominations was instead removed from the portfolio of Kelemen and subordinated directly to Premier Boc. The Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs was split in two, through the creation of a special secretariat, having the Religious Affairs component pass under the direct subordination of the prime minister.

And in order that Patriarch Daniel would be fully satisfied, Emil Boc appointed Adrian Lemeni, domestically known as the Patriarch's protege, as the head of the Department for Religious Denominations.

Lemeni was obliged to resign in 2007 from the same office, after the Pro Europe League discovered that a school-book of Orthodox religion that he had promoted contained a virulent attack against the other religious denominations. They were charged with dividing

Christians through proselytism, "a mean method, unacceptable from social and moral points of view."

With such conceptions about "religious freedom" and "tolerance" and in the context of the forced reorganization of the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs it is highly questionable and directly offensive to the non-Orthodox citizens that he was appointed chief of religious denominations in Romania.

On the other hand, for the European citizens who, as myself, believe in the spirit of "unity in diversity" and in the ecumenical fellowship of Christian love, it is again unacceptable that the Premier of a "religiously neutral state," accepted to fulfill the Patriarch's wish without consulting the leaders of the other official religious denominations in Romania.

I respectfully request your evaluation with this case of religious and ethnic discrimination.

Truly yours,
22 January 2010

László Tőkés

Communiqué

on deploying Moldovan citizens to Transylvania

The recent parliamentary elections and demonstrations taking place in the Republic of Moldova within the last few weeks, pinpoint – yet again – that the countries of our region cannot shed the shackles of our Communist heritage.

It is unfortunate and disquieting how several Romanian politicians attempted to exploit the

demonstrations of the Moldovan youth, and seek to legitimize Romanian territorial demands.

This phenomenon could be observed in the European Parliament, as well. At the end of March 2009, two Romanian socialist MEPs, namely Adrian Severin, ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Victor Boștinăru, sent out an invitation to

a so-called "historical conference," which included an attached map, clearly showing the annexation of Moldova to Romania. Using the aforementioned map (displaying the annexation of Moldova to Romania) within the European Parliament, does not serve, by any means, the process of normalizing Moldovan-Romanian political relations.

▶ The majority of the Romanian political elite regards the settlement of this heated conflict by the expansion of the Romanian citizenship to Moldovans. As a result of this initiative, at least one million additional Moldovan citizens could attain Romanian citizenship, beside the existing 1.0-1.5 million Moldovan citizens, who already hold dual citizenship.

Romanian national politics have always held this double-standard. More than ten years ago, a parallel (Slovakian and Serbian) counter-propaganda diplomatic offence began in Romania against Hungarian politicians, who embraced the causes represented by the Hungarian Permanent Conference, the Forum of Hungarian Representatives of the Carpathian Basin, and the Status Law. All of these were fighting for dual citizenship and autonomy with democratic process. In the meantime, there has been a general consensus, by the Romanian political parties, to expand the Romanian citizenship.

Some months ago, an elected representative of Hungarians living in Transylvania and President of the Covasna County Council, Sándor Tamás, reported that Moldovan citizens visited him in his office, with the mediation of the Romanian Ministry of the Interior. They requested information about a programme, designed by the Romanian government, to deploy Moldovan citizens in Covasna (Kovászna) and Harghita (Hargita) counties. Apparently, a secret government project has been created, which attempts to deploy Moldovan citizens (with dual citizenship) into territories inhabited predominantly by Hungarians but primarily in the Szekler Land (east Transylvania). The change of ethnic proportions by the government, contradicts however the international responsibilities assumed by Romania, including rules ratified by the European Union and the Council of Europe.

There is a real risk that the concealment of territorial demands, by the Romanian government, will diminish Moldovan-Romanian relations. Further, the "treatment" of the aforementioned issue (i.e., the intended obtrusive and artificial changes in the ethnic proportions in Transylvania and the Szekler Land) would eventually create inner tensions in Romania, as well.

Therefore, we would like to call attention in the European Parliament to the fact that the Hungarian community of Transylvania – which has been struggling for autonomy with peaceful and democratic means – could also become an aggrieved party of the ensuing Romanian-Moldovan conflict.

Sustaining the inner stability and cohesion of the European Union is in our mutual interest. Now, it is evident that accepting new member states cannot itself solve the conflicts and tensions, which have existed for decades in this particular region.

We suggest that a series of round-table discussions be initiated by European Union institutions, which would include the central governments of our region and representatives of the regional and ethnic communities as members, as well, which are propagating autonomy through peaceful means.

Conflicts pertaining to minority and regional issues, which burn deeply within and might erupt, could be permanently and peacefully resolved in this manner, exclusively.

Nagyvárad/Oradea, 27 April 2009

MEP László Tőkés,

President of the Hungarian
National Council of Transylvania

Transylvanian Autonomy Workshop in Cooperation with the Maurits Coppieters Center

On 26 September 2009 the Centre Maurits Coppieters, which is a political foundation affiliated to the European Free Alliance – EFA, held its general assembly in Cardiff, capital of Wales. The Centre was named after the Flemish Maurits Coppieters (1920-2005), founder of the EFA and the first Member of the European Parliament on behalf of the organization. The objective of the institution, which is supported by the European Committee, is the monitoring of the European regions, processing the data and making them public. The Centre is dedicated to an authentic European integration, as well as, to national democratic and regional movements. Furthermore, they are committed to establish an international cooperative for state and regional political workshops.

The Parliament of Wales hosted the general assembly of the Centre Maurits Coppieters. Welsh MEP Jill Evans, the newly elected president of the EFA Group in the European Parliament, welcomed the representatives of European – Catalan, Irish, Flemish, Scottish, Basque, South-Tyrolean, Aragonian, Corsican, Galician, Mallorcan, Transylvanian – autonomist movements and institutions.

The Hungarian National Council of Transylvania (HNCT) was represented by János Antal, executive of the international information service. Soon after HNCT was founded, this service came into being. Contrary to the official Romanian propaganda mechanics, it was designed to ▶

► supply the international public opinion about facts and news on the offenses against our Transylvanian community, the everyday discrimination, and aims at autonomy. Since 2004, HNCT has regularly supplied the international media and political organizations with a collection of news analysis, and case studies, through the English journal entitled: Transylvanian Monitor.

It is common knowledge, that the EFA unites approximately 30 progressive regional and national parties from thirteen EU member states, which uphold autonomy. One of its essential objectives is to secure democratic rights for those national and geographical-historical regions in Europe that have no state. Therefore, the EFA supports the autonomy for the Hungarian community in Transylvania, including Szekler Land too. MEP László Tőkés, President of the HNCT, on the occasion of the strategic cooperation agreement between the Transylvanian organization and the EFA asked that the Transylvanian Monitor be included in the structures of the Centre Maurits Coppieters.



János Antal made a thorough presentation on the situation of the Transylvanian Hungarians before the general assembly. He gave full particulars on the artificial change of ethnic proportions in Transylvania, the ongoing Romanian assimilation politics, the gradually strengthening settlement of Hungarian regions, and detailed the previous results of the movements for autonomy, as well as, the tasks that lie ahead of the organization.

The General Assembly unanimously voted for the Transylvanian Monitor to be included in the institution that

was founded in 2007 and which now hosts about 15 autonomous political workshops. In conclusion, Xabier Mañas, Galician President of the Centre, and Nelly Maes, Flemish President of EFA, greeted the membership of the Transylvanian autonomy workshop.

29 September 2009

Press Office

of the Hungarian National Council
of Transylvania

Nobel Peace Prize Winner Dalai Lama to Visit Transylvania

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will pay a visit to Romania. László Tőkés, Member of the European Parliament and President of the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania invited His Holiness the Dalai Lama to visit Romania when he met the Buddhist teacher and Samdong Rinpoche, the head of the Tibetan government in exile, in Brussels in December of 2008.

The proposed itinerary of Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, includes a trip to the small village of Csomakörös (Chiurus) in the Szekler Land area, Transylvania, where founder of Tibetology, Sándor Kőrösi Csoma – or as he signed his

English letters, Alexander Csoma de Kőrös – was born. Through the first ever Tibetan-English dictionary and grammar (1831) de Kőrös revealed Tibet's wonderful culture to Westerners.

"Romanian authorities have not extended any invitation to visit the country to the Dalai Lama or his representatives, and Bucharest recognizes a single China, which includes Tibet," Romania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on 21 April 2010, in response to a request by MEDIAFAX. The ministry said Romania endorses the One China principle, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the

People's Republic of China (PRC), of which Tibet is part. According to the ministry, all contact between Romanian officials and representatives of the Tibet Autonomous Region is carried out through diplomatic channels, in the framework of PRC-Romania relations.

The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has discredited Romania, with its "quick reaction" of distancing itself from the Dalai Lama's visit, which was slated for September 2010. Without waiting for Beijing's reaction, Romania's servile declaration gives the impression that the continuous

▶ violation of human rights in China does not concern the MFA at all – argues the 25 April 2010 edition of Krónika, a Transylvanian newspaper.

It is public knowledge that the Dalai Lama's international appearances draw attention to China's occupation of Tibet. As the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, has been president of the Tibetan government-in-exile, since 1959. By speaking up for his rights, for five decades, the Tibetan religious leader has angered the Chinese government.

In diplomatic terms, the Dalai Lama's presence is an extremely sensitive matter. Further, the Dalai Lama's lectures draw large crowds

of sympathetic souls. The world champions his minority status, by advocating the return of Tibet to its native Himalayan people.

China claims the Himalayan territory, as its own. To defend its occupied turf, the Beijing government regularly assaults the host-nation on any of the Dalai Lama's foreign visits, with diplomatic pressure and rhetoric. The intent is to hinder and halt any international forum that promotes Tibetan minority rights. By discrediting the exiled leader, he is often stripped of his official recognition, as the exiled President of Tibet.

Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs declaration is not a surprise, since they affirm that the Dalai

Lama has not been officially invited by the Romanian state. Nonetheless, the timing of the declaration is problematic, opines the native Transylvanian press, since the Beijing government has not had any reaction yet to this issue. The recent exit of Google, from China, illustrates that human rights and freedom of speech are more important than seeking the long-term profit from a 1.3 billion-person marketplace. Any nation that cannot uphold such moral ideals disgraces itself before the world. For a constitutional state, especially a European Union nation, to lag behind a multi-national corporation, in its observation of human rights and freedom of speech is an international humiliation.

Communiqué

Regarding the intense scrutiny of the media, after the recent Romania MFA communiqué, the Press Office of MEP László Tőkés issued the following statements on 21 April 2010, pursuant to the planned visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Romania:

- Since his first election, MEP László Tőkés has advocated the invitation of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to the European Parliament. He considers it abnormal that such an invitation has not been proffered but instead postponed to this day.
- Religions are vital worldwide. In Europe, the spirit of inter-confessional ecumenism should join world religions to serve humanity, according to MEP László Tőkés.
- In this spirit, MEP László Tőkés thanks His Holiness the Dalai Lama for accepting the invitation to visit Romania, in September, with great expectation and ecumenical ardor.
- Through his consistent and conscientious commitment to promote the freedom wish of the



The Dalai Lama met with Vice-President László Tőkés, in September 2010

Tibetan people, the Dalai Lama offers a non-violent model to the world for pursuing democracy. He contests for the rights of his own Tibetan people and people facing oppression around the world.

- As an exiled religious leader from Tibet, the Dalai Lama seeks freedom and human rights for all nations. In appreciation and acknowledgment, His Holiness was received by the European Parliament, and by U.S. President Barack Obama in 2010.
- As a member of the Euro-Atlantic community, Romania represents the values and interests of the Euro-Atlantic fellowship. Further, Romania endorses the territorial

integrity and sovereignty of the People's Republic of China.

- Regarding Romania's MFA, it is well-known that most countries acknowledge visits of the Dalai Lama, with a non-official meeting – even U.S. President Barack Obama.
- The Dalai Lama visit does not question the "One China" principle endorsed by Romania. His Holiness' first visit to Romania is not political but of an ecumenical and religious nature. This particular visit honors the home country of Alexander Csoma de Körös, who was declared a Saint of Buddhism (Bodhisattva).

Re-invitation to Transylvania

Tibetan politician and spiritual leader His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama visited Hungary for the seventh time between the 17-20 September 2010. On 20 September, His Holiness visited the Parliament of Hungary. He was welcomed in the Upper House by members of parliament and invited guests.

Following the reception, the Dalai Lama met Right Rev. László Tőkés, Vice President of the European Parliament, and President of the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania. At the opening of the approximately 40-minute-long discussions, the Transylvanian politician presented His Holiness with a plaque representing Sándor Kőrösi Csoma (1784-1842).

László Tőkés emphasized that the Transylvanian community is proud that Csoma, who with his English-

Tibetan dictionary facilitated the recognition of the outstanding Tibetan culture in the Western world and civilization, was a Transylvanian Hungarian. He added that, among other reasons, this was why Transylvanian Hungarians have deepest sympathies with the oppressed Tibetans.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave an overview of the present-day Tibetan situation and conditions in a nutshell and asked the Vice President to make arrangements for a European Parliament fact-finding mission to travel to Tibet, since publicity and transparency are the most effective weapons against totalitarian regimes, just like it was demonstrated in the struggle against the Ceausescu regime in Romania, in 1989.

On the agenda of the discussion, László Tőkés re-invited His Holiness

to Transylvania. In the meantime, he expressed his regret that this year His Holiness could not visit the native land of Sándor Kőrösi Csoma. His Holiness asserted that the rejective policy assumed by the Romanian diplomacy with patterns of servility towards China was regrettable.

He assured Mr. Tőkés that he would visit Transylvania with delight provided that the Romanian government changed its attitude in this particular matter. With the consent of His Holiness, László Tőkés shall intervene with State President Traian Băsescu and the Romanian Government in order to assure that the Dalai Lama may visit under untroubled circumstances the native village of Csoma, the first European Buddhist Saint (Bodhisattva).

From the Fall of the Berlin Wall – to the reunification of Europe

Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, said 9 November 1989 was the happiest day in the modern history of Germany. It is one of the rare cases in history that all peoples and states, belonging to the reunified Europe could share this joy of a single nation; of the reunified Germany. This anniversary occasion is a universal triumph of Europe and the entire world, as well. Therefore, we join the Berlin participants of the ecumenical thanksgiving celebration, by quoting Bible books penned by Apostle Paul: "Rejoice with them that rejoice" (Romans 12:15) and "Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).

At his Vilnius, Lithuania visit, President George W. Bush declared that the recent history of liberation

of the Baltic States was a true "Miracle." This miracle happened in Berlin twenty years ago. Actually, a whole series of miracles happened in those days. The road to the Fall of the Berlin Wall – to our liberation – was prepared by events throughout the Eastern Bloc; in the homeland of Pope John Paul II and Father Jerzy Popiełuszko; in Hungary, where, despite the brutal repression of the 1956 Revolution, the Sopron Pan-European Picnic was organized, on which occasion the revolutionary break-through of the border-block between East and West took place, at the Hungarian-Austrian border.

"Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today... The Lord will fight for you," encouraged Moses to

his people, as they were fleeing from Egyptian captivity (Exodus 14:13). Further, the waters were divided in front of them like "stone walls" and they crossed the Red Sea on dry land, escaping their pursuers (Exodus 14:21).

Two decades ago, we all experienced this liberating miracle created by the Almighty. Walls would fall and the path of freedom opened up in front of our eyes in Timișoara, Transylvania, which was annexed to Romania from Hungary, in 1920. The region of Timis, in the Banat area, was largely populated by Germans, and it was the native soil of writer Herta Müller. As once the Pharaoh, "Conducator" Ceausescu prepared an attempt not only against the "People of Israel" – the captive

- Hungarian and German minorities – but he was willing to push his own nation into deep misery by planning to destroy thousands of villages, knocking them to the ground.

As East Berlin had its Gethsemane Church, there was a church in Timisoara where Hungarian Reformed believers, who were later joined in their living chain by thousands of people of other denominations, including Romanians, Germans, Serbs, Jews, Bulgarians, finally broke through the walls of silence and terror and marched on the streets. Gaining courage from each other's faith, they cried out loud: "It was enough!" They went against the feared atheist communist dictatorship and prayed to God for freedom. A miracle took place in Timisoara too. The inhabitants of the multicultural and multi-faith city, which had pragmatically been divided by the nationalist and communist regime, joined forces against their mutual enemy: ungodly Dictatorship. With the power and words of the faithful apostles, they said "no" to the totalitarian regime headed by the "Pharaoh," stating "We ought to obey God, rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Everybody knows what followed. The last East-Central-European Bolshevik dictator fled, but was soon captured. The "dynastic evil" (metaphor of poet Kornél Dobrenței) was caught up by his destiny, alongside his fellow-rampant, his wife – in front of a firing squad in Dracula's country. The last bastion of the Soviet "lager" fell; the last piece of the Great Wall dividing Europe came down.

In the phrasing of Angela Merkel, "22 December 1989 was the 'happiest day' of the oppressed in Romania," when the "Genius of the Carpathians," as Ceausescu expected to be called, fell. The infamous Securitate had its special sections hunting for "Hungarian Irredentists" and "German Nationalists and Fascists." They used a large

spectrum of Herodian tools to terrorize the minorities labeled with "collective guilt." Further, they ruined the life of our society with an artificial apocalypse: cutting off electricity and heat, and starving people.

As elevating height after profound depth, as glorious light after grim darkness: the birth of the Liberating Christ brought us the Redeeming Christmas of 1989; the happiest day of our preceding fifty years.

As Chancellor Merkel articulated, "Twenty years ago, Hungary gave wings to Germans, and answered the freedom wish of east-German citizens, when it opened the border in front of them." This kind of fraternal sympathy was the strongest power and the most beautiful feature of those times. The way "a captive nation opens a gate to another captive nation" – for freedom, as journalist Lajos Sylvester wrote. The living chain of Budapest and Berlin; of Warsaw and Prague; of the Baltic nations from Tallin to Vilnius; of the Hungarians, Romanians, and Germans of Timisoara; and the effective support from the free world – are all adding to the active solidarity of the interdependent nations of a Europe which is recovering consciousness.

In January 1990, German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans-Dietrich Genscher was among the first visitors to our humble church in Timisoara. During the Berlin commemorations, he stated that "the demolition of the Berlin Wall was a historic event, which did not only dissolve the division of Germany and Europe – but also that of the entire world." As a Transylvanian Hungarian, I am thankful that following the reunification of Germans, within the process of European unification, obstacles seem to decline from the unification of the Hungarian

communities in the Carpathian Basin, which have kept us separated artificially, since 1920.

We have another 20th anniversary commemoration scheduled for next week in the European Parliament, with the participation of Hungarian, Romanian, and international speakers. It is entitled "From Timisoara to Brussels."

I must admit, that there is a long journey "From Timisoara to Brussels," from the totalitarian regimes of atheist-communist dictatorships, to the free and democratic Europe. This holds true for my person as former pastor of Timisoara and current member of the European Parliament, but also to our country and the wider East-Central-European region. Our progress is still hindered by obstacles and walls of separation. Walking on the fields of persisting communism and on the "undermined" territories of the Cold War heritage, it is a long and dangerous journey from "Egypt" – to "Promise Land."

But we will not back down. Hungarians have a historic phrase for cases, we are convinced that we are right: "We do not cede from '48." It refers to our Freedom Fight and Revolution of 1848. On this pattern: we should neither cede from '56, nor from '89!

We have no illusion regarding our own situation and European reality. We know what to expect. But whatever difficulties we have with progress – we are continuously gaining strength out of our faith and preceding results, and we trust in the solidarity of our European allies.

Berlin, 12 November 2009

László Tóké

**"We ought to
obey God, rather
than men"
(Acts 5:29)**



TÖKÉS LÁSZLÓ
MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
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The Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation
Honorable **Lee Edwards**, Chairman

May 7, 2009

Dear President,

I was deeply moved by your mail announcing that the Board of The Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation honored me with the **2009 Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom** in recognition of my support of liberty around the world, and especially of my role in bringing an end to communism in **Romania**, in **1989**.

Indeed, besides the fall of the Berlin Wall and the massacre in the Tiananmen Square in Beijing, 2009 also marks the **20th anniversary** since the **popular uprising of Timișoara**, which then spread to other cities throughout Romania.

I interpret my rewarding as an appreciation and encouragement to all those, who — in the Spirit of Timișoara — have never stopped struggling for true democracy and freedom in my home-country. Besides, it recalls the blessed memory of the many hundreds of **martyrs massacred in Romania** during the uprising and revolution of December 1989.

Coping for us, who lived through communist oppression and its hindering heritage, has been unexpectedly and extremely difficult, over much of the last 20 years. We, who witnessed the bitter and difficult process of **post-communism transition**, know this best. Like a chameleon that changes its colors — surviving its purported ‘fall’ — communism has returned.

By transferring its power to selected persons, communism continues to persist in its habitual heritage of dishonest distortions that hinder truth, genuine change, and a regeneration of society. And this is why there has been no ‘moral catharsis’ following the events of 1989 throughout East-Central-Europe. Despite all the important achievements since 1989, the greatest shortcoming is the absence of any ‘moral accounting’.

I am sure that the 2009 Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom dedicated to the Romanian Revolution of 1989 will fill many hearts with the feeling of **catharsis**.

Therefore I do thank you for this honor. I will be there in Washington D. C., on June 16, to receive The Medal.

Truly,

László Tökés

Bishop László Tökés
Member of the European Parliament

Right Revd. László Tőkés Awarded with the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom by the VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

On 16 June 2009, Bishop László Tőkés, a leader of the Hungarian community in Romania and a member of the European Parliament, received the Truman-Reagan Freedom Medal at a ceremony held in the Rayburn Building of the U.S. Congress. During the past ten years, this award has been presented to individuals including Pope John Paul II, Vytautas Landsbergis, Lech Walesa, Vaclav Havel, Viktor Orbán, János Horváth, and Tom Lantos.

Dr. Lee Edwards, Chairman of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, recalled the Foundation's mission and explained the purpose of the award: "The Foundation awards the Truman-Reagan Freedom Medal to those individuals who have demonstrated a life-long commitment to promoting freedom and democracy and opposing communism and tyranny."

In her introduction of Bishop Tőkés, Edith Lauer, Board Member of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, commented on his 20 years of leadership in Romania and noted that he has recently called on his fellow members of the European Parliament to condemn



With Edith Lauer, Lee Edwards, László Hámos, and Max Teleki (from left)

Communism. She recalled his heroic resistance against the Romanian secret police in 1989, which culminated in the outbreak of the Romanian Revolution: "In 1989 László Tőkés risked his life to challenge the power of Ceausescu, one of the most infamous communist dictators in Europe. In spite of being unarmed and inexperienced in this confrontation, he possessed two superior weapons: an abiding faith in God and the moral conviction that by resisting tyranny, he could make it fall."

In his acceptance speech, Bishop Tőkés pointed out that remnants

of Communism survive to this day in Romania and elsewhere, and commended the work of Dr. Edwards and the mission of the Foundation as timely and necessary: "The wrongdoers and the privileged of the former dictatorship saved their power and transplanted their influence into economics. Then, they converted it back into political power. That is the very reason why justice for the victims of Communism and their descendants was not granted up to this day. However, without justice and equity, there is neither freedom, nor permanent peace and stability."

Presentation of the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom to Bishop László Tőkés by Edith Lauer

1989 was, indeed, a year of miracles! Two decades later, we recall events still difficult to believe, events that caused the eventual dissolution, in President Reagan's term, of the "evil empire." Today, on the 20th anniversary of the majestic and cathartic reburial in Budapest of Imre Nagy and other martyred leaders of

the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, we pay homage to them and to all the heroes whose suffering, sacrifice, and leadership led to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

It was also in 1989 that the world first became aware of the extraordinary courage of László

Tőkés, a young Hungarian Calvinist-Reformed minister in Romania.

His resistance to the systematic destruction of villages in Transylvania, and to the ongoing persecution of the 2.5 million-strong Hungarian minority by the Ceausescu regime culminated

in a dramatic confrontation: as the feared Romanian Securitate attempted to evict him from his Reformed Church in Timisoara, congregation members, neighbors, friends and strangers – Romanians and Hungarians alike – surrounded his church to protect him, and his family. The ensuing confrontation helped ignite the Romanian Revolution of December, 1989.

However, after the Ceausescu regime fell, the initial euphoria soon gave way to the realization that after 42 years of communism, Romanian society and the historic Hungarian community, had enormous challenges to overcome.

In early 1990, László Tőkés was elected Bishop to serve the Hungarian Reformed Church in Romania. He took on the daunting tasks of healing the wounds inflicted on Hungarians by systematic discrimination and forced assimilation, and of rebuilding the extensive network of confiscated Hungarian religious and cultural institutions.

When the Romanian Government prevented church restitution, Bishop Tőkés realized he must establish new institutions: churches, schools, orphanages, homes for the elderly. In 1999, he founded Partium Christian University, in Oradea, that became an important part of the larger Hungarian Sapientia University system.

In the “spirit of Timisoara,” he encouraged openness, forgiveness, and an atmosphere of reconciliation, among the coexisting Romanians and Hungarians, among the majority Orthodox and minority churches. Sadly, he came to realize that until those responsible for the crimes of communism refused to admit their responsibility, their victims could neither forget, nor forgive!

Seeing the disappointingly slow pace of democratization in Romania, Bishop Tőkés followed



a uniquely Transylvanian tradition: in addition to being a servant of God, he entered the political arena to achieve his community's aspirations.

During his travels in Italy, Spain, Finland, and Switzerland, he observed the equality and justice autonomy provided for the historic minority communities of those countries.

In Romania, he advocated the same: self government, local autonomy for Hungarians, as the only way they can control decisions affecting their daily lives.

In 2007, he ran for election, and won as an independent candidate to the European Parliament. With his reelection two weeks ago, his voice of conscience will continue to be widely heard all over Europe.

In March of this year, he submitted a motion for resolution in the European Parliament to research, document, and condemn the crimes of communism in EU member countries. In spite of previous resistance, the resolution passed with a large majority on April 2, 2009. Today, when Russian leaders are promoting the “re-evaluation” of Soviet history, including the rehabilitation of Stalin, it is time for European countries to condemn the crimes of communism, just as

they so rightly condemned the crimes of the Holocaust.

This is also the mission of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation: to commemorate the more than 100 million victims of communism and to teach their tragic history to future generations.

As part of this mission, each year the Foundation awards the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom to those individuals who have demonstrated a life-long commitment to promoting freedom and democracy and opposing communism and tyranny.

In 1989, László Tőkés risked his life to challenge the power of Ceausescu, one of the most infamous communist dictators. In spite of being unarmed and inexperienced in this confrontation, he possessed two superior weapons: an abiding faith in God and the moral conviction that by resisting tyranny, HE could make it fall! His life is an inspiration to us, who are privileged to live in freedom and democracy, and a beacon of hope to those who still suffer the consequences of communist ideologies.

It is our privilege today, to honor Bishop László Tőkés with the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom!

Fight Against 'the Evil Empire'

The memory of the June day, when we inaugurated the Victims of Communism Memorial with the participation of President George W. Bush two years ago on Capitol Hill, still vividly lives in my mind.

Now, on the twentieth anniversary of the gruesome and violent putting down of the student protests at Tiananmen Square, the imposing memorial by Thomas Marsh reminds us simultaneously of the demolished statue presenting the Goddess of Democracy in Beijing, and the New York Statue of Liberty – which actually served as a source of inspiration for the construction of the statue in the Chinese capital. The memorial erected by the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation is a worthy memento of the tens of millions of innocent victims, heroes, and martyrs, who shed their blood during the totalitarian communist regime. Through remembrance, and by the symbolic force of liberty, it compels us to face past sins committed against humanity. At the same time, it urges us to fight against tyranny, in order to liberate the oppressed ones; a battle which must never be abandoned.

In his June 12, 2007, inauguration speech, Representative Tom Lantos also commemorated the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. He used the felicity: "The 1956 Revolution was not put down; its victory was only delayed."

Twenty years after the breaking out of the Romanian Revolution in Timisoara and the fall of the infamous Ceausescu-regime, one must achingly infer the conclusion that the final victory of the freedom fighters over communism has not come yet. Former Romanian President, Emil Constantinescu, declared: inhumane and ungodly communism "is unable to return,

however, it can not really leave either." In the former Soviet Empire, as well as, its "henchmen states" – the post-communist societies of East-Central-Europe – communism still lingers on by its former representatives and inherited legacy, exerting a pernicious influence.

In other words, in the countries of our region a bloodless struggle has been going on for 20 years against communism, a virtual Third World War. This is the ponderous price to pay for the peaceful transition of the democratic change of regime. We might quote President Ronald Reagan's words according to which "the Evil Empire" would never give up voluntarily! The wrongdoers and the privileged of the former dictatorship saved their power and transplanted their influence into economics. Then, they converted it back into political power. That is the very reason why justice for the victims of communism and their descendants was not granted up to this day. However, without justice and equity, there is neither veritable freedom, nor permanent peace, and stability.

In front of the U.S.A. embassy in Budapest, the Memorial of the occupying Soviet "heroes" still

spoils the cityscape, two decades after the fall of communism. On the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution (2006) the post-communist Hungarian government stepped up with such brutish methods against the population of Budapest that reminded us of those implied during the former dictatorship.

A similar chain of events and riotousness characterize the contradictory post-communist period in Romania. Until the present moment, the inheritors of Ceausescu's national-communist principles would not serve justice for the oppressed and sold-out minorities, among which there is the Transylvanian Hungarian community. Although the Euro-conformity of "display-case politics" represented by the Romanian government verbally condemned communism (the Tismăneanu Report), it still firmly repudiates the compensation of victims. "Romanian legislation and justice keeps on rejecting to measure the crimes of communism with the same standards as Nazi war crimes and atrocities were condemned," stated Marius Oprea, President of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes in Romania. ▶



A native of Hungary, US Congressman Tom Lantos (1928-2008) was internationally recognized for his work on human rights

On the other side of the former Iron Curtain, Europe and developed Western civilizations continue to postpone the addressing communist crimes committed against humanity. Moreover, this attitude is even more resolute in ecumenical church gatherings. It took twenty years until the European Parliament in April, 2009, finally decided to make the first significant step regarding this issue.

Keeping all this in mind, the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation and President Lee

Edwards should be congratulated for their work. The Congress of the American "Free World" should also be honored, since they step-up against all totalitarian regimes in the spirit of those whom this prize was named after.

They protect the oppressed people throughout the world and they also support us, subjects of the former communist countries, in our struggle to win our freedom.

May the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom, and the Global

Virtual Museum on the Internet, commemorating the victims of communism, and which is to be inaugurated this afternoon, serve as downright acknowledgment and moral support for all those who go on with their relentless fight for justice and liberty worldwide, in the name of God, in countries like China, Tibet, North Korea, and Cuba.

Washington, 16 June 2009

László Tőkés

Prayer

on the Memorial Day in honor of martyr Prime Minister Imre Nagy, and the anniversary of demolishing the Berlin Wall



Memorial of Hungarian Premier Imre Nagy. He was executed on charges of "treason" after the Soviet invasion ended the Hungarian Revolution of 1956

Almighty God,
Heavenly Father,

You promised that we, "who formerly were far off have been brought near, by the blood of Christ; for He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall." (Ephesians 2:13-14).

We are grateful for breaking down the dividing wall of hatred and animosity, which was erected between us!

We thank You, Lord Jesus, for conquering with your endless love the deadly evil that crucified you.

We remember those who followed Your example until their death. They would rather assume the role of being altruist martyrs, than sacrifice others on the godforsaken altar of ungodly enmity!

Mazes and labyrinths of walls do separate us from one other. Sins, lies, hatred, unbrotherly conduct, and egoism erect impenetrable walls between us. They push races, nations, "social class enemies,"

minority communities, pariahs, and the stigmatized into inimical sides of human absolutism.

We are thankful that You connect heaven with earth, the Father with His creations, human with human, and unite them in your love!

It is only Your love and the might of your grace that pulls down the walls existing between us. It is your sacred blood which accomplished reconciliation between men and nations, so that Cain and Abel may live in peace, and the "prodigal sons" could return to Your "paternal house." Thus, through you, they will win salvation.

For the holy name of Jesus, we pray and ask You to bless our souls, and bless our nation! "Let us have peace with You and amongst ourselves, as well, for You are peace itself!," as Hungarian poet, Endre Ady, expressed it. Amen.

Washington, 17 June 2009

László Tőkés

Crimes of the Communist Regimes

International Conference, Prague, 24-26 February 2010

We Need to Put and End to Persisting Communism

In January 2006, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly condemned the “crimes of totalitarian communist regimes.” In April 2009, the European Parliament also judged totalitarian communism accordingly, as a direct continuation of the Prague Declaration dating June 2008.

Last year in December, the European People’s Party Congress in Bonn adopted an emergency resolution against the revival of communist symbols.

Contests against the veil or factual signs of communist restoration, as well as, voices advocating justice for the victims of the totalitarian regime are becoming stronger and stronger, in all former communist countries.

In Romania, referring to the so-called Tismăneanu Report, State President Traian Băsescu labeled communism in Romania as an “unlawful and criminal” regime in the plenary of the Parliament, in December 2006. “Communist Romania was a prison from its first day of existence until its end for the overwhelming majority of the population,” stated President Băsescu.

In his speech on the 20th anniversary of the Romanian Revolution, Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament said, that “Just like the peoples of Budapest, then Prague, Berlin, Sofia, Temesvár/Timisoara, and Bucharest, we thought we were too few, and would fail. But we slowly realized, that we were many, all destined to open the prison of the hundred million. The first



The Memorial Monument for the victims of the „shoot-to-kill” order at the Berlin Wall

slogans of the mass demonstrations both in Temesvár and Bucharest were the following: “Do not be afraid! Communism is falling!” And that became true.

The notorious Stasi prison of Berlin, that I had the chance to visit last autumn, stays as a memento: we should not let our achieved liberties vanish. German writer Herta Müller – who was born in the region of Temesvár, Romania – and her Nobel Prize also implore us to continue the path: we should not stop half way after our escape from the “Egypt captivity” but rather complete the change of regime!

Because what are we experiencing twenty years after the fall of dictatorships in our countries and societies smitten by communism?

“The heroes died; the revolutionaries returned to their homes; and the opportunists took the power,” concluded Romanian anti-communist dissident, Ion Caramitru. “We were few then, and we remained many until now,” refers to the rushing Romanian pseudo-revolutionaries former dissident, poet Mircea Dinescu.

“Honoring” the twentieth anniversary, they erect a statue to Todor Zhivkov in Sofia, and they erect statues in Romania for Ceausescu and army general Stefan Gusa, who ordered fire upon the demonstrators. In Slovenia, State President Danilo Türk awards a former leader of the communist secret service. State President Basescu, who festively condemned communism, hands high distinctions to key leaders and agents of the infamous Securitate.

These days, they intend to remove a most dedicated and determined protector of the victims of communism, Marius Oprea, from his position of director of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes in Romania.

László Csendes, president of the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives needed to resign last month because of the concentrated pressure upon him.

It is to be feared, that both organizations promoting justice for the victims of communism – the Timisoara Association and the Revolution Memorial – will

▶ get turned out in the near future from their headquarters situated in Temesvár/Timisoara, the “capital” of the Romanian Revolution.

I could continue enumerating the negative instances...

The Romanian situation can be described as quite paradoxical. While it is true that the government chose to forward additional files to the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives (NCSSA), it is also true that the NCSSA is constrained by serious under-staffing, limiting its productivity.

In February 2008, I needed to complain to Commissioner Franco Frattini and in November 2008, to Commissioner Jacques Barrot.

Dan Voiculescu, former Securitate agent and current Senator, through the Romanian Constitutional Court, tried to impede the functioning of the NCSSA. Further, the privileged Romanian Orthodox Church intervened, in a discriminative manner, and received Romanian government authority restricting the

lustration of clergy, by reassigning the jurisdiction of the NCSSA.

In Romania, one thing is said and another thing (very different) is done. Via its former agents, the former Securitate still safeguard and wield immense influence over jurisdiction and legislation of law.

As a consequence, the background and real offenders of the mass murders of December 1989, the anti-Hungarian pogrom attempts of March 1990, as well as, the terror of Minerriads (a term used to identify any of the successive violent interventions of miners in Bucharest in the 1990s) – are still unknown.

The European Union needs to remain consistent with its own rule of law, principles, and values. Therefore the Union should not neglect the legal abuses and injustices, which are experienced in former communist countries. The Union should take – common – responsibility towards member states and support the investigation of crimes against humanity during communist dictatorship, and promote indispensable

justice. This would also be a prerequisite for the democratization of former communist countries, and for safeguarding the rule of law. Eventually, it is the crucial precondition for the genuine and effective EU integration of the East-Central-European societies.

In this context, this Prague Conference should examine the possibility of establishing an international investigation committee to reveal communist crimes. Last December, on the 20th anniversary of the Romanian Revolution, I issued a political statement. I suggested that the European Union should notify and request the United Nations to take the appropriate measures to establish an international criminal system – i. e. international tribunal – that would initiate the process of the “Nuremberg Trials” of communism.

If I may say so, this idea meets the intentions of the organizers of our conference.

26 February 2010

László Tőkés

Failure to provide justice after the fall of communism and the occurring serious consequences

First of all, as host of this panel, allow me to say thanks for the honor that I can be a patron of today's conference. May I also appreciate, besides the political importance of this consultation, the eminent role that Prague – including the Parliament and Government of the Czech Republic; the Czech civil society; The Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes; former state president Vaclav Havel; Institute president Pavel Zacek; or my former colleague in the European Parliament, Jana Hybaskova; as well as other outstanding personalities of the democratic change of regime – plays in disclosing communist past,

in exposing the crimes committed by the dictatorship, and in providing social, legal, and moral justice.

The program and the objectives of The Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes of Prague and the like-minded institutions throughout the former communist countries clearly indicate that we should not use double standards in the judgment of totalitarian regimes. As Tunne Kelam, prominent personality of the Estonian change of regime pointed out, “Nazism and Communism unleashed the Second World War hand in hand, like twins.” Similarly,

“communism brought killing to an industrial level, as in the Ukraine for example,” stated Professor György Schöpflin, Member of the European Parliament. Stéphane Courtois, well-known editor of the Black Book of Communism justly asked the following question regarding crimes against humanity and war crimes: “Why are these terms used only referring to the victims of Nazism, or of mass killings of ethnic intention?” How is it possible – we may add – that a law adopted earlier this week in Hungary qualifies the denial of the Holocaust to be a crime, but the socialist majority of the Hungarian

► Parliament absolved the crimes and criminals of communist terror?!

One of the key questions of our conference today is: why did post-communist societies fail to provide justice for their citizens? Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet empire we may see that reconciliation is impossible without justice. Twenty years after, the failure or delay of justice and its occurring, serious consequences have grown very depressing. The retracting heritage of communism is otherwise a huge obstacle in the genuine unification of Europe.

The famous phrase of Polish Premier Tadeusz Mazowiecki was misunderstood or deliberately misinterpreted, since it is impossible to draw a “thick line” (“gruba kreska”) between past and present.

As a clergyman, I often hear the cynical pleas referring to “Christian forgiveness” on behalf of the once criminals and their accomplices. Driven by this kind of misinterpretation, our Western sister churches and the international ecumenical organizations also tend to forget about the atrocities of communism, about the sufferings of its many million victims. At the same time, many would like to forget about the basic teachings of the Christian faith, which strictly assumes repentance preceding forgiveness. Therefore, we might hardly speak about true democracy, social justice, forgiveness and real reconciliation, European values and human rights in a country, where Ceausescu’s brutal communism was replaced by Iliescu’s creeping neo-communism.

“The Romanian Revolution was stolen,” says a popular laconism. The former Communists stole it, and retained their power, while already wholly corrupt to the core. We have witnessed this in the last twenty years – when post-communist pseudo-democrats ruled the



country. And this is why justice was not provided. This is why lustration failed, regarding the activities of the godless and inhumane secret service. This is why criminals were not brought to justice.

As a consequence, the “revolution” was just partially fulfilled in our country, since though the one single party regime changed into a politically pluralistic system – which is of course a good development – but the power elite did not change. On the whole, the beneficiaries and leaders, of the new regime, were still the members of the old regime, or – at best – their “descendants” and “inheritors.”

In other words, communism did not disappear, it did not vanish. Communism transformed itself. In an opportunistic fashion, it seized democracy, and dressed up in a “Euro-conformity” shirt. And this is the essence of post-communist, pseudo-democracy.

The Czech Republic does much better in this respect than any

other former communist country. We must follow this example.

In Romania, we also need to enforce the 8th Point of the – well-known – Proclamation of Temesvár/Timisoara which was drafted exactly 20 years ago. It clearly stated that former Romanian Communist Party nomenclature and Securitate cadres should not hold public offices in a democratic constitutional state.

It is now the common issue and responsibility of the European Community to hinder the “stealing” of the revolution and of democracy. The freedom-aspiring peoples on the eastern side of the former Iron Curtain need efficient and practical support, so that they may continue the change of regime, overcome the burdensome heritage of dictatorship, and achieve human and collective rights, and accomplish social, moral, and legal justice.

Prague, 25 February 2010

László Tőkés

The Siege

11 December 1989: On the television program entitled: "Panoráma" broadcast by the National Hungarian Television, László Tőkés reports on the official actions that were taken against himself and his family. In addition, he criticizes the Bucharest regime and asks for the support of international public opinion. The television program has a major impact.

15 December 1989: The news spreads in Temesvár (Timisoara) that the Securitate made arrangements to remove László Tőkés. Late in the afternoon, the adherents of the congregation, about 200 people present, make a protective human chain around the manse.

16 December 1989: The Authorities intend to execute the eviction court order. After police and the responsible government officials appear, several adherents of the pastor rush to the scene, gathering at the Reformed Church at Maria Square and in front of the manse.

Both Romanian and Hungarian pedestrians and individuals of different nationalities join them. The protestors consider the measures taken by the authorities



Rev. László Tőkés was breaking down the "walls of fear" during a secret interview, in March 1989

to be a violation of the free practice of religious beliefs and ask them repeatedly to rescind it.

The local officials request that the people leave the square. However, they do not obey the request. Meanwhile, Mayor Petre Moș arrives and views the huge crowd. He announces that they can overrule the eviction of the pastor. However, he is not willing to promise anything, with his signature. Meanwhile, the crowd grows gradually and anti-communist slogans arise, transforming the protest into a full-blown demonstration.

17 December 1989: At dawn, the Romanian authorities enter the vicarage. Then, they enter

the church, where László Tőkés is assaulted and dragged away with his wife. Driven in separate cars, they are taken to Mineu (Menyő) in Sălaj County. Based on a State suggestion, this is the original location chosen by the Oradea bishop for Tőkés' exile. The Tőkés' submit to separate and repeated interrogations.

Back in Timisoara, various groups gather, shouting anti-Ceausescu slogans. Earlier in the afternoon, they march before the county council. They trash Ceausescu's pictures, red flags, and coat of arms.

The policemen and firefighters are impotent against the crowd. The army and the Securitate (secret police) surround the mass of demonstrators and open fire before dusk. After the ensuing riot, the crowd disperses. Securitate vehicles transport the bullet-ridden bodies from Timisoara hospitals to an unknown facility. As a result of the Timisoara events, Ceausescu calls an emergency meeting. The dictator's personal representative, Emil Bobu, visits the city in order to "settle things down."

18 December 1989: Ceausescu is away on an official visit to



Growing crowds around the manse of Rev. Tőkés in Temesvár/Timisoara, on 16 December 1989

Iran. In the early morning, the border guards receive orders not to allow Romanian citizens out of the country and forbid entry to foreigners. In the early hours in Timisoara, the Securitate (secret police) and the police and the army clear the debris from yesterday's riots. They attempt to create the impression that the inhabitants have calmed down.

However, in the afternoon, in front of the Orthodox Cathedral, another demonstration organizes. With their candles lit, the protestors remember yesterday's victims. The deployed army and Securitate units fire shots into the crowd of demonstrators. They hunt for fugitives, seeking safety. Subsequently, a series of mass arrests occur in Timisoara.

19 December 1989: During the day, another demonstration takes place in Timisoara. However, the army units are withdrawn from the city, leaving only the Securitate (secret police). Meanwhile, the army surrounds the city. In secret, Prime Minister Constantin Dascalescu travels to Timisoara. News of the demonstrations and riots spread, throughout the whole country.

20 December 1989: On a special train, workers dressed in military uniform arrive in Timisoara. From Craiova, the workers are told that Hungary attacked Romania and they are deployed to protect the city.

Throughout the entire county, a presidential state of emergency is announced. All internal bodies, including the army and the National Guard are on alert. At 11 o'clock p.m. a curfew is enforced, along with a ban on public assemblies. In the evening, a crowd of 100,000 demonstrate in Timisoara. The Securitate units randomly open fire into the crowd of demonstrators, which includes a manhunt after marooned protestors. Back from Iran, Ceaușescu arrives and discusses the Timisoara events on television.

Labeling the events as an anti-national provocation, Ceaușescu said they were sent to dismember Romania and to destroy socialism, by so-called foreign powers. In the evening, Ernő Rudas, the Hungarian ambassador's deputy, is invited to the Romanian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. That same day, there are demonstrations in Arad, Cluj-Napoca, Oradea, Brasov, Sibiu, Bistrita, Constanta, Buzau, and Curtici. Foreign news agencies are informed that László Tőkés is alive and was transported from Timisoara to Mineu.

21 December 1989: In Timisoara, a general strike starts. The workers occupy several factories. The commanders-in-chief of the Securitate withdraw their units from many locations. The rebels control the majority of the city. That same day in Bucharest, the people call for a great assembly and start to scan the anti-communist slogans. In other cities, predominantly in

Transylvania, the citizens follow the example of Timisoara.

22 December 1989: At night, the army continues to shoot civilians. However, the next day, by noon, they join the revolutionaries in Bucharest. Ceaușescu escapes. On 24 December, the National Salvation Front (NSF) comes into existence. The NSF makes a proclamation to the general public. The members of the temporary NSF council include: Doina Cornea, Ana Bladiana, Mircea Dinescu, László Tőkés, Géza Domokos, Petre Roman, and Ion Iliescu.

24 December 1989: The newly elected President of the National Salvation Front, Ion Iliescu, issues an order for establishing a military tribunal to condemn and charge the Ceaușescu couple. The military court finds the couple guilty. Their sentence is death by bullet, where upon they are instantly executed in a military barracks courtyard.



Anti-communist demonstration on the main square in Temesvár/Timisoara, on 20 December 1989

Twenty Years After

International Conference on the 20th Anniversary of East-Central-European Changes, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 26-27 November 2009

Much well-founded criticism is brought against the European Union. Fearing the loss of their sovereignty, and clinging to their identity, member states seek to protect their own specific interests from integration, which leads to transformation and ultimately globalization.

Nobody desires a "United States of Europe" on the American pattern. In their disadvantaged situation, many inhabitants of the former communist countries feel that after arriving into the European Union from the Soviet Empire, only the name of their presiding authority has changed.

"Out of the frying pan, we fell into the fire," they say. And they sense that their condition is just as harmful, as before the change. This generates nostalgia over "goulash communism" in Hungary, which recalls the – literally – dark Ceausescu era in Romania and the "Trabi-world" of the former East Germany.

Twenty years after the fall of the communist dictatorship and the beginning of the regime change throughout East-Central-Europe, we commemorate this anniversary with mixed feelings. Likewise, the evolving period, between 1989 and 2009, filled our days with the reality of tormenting contradictions.

Somehow, we resemble the people of Israel, who escaped from their Egyptian captivity. They attained their freedom. But they felt nostalgia, recalling their slave days and the "meat pots" of Egypt, while wandering in the desert. They lost sight of a better future, forgetting the hope of their "Promise Land."



Material necessity would urge us to bypass the road of liberty, exchanging our liberating and merciful God for inert and lifeless fetishes, which would only return us to the hopeless world of slavery.

Two weeks ago in Berlin, we celebrated the fall of the "Iron Curtain" at an event organized by the European People's Party. Twenty years later, we looked back at the dictatorship and we assessed the situation. Numerous conferences, exhibitions, and commemorations are scheduled this season in the European Parliament, to reflect on the transition period from the fall of the Berlin Wall to the reunification of Europe.

Last week, we also held an anniversary conference, entitled: "From Timisoara to Brussels," about the changes in Romania. From Berlin to Warsaw, from Budapest to Bucharest, from Vilnius to Prague – we commemorate together. Together, we walk down the 1989 Revolution road again. In order to draw from its lessons and continue on our journey, we traverse the road that points us in the right direction.

Otherwise, how could we hope for a better future?

In the olden times, citizens and nations could only count on themselves. The strong oppressed the weak; the large dominated the small. After their defeat and loss of freedom, the oppressed were left alone. "Might is right," goes the old adage, insinuating that the stronger is always right. This rule prevailed in the Old World. Consequently, totalitarian dictatorships and world wars invaded the "weak" and "small" citizens and nations in the 20th century.

Despite criticism against the European Union or "globalism," there is no doubt that today only global cooperation can rescue humanity from the danger of a "global war."

We understand from the fall of the Berlin Wall that a mutual solidarity between nation states should take charge over "pagan" power politics and godless direction. The message is that interdependent nations and nation states must join forces. Following the confrontation of the

▶ two super powers, the Cold War, and the two spiritual forces of good and evil, humanity needs a lasting solidarity, which embodies the downfall of the dictatorial communist regime and the reunification process in Europe.

In the biblical sense, this would fulfill the teaching of Jesus Christ to be "united in diversity," so that a value-based integration would benefit Europe and the entire globe. The global antidote to the universal jeopardy facing mankind is integration. By joining global forces, we answer the dilemma in overcoming Europe's inherited division.

This becomes visibly valid in Slovenia, an early location of the last Balkan war. As a member state of the former South Slavic state-federation, it is searching for ways out of its tragic divisions.

Through an outsider's eyes, Slovenia's most recent history is a success story. Besides creating new social structures, the fall of communism and the East-Central European changes made the declaration of an independent state a reality for Slovenians.

The political change of regime fulfilled their national aspirations for independence. After "escaping" from communism, the events in Yugoslavia were swift. In less than two decades of state independence, Slovenia held its first presidential election last year. This exemplifies the success of the "United Europe" project.

We have to believe in the "peace program" of Europe's reunification; on a conceptual, spiritual, and practical level. And we must make every possible effort to advance Europe's cooperation and security policy, continuing on our path of

freedom gained 20 years ago. We should not hinder our countries and continent, by retracting our heritage or tolerating any form of new crisis.

* * *

Just like Slovenia, 90 years ago, my native land, Transylvania and the Banat region were also part of the Habsburg Empire. After World War I, the Habsburg Empire was eviscerated via the Paris peace treaties. We were attached to an adjoining country: the Romanian kingdom. Transylvania's non-Romanian inhabitants, almost half of the population – including Hungarians and Germans – found themselves under an oppressive empire again.

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact era, which started 70 years ago, redistributed Europe between Hitler and Stalin. This later birthed the historic catastrophe of World War II.

It is more than sixty years since the people of East-Central-Europe escaped from their "Egyptian captivity" of Nazism. But from that captivity, they were led into another totalitarian world system: Communism. In 1961, the Berlin Wall became the shocking symbol of the new partitioning of our continent by the great powers.

Twenty years ago this kind of power partitioning – which spanned the entire 20th century – came to an end. The fall of both totalitarian regimes began a brand new chapter in European history.

Europe's genuine liberation was achieved in a long struggle, which was characterized by the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, the Prague Spring of 1968, and the Polish

Solidarity movement of 1980. As it celebrates its 60th anniversary, the European Community joins America, the "land of the free," both having born the battle to defeat communism.

However, those who believe that the liberation and reunification of Europe is a mere result of the historical-political automatism of the "domino principle" – or that of the good "teamwork" of great global power politics – are wrong.

Millions of freedom-loving people in Europe stood behind the changes of 20 years ago, who refused their unjust and inhumane destiny, and had sacrificed themselves on the altar of struggle and death. In silent revolt or heroic opposition, with extraordinary efforts and freedom-fights, they all contributed to the fall of the oppressive regimes. In the end, by demolishing the Berlin Wall, they broke down the walls of fear, lies, and hatred.

Twenty years ago, the fall of the Ceausescu-couple, the most brutal post-Stalinist dictatorship in East-Central-Europe, started with breaking through the "wall of silence."

The evil announcement to demolish about 7,000 settlements, by the Romanian "Conducator" in his village-destruction plan, can be compared to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, whose agenda includes anti-cultural and anti-civilization ambitions. The village destruction plan was the final impetus for the revolt against the terror, of the Ceausescu regime; against the death machine, of the infamous Romanian secret police, the Securitate; and against the intolerance, of the Romanian national-communism.

It is telling that the spontaneous anti-communist uprising began in Timisoara/Temesvár, in the Banat region, in a minority Hungarian Reformed church. It started in a multi-ethnic, multi-faith, and multi-

**... the
"Ghost of
Ceausescu"
still haunts
the Romanian
society.**

► cultural city and region, where ethnic minority groups suffered from racist political, nationalist, and religious oppression. Every week, our church in Timisoara/Temesvár proclaimed the liberating Word of God, against the brutal atheist dictatorship.

According to the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Word of God says that the “stones would cry out” if the people refused to speak out on behalf of the Lamb of God, who sacrificed himself to conquer the forces of darkness, evil, and fear.

We succeeded in breaking through the “wall of silence.” In Timisoara/Temesvár, the Romanian majority inhabitants joined the minority protesters, in a show of solidarity. The Romanian, Hungarian, and German inhabitants of the city united together as believers, spanning, Baptist, Catholic, Reformed, and Orthodox denominations. In fellowship, they confronted their common enemy: Ceausescu’s communist dictatorship.

Twenty years ago, the “Spirit of Timisoara” advanced the European Spirit, which is reflected in the

current European Union policy: unity in diversity, pluralism of common values, solidarity and cooperation of nations.

However, twenty years later, the “Ghost of Ceausescu” still haunts the Romanian society. As I mentioned, many people wax nostalgic about the illusion of the “golden” past, because of their disappointment with the difficult post-Communist transition and a structural Europe in crisis.

In the evolving period of 1989 to 2009, the former ruling political class maintained its power. The former communist nomenclature and the former Securitate, which was left intact, did everything possible to delay and even “hijack” the change of regime, to serve their own interests.

The democratization of Romanian society was only superficial. But it succeeded in securing Romania’s acceptance into the European Union, on 1 January 2007. Even so, Romania has still not reconciled its past. The transformation from a communist-collective

ownership system to a private property, free-market system has been unjust, unclear, and remains unaccomplished. During this transformation, proper restoration was not implemented on a mental, moral, or monetary basis.

The communist, state-nationalist past still haunts the national citizenry, regarding human rights, minority rights, and personal property rights. Further, Romania’s citizens have tolerated the deferred and distorted economic impact and disingenuous legislation on minority rights.

These troubles are entrenched within all the societies of the entire former Soviet bloc. They are symptomatic of a “mad dash” for social change, at any cost, without moral consequence or recompense. The former elite convey their prior control, in a furtive fashion, to the next generation, who has become the latter elite. These heirs are the direct descendants of the former despot ruler, as nepotism prevails yet again.

In April 2009, the European Parliament took an important step toward supporting further regime change, by condemning the dictatorship of Communist Totalitarianism. Likewise, sixty years ago, the world condemned the dictatorship of National Socialism. In addition, the EP has supported the real integration and advancement of the former communist countries.

At the EU-level, the 20th anniversary celebration of change since 1989 serves several purposes. Notably, these include the renewal of East-Central-European countries, the extension of the democratization process, and the advancement of European unification.

The 2009 Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Herta Müller, the Romanian-born German novelist, who writes on the themes of



Anti-communist demonstration on the main square in Temesvár/Timișoara, on 21 December 1989

► oppression, exile, and dictatorship in her native country. She was born in Nițchidorf in the Banat region, which includes Timisoara.

Ms. Müller writes extraordinary accounts of being an ethnic minority in a totalitarian regime. Having immigrated in 1987 to Germany, as a political exile, she writes in memory of her Romanian friends, who were killed under the Ceausescu regime.

Most likely, beyond the appreciation of her literary skills, the Nobel Prize committee intended to draw attention to the 20th anniversary of East-Central-European regime changes. In traditional Europe, one must respect the rights of every ethnic community and minority, as well as, the human dignity of their members.

The life of Herta Müller was spent principally in Romania and could be characterized as a brave resistance against communist dictatorship and the infamous Romanian secret police; the Securitate.

Twenty years after the fall of Ceausescu, in her published July 2009 *Die Zeit* article, she writes about the still operating Securitate. Ms. Müller unmasks the Romanian post-communist system, utilizing her extreme precision with words. Concerning her former homeland of Romania, she concludes: "The same people with the same mentality occupy all the important positions. Practically nothing has changed."

In commemorating this 20th anniversary and presenting the Ljubljana conference, the most important role and purpose is to promote the defeat of our communist heritage that hinders the democratic regime change, which started in 1989.

Ljubljana, Slovenia,
26 November 2009

László Tóké

Pan-European Memento



On 27 June 2009, festive commemorations were held in Budapest, at the Austrian-Hungarian border, with the participation of Hungarian state president, László Sólyom, and Austrian state president, Heinz Fischer, as well as, the high representation of another thirty countries, on the 20th anniversary of the border-opening.

It is common knowledge that the "right date" of the border-opening is still debated. Allow me to be unconventional and celebrate the 19th of August as the official anniversary. To me, it is the most authentic anniversary of both the symbolic and genuine breaking of the Iron Curtain. Its dark veil separated two worlds: the Soviet-bloc dictatorship and a free Europe.

It was 19 August, when the Pan-European Picnic was organized, on the border of Hungary and Austria, as a civilian initiative. It was carried out by the Common Fate Camp and members of the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) in Debrecen and Sopron. It was then that freedom-aspiring East German refugees overthrew the border-gate and rushed into Austria. In that magical moment, the assembled Hungarians and representatives of another twelve

nations demolished the remaining barbed-wire fence. Together, they opened the closed border, which symbolized communist tyranny.

Today, we pay tribute to those freedom-loving heroes, who assumed great risks and dared to act. Irrespective of government decrees or great powers, they chose to demolish the walls, which divided Europe that separated; nations from nations, people from people, and brothers from brothers.

We are honored by the presence of Carl Bildt, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, whose country currently holds the presidency of the unified Europe, and of Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, whose country re-united, after the fall of the Iron Curtain. These worthy acknowledgements highlight Hungary's historic role in defeating the atheist-communist dictatorship, as well as, the liberation and unification of Europe.

Let us sincerely appreciate the objective organizers, courageous contributors, and valiant veterans of the Pan-European Picnic, many of whom are with us today. Let us thank those people for striking through the wall of tyranny and opening the freeway of freedom for us.

▶ Coming from Romania, in the town of Temesvár/Temeschwar/Timisoara, I recall that twenty years ago we succeeded in breaking the wall of lies, fear, and silence erected by communism. Its ideology must be condemned, along with its twin-ideology, fascism.

Back then, Dictator Ceausescu planned to demolish thousands of villages. But instead, we succeeded in demolishing his brutal dictatorship. In 1989, Hungarians, Romanians, and Germans, joined forces with various ethnic and religious forces to fight for freedom. A genuine European spirit inspired everyone.

As a Transylvanian Hungarian, I am thankful to God that along with the re-unification of Germany and Europe, the re-unification obstacles of the Hungarian communities have diminished too. Once, separated by state borders throughout the Carpathian Basin, these artificial walls that kept us separated since 1920 – also fell down.

Twenty years after the new change of regime, there are still countless walls of separation, between European nations and worldwide totalitarian regimes that continue to deprive their citizens of basic liberties.

May the anniversary of the border-opening at Sopronpuszta be a memento for us – in the sense of Apostle Paul's warning:

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1)

May the newly inaugurated statue of Miklós Melocco also remind us of this!

Sopronpuszta, Hungary,
19 August 2009

László Tőkés

The twentieth anniversary provided an excellent opportunity to look back at the beginnings of the 1989 regime change in Romania, to assess the difficult period of transition, and to cope with the heritage of communism. In December 1989, Temesvár/Timisoara advanced and projected the spirit of European unity in diversity, when about ten ethnicities belonging to the same number of confessions joined forces against their common enemy – against ungodly dictatorship – and started the popular uprising which then arrived and was completed in Bucharest. In this context, the "Spirit of Temesvár/Timisoara" is a synonym of the ecumenical spirituality of Europe which roots in our Christian faith; and in the civil sense, it is a synonym of tolerance and solidarity, two basic values of the European Union.

From Temesvár to Brussels

Conference organized on the twentieth anniversary of the 1989 revolution in Romania

17 November 2009

09:00-12:30, room 6Q1

European Parliament, Brussels

● 9.00 Opening Speech

László TŐKÉS, MEP

Hans Gert PÖTTERING, MEP

Nelly MAES, president, European Free Alliance

József Szájer, MEP

PÁL Schmitt, MEP, vice-president of the European Parliament

● 9.30 Freedom and Fear

The Fall of the Iron Curtain and rebuilding democracy in Central Easter Europe

Cristian PREDA, MEP

Florian MIHALCEA, Societatea Timișoara

Traian ORBAN, Memorialul Revoluției, Timișoara

William TOTOK, publicist, Germany

● 10.15 Questions

● 10.30 Communities and Minorities under the Communist Regime and after its Fall

István TŐKÉS, theologian, Cluj

Gábor VINCZE, researcher, Szeged

Stefano BOTTONI, researcher, Budapest

● 11.15 Questions

● 11.30 Europe and its Communist Heritage

Tunne KELAM, MEP

Vitautas LANDSBERGIS, MEP

Alojz PETERLE, MEP

Tamás DEUTSCH, MEP

● 12.20 Closing remarks

László TŐKÉS, MEP

► Dear Participants,

I was asked to share my views on the theme “From Timisoara to Brussels”, on behalf of the members of the Tőkés family – including those who have already passed away.

First, I need to mention that I am 94 years old. Thus, I was a beholder, and sometimes also active voice in various aspects of the events 20 years ago, and, at the same time, I had also witnessed the difficult half of a century in Romania, in Transylvania, which preceded Timisoara (Temesvár). I have personal experiences of the period between 1944 and 1989; it is not through books and studies I gained reflection on 20th century history. These makings commence me to denote the wider historic context which – in my strong opinion – gave sense to the 1989 events in Timisoara.

The authors of the Paris Peace Dictate tore Europe into two halves after World War II. Eastern Europe became the counter-part of the so called West. The disjunctive line was probably more dangerous and demanded more victims than the later Berlin Wall.

I would not like to introduce names or dates here. Romanian dictator Ceausescu was a fading state president, just like the red-handed Hungarian dictator, János Kádár. They were both futile figures of puppet-politicians of the divided Europe.

Many library data prove this, bringing much contradiction and raising many questions. The basic truth however remains the same: the nations of Central-Eastern Europe got closed behind the bars of the Stalinist jail of Soviet Communism. One can remain unconcerned about this, others may like to put a gloss on the truth – nothing will change the captive condition of millions, which occurred of an agreement by great power leaders.



Popular consciousness is still waiting for the impeachment of those concerned and the indemnification of the victims. At best, we have the judgment of French president Mitterrand, which were then uttered without effect. As he stated, the winners of the two world wars were just attendants of vengeance, there was no real settlement of conflicts. The West left the oppressed alone. The case of the 1956 Revolution of Hungary and the following totalitarian repression is a good example of this. Let them settle their own issues due to communist ideology, they said, between each other, or against each other, as they can. Unfortunately, the leaders of the oppressed churches joined the “example” of the Romanian Orthodox Church, and also yielded to the Communist regime in Romania.

This was the situation until December 1989.

As many of us hoped, Timisoara meant a conclusion by Providence to the yoke of power in a Transylvanian and Romanian context. We hoped that a process of liberation would start. We need to emphasize that Timisoara, not Bucharest, the capital, was the beginning of the 1989 Revolution – despite what many would like to misreport or factually omit. “The Lord of History” used László Tőkés, the pastor of the small

Calvinist-Reformed congregation to become the “spark” – as many call him – of the flames which burned down communism in Bucharest, in Cluj-Napoca (Kolozsvár), in the Hungarian Szekler Land area and throughout the regions of the Romanian Old Kingdom. László has never seen himself as a “spark” or “hero.” On the contrary, he only did what each church servant should have done in the spirit of their oath, as he explained to me. But it is a fact, that there was a burning due to the “spark.” The flames demanded many victims and they covered and revolutionized all the country. Communist tyranny came to its final days.

Unfortunately, we need to witness these final days. Post-communism prevails in most aspects of social life. I do not feel it is my duty to go into detail, while proving the “survival” of Communism. But I still have to mention some negative facts, regarding our minority existence.

The almost two million strong Hungarian community of Transylvania, which has been continuously decreasing in number, expected some kind of positive discrimination after the change of regime. But their forced assimilation continues. The destruction of the historic Hungarian cities continues, including the present-day tasteless havoc of the main square of Cluj

► (Kolozsvár). The facts of violent intervention against the Hungarian community in Transylvania are obvious (László Tőkés: What's behind a statement, 2009). Twenty years after Ceausescu's fall, we still need to struggle for the restitution of our confiscated cultural and church property. Bishop Géza Pap of the Reformed Church in Romania, Transylvanian District, was interviewed about their recent legal actions at Strasbourg in this respect (Szabadság daily newspaper, 6 November 2009). The sweep of the Romanian state language and the appearance of a variety of false Romanian national claims are virtually untamable. The Romanian language prevails in the public offices of regions of Hungarian majority. We can ask for train or bus tickets only in Romanian, and we can only use the Romanian language in hospitals, at the chemist's, at post offices, at the police station, etc. There are certain exceptions, but this situation will not change until the concept of a "unitary Romanian National State," as included in the first article of the Constitution, will rule the country. Therefore, until the responsible Brussels officials do not

demolish the remains of the historic wall between East and West, the "spark" of Timisoara will remain a reminiscence of a beam of light in the European Union.

Coping with the past will be an essential part in demolishing the remains of the Iron Curtain, throughout Romania and the Carpathian Basin. The process has started. But the apparatus of the Securitate (the communist political police of Romania) still exists and operates, in the form of anti-minority nationalism. The scandals around Hungarian inscriptions and names of streets conserve the communist past. The reality of Hungarians being second class citizens can not be hidden any more.

We have expected a lot from Brussels. But East Europe still uses post-communist nationalism against our Hungarian community, as experienced in Slovakia, Romania, Voivodina (Serbia) and Carpatho-Ukraine. Hungarians hope that the officials of the European Union will gear the European Constitution to historic truth. We also hope that after a while the "spirit of Timisoara"

will dominate the offices and member states of the European Union.

We still do not know when or how this will occur, but I trust that the MESSAGE of Jesus Christ will soon come true somehow: "I am the way and the truth and the life." This message can be formulated in various languages, by various cultures – by the people of the post-Holocaust Israel, by the followers of the Koran, and by the millions-billions of true humanists. However, we expect the European Union to be the blessed tool of the integral – peaceful, spiritual, and financial – co-existence of Europe's small and big nations, when various communities come together. An official European language for all the member states, as middle-age Latin was, would be an important step forward on this path, besides the cultivation and preservations of the precious national languages.

In the hope of the upcoming togetherness of European Union nations, I do thank you for your attention.

Dr. István Tőkés, theologian

From Temesvár/Timisoara – to Europe

Berlin, Brussels, Ljubljana, Budapest, Bucharest, Strasbourg – to enumerate only some of the important capitals and political centers where, in the framework of significant programs, we commemorated last year the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain and the beginning of the reunification of our Continent.

Thanks to the Konrad Adenauer Foundation for today's worthy event which is a strong encore to the aforementioned. Today, in the large fellowship of the European people's parties of Christian-Democratic roots, we might put aside the professional analyses and conclusions of scientific and

political conferences – and during this anniversary year – we may reveal the human, confessional, and moral depths of the historic 1989 turning-point, focusing on the popular opposition and uprising in Temesvár/Timisoara. This will also allow us to draw conclusions and outline messages.

* * *

To quote Tunne Kelam: "Communist power is based on two pillars: lies and violence." And attached to these: the other two psychological pillars of totalitarian dictatorships are fear and silence, arising from fear. The people of the eastern side of the Iron Curtain, which literally

stood as a "prison wall," the citizens of the Soviet-Russian "lager" had to experience this. And this was increasingly true for the intimidated and silenced subjects of the last Stalinist-communist dictatorship – the Ceausescu regime.

In a poem entitled Consumatum est, contemporary poet Kornél Döbrentei described Romania of those times as "Europe's dogma-grim prison" where "the dynastic evil rules," where "the power of lock-jaw fear waits to be defeated;" he saw the subjugated society of a captive nation in which "the deadly devoutness of sufferance has diminished, / the walls of silence – at last – must be demolished." ►

► In the 80s, we indeed had to live in the gloomy world of the “Genius of the Carpathians” (as Ceausescu liked to be called), where the secret service of the police state, the infamous Securitate, which – as the once ÁVO in Hungary or the STASI in East-Germany – wormed itself into the most intimate human relations. Brothers denounced brothers, spouses denounced spouses. Our lives were “wired” and “bugs” were even planted in our bedrooms. Securitate wanted to know our desires and dreams – perchance they might have threatened the social order! We lived in a regime, which declared total freedom, although it celebrated its own dictatorship and Soviet occupation, by telling the oppressed it was “liberation.” Its Thought Police constrained the unwritten law of lies upon us.

And all lied – as “citizens’ responsibility.”

People lied – or told the untruth.

Or – in the best case – they remained silent.

We built up walls of fear and silence around us. We withdrew into our Ivory Towers of silence. Silence shackled our tongues and deeds. And while the false success-propaganda blared in the East, Western-Europe remained silent.

In 1988, Nicolae Ceausescu announced his “settlement systematization” plan. In a euphemist way, this covered his diabolic plan of village destruction – an authentic Balkan “Talib project.”

Listening to the vicious half of his ego, Prophet Jonah again tried to run away – for the umpteenth time. “No gain here of nice words and prayer, / there’s only place for fight, and the arrows of power” – thought many of us with despair in the captivity of the “sinful Nineve,” as recalling the poem of Mihaly Babits.



The village destruction plan finally shook Europe up. The plan otherwise was a multiple menace for the minorities of Transylvania – just as pan-Romanian atheist, national-communist dictatorship stroke minorities the most cruelly. It also threatened their ethnic and religious identity – after completely ravaging their human condition. After the Jewish and German inhabitants – the Kraut and Saxon people of Herta Müller – were sold out for hard currency; we, the Hungarians were next in the cross-hairs of the Romanian national-chauvinist “Endlösung.”

In those extreme and tragic times of Transylvanian history, besides former US President Jimmy Carter and Polish President Lech Walesa, I also sent my cries for help to the Chief Rabbi in Budapest, Tamás Raj. In those times “... we, Transylvanian Hungarians and Christians, were becoming with the steady tread of the former ‘Jew Laws’, ever more the ‘Jews’ of Romania” (fragment of my letter dating 8 December 1989).

In those times, our own church-leaders also gave us over to the Securitate, as they became collaborators. Besides them, communist dictatorships fouled many hundred thousands, and made them accomplices in oppressing the people.

The public reply of the Budapest Rabbi was staggering. Among others, he wrote that: “In this country too, the church leadership has often fallen into the trap of collaboration and “survival of the un-fittest.” Even today, it is difficult to extricate ourselves from this.

“Mutes are panders to guilty,” sums up the hard sentence Mihály Babits in his above cited poem entitled The Book of Jonah. This concise verse of our great poet is highly relevant as we continue to read the letter. “The Jews in Transylvania never watched the affairs of other ethnic groups as strangers; they felt the destiny of the Hungarians as their own. They were exposed to a twofold threat, to the dark shadow of anti-Semitism and anti-Hungarian attitude, two branches of the same stock. Today, the Transylvanian Hungarians have become ‘Jews’, but the Jews became Hungarians long since. (...) Perhaps even they remember their Hungarian nationality who saw their homeland for the last time from the window of a cattle wagon...” wrote the Jewish high priest who undertook solidarity with the ridden.

“Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of falsehood, who draw sin as with cart ropes,” resounds the righteous judgment of the Book of Isaiah (5:18) over the totalitarian

▶ atheist dictatorship which was rotten to the core, and over the grave of the shamefully exterminated Ceausescu-couple.

"You have eaten the fruit that your lies produced," reads the statement of Prophet Hosea (10:13) which was true concerning ourselves and our miserable conditions.

"Consumatum est – it must have been told!" The "wall of silence" – which metaphorically was an integral part of the Berlin Wall – needed to be broken through. Further, it needed to be demolished completely!

Then, in the tribulations of 1989 we experienced the truth of the words of Jesus: "I tell you, if these – the disciples – were silent, the very stones would cry out." (Luke 19:40)

Following a very long Advent wait, on the liberating Christmas of 1989, our congregation of Temesvár/Timișoara, and our sister churches, the Hungarian population of the city, its majority Romanian population, as well as, the other coexisting ethnic groups arrived to the limit of endurance which also meant the threshold of speaking out. "From the depths they cried for help," God heard their prayers, He blessed their brave conduct, and abated the "Babylon captivity" – and disproved the personality cult of the self-deifying dictator.

German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans-Dietrich Genscher was among the first visitors to Temesvár/Timișoara, following the fall of the Ceausescu regime. He paid tribute to the martyrs of the freedom fight in our church. During the anniversary last year he stated that "the demolition of the Berlin Wall was a historic event, which did not only dissolve the division of Germany and Europe – but also that of the entire world."

In December 1989, Temesvár/Timișoara advanced and projected the spirit of European unity in

diversity, when about ten ethnicities belonging to the same number of confessions joined forces against their common enemy – against ungodly dictatorship – and started the popular uprising which then arrived and was completed in Bucharest. In this context, the "Spirit of Temesvár/Timișoara" is a synonym to the ecumenical spirituality of Europe, which has roots in our Christian faith; and in the civil sense, it is a synonym for tolerance and solidarity, two basic values of the European Union.

The "Ghost of Ceausescu" however still haunts us in various forms. It is extremely difficult for Eastern Europe to escape of the retracting heritage of communism.

With the accession of the former Soviet bloc countries, the European Union inherited the problems of the long-lasting democratic transition and the moral crisis of post-communism as well. Therefore, the issues of East-Central-European regime changes are now a common European issue, just like the recent global financial crisis is.

The integration of nations and countries, which were separated by the Iron Curtain, is only possible, if in the spirit of Temesvár/Timișoara – of the solidarity between nations – while exceeding the destructive anti-culture of hatred, we are able to establish the spiritual unity of a Europe renewed in faith and morality.

I am convinced that only this – otherwise two-way – path will take us to Europe. This is the only way for European encounter.

Brussels, 27 January 2010

László Tőkés

POLITICAL STATEMENT

on the establishment of an international criminal system to examine the crimes of communism

On 15 December 2009, in Timisoara/Temesvár, on the twentieth anniversary of the regime change, Bishop László Tőkés, Member of the European Parliament issued a political statement on the establishment of an international criminal system to investigate the crimes of communism, according to the following:

"We ask the European Union, representing close to five hundred million citizens, to have the United Nations take the appropriate measures in order to establish an international criminal system that would allow the legal investigation and condemnation of crimes against humanity committed under the communist regime, according to international law. For the "Timisoara/Temesvár Trials," the specialized institutions of the concerned countries would provide proof, where these institutions already exist. In those countries where these institutions have not yet been established, they would be created under the aegis of the UN, as well as, the appropriate investigative bodies. The material and territorial competencies of the tribunal to be created, as well as, the use of technical terms would be determined by the above mentioned fundamental documents that would serve as the legal basis of the decisions brought by the tribunal."

Communiqué

on the occasion of Christmas, the upcoming New Year,
and the twentieth anniversary of the popular uprising at Temesvár/Timisoara

On the holy day of the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, we remember with gratitude to God the wonderful fulfillment of the 1989 Advent expectations and that Redeeming Christmas. This symbolizes our escape from the “Egyptian captivity” of the atheist-communist dictatorship.

In the framework of the 1989 Anniversary Year, in the polarity of the End and Beginning, we take into account the events of our Revolution, which heralded the end of our slavery and the beginning of our obtaining freedom. We might sum up the conclusions and message of the Timisoara Anniversary as follows:

- Let justice be done to the heroes of the freedom fight, both martyrs and victims! Two decades after the Revolution, it is scandalous and untenable that we still do not know the identity of the so-called “terrorists” and those who murdered the demonstrators.
- It is our duty to face the communist past and its horrible heritage on a European and worldwide basis. To do so, the “double standard” of allowing communism a “free pass” from judgment must be abolished. It is our moral obligation to pursue a “Timisoara Trials” of the totalitarian communist regime – like the Nuremberg Trials, which judged the Nazi regime.
- Throughout East-Central-Europe, a post-communist continuity has been maintained that thwarts genuine change. Therefore, we must pursue the ideal of genuine freedom that commenced with the regime change initiated in 1989. And we must finish the “unfinished” Revolutions of 1956 and 1989.



Lech Walesa and László Tőkés at the 20th anniversary commemorations in Temesvár/Timisoara, on 15 December 2009

- Within the former Soviet countries, we must confront our communist heritage. We must unite, undergird, and unanimously denounce surviving communism throughout the rest of the world (e.g., China, North Korea, and Cuba).
- Twenty years after the demise of the Ceausescu dictatorship, we face important consequences: rehabilitating Timisoara's revolutionary role and revisiting a renewal of our spirituality. Collectively, in the Banat region of Romania, the churches and revolutionary organizations refute and renounce the post-communist, nationalist restoration, and its fraudulent revisionist history. More importantly, this stand is supported and endorsed worldwide by such illustrious personalities as: Lech Walesa, Jerzy Buzek, Viktor Orbán, Traian Băsescu, László Sólyom, Emil Constantinescu, James Baker, Barack Obama, and Joseph Daul.
- With this global recognition, the twentieth anniversary of the Revolution at Timisoara terminated the anti-revolutionary political discourse, post-1989. In remembrance of the martyrs and victims of the regime change, we must protest any attempt to erect statues that would celebrate and glorify the communist death machine and its criminal proponents: the Romanian communist “Führer” nicknamed the “Conducator” and Gen. Ștefan Gușă, who ordered soldiers to shoot the Timisoara demonstrators.
- We view the 1990 “Black March” in Targu Mures/Marosvásárhely as an anti-revolutionary event, wholly contrary to the spiritual character of the Timisoara Revolution. Obviously, the anti-Hungarian intent to erect a statue of Gen. Gușă is orchestrated to desecrate the 20th Anniversary of the Timisoara Revolution and provoke nationalism against minority Hungarians.
- Genuine democratic regime change cannot be implemented without fundamental changes that address minority politics. The Hungarian – Reformed Church – stand, which initiated the popular uprising in Timisoara, focused global attention on Romania. The spotlight of global attention continues to expose the anti-minority rhetoric,

▶ and resentment by the national-communist regime.

- We lament the extinction of the Jewish and German populations within Romania. The iconic images of Elie Wiesel and Herta Müller provide human faces of the Jews and Germans, respectively. Naturally, the Hungarian community within Romania, almost two million souls, refuses to share their same destiny.

- In laconic terms: "The Romanian Revolution was stolen." In "the spirit of Timisoara" we must reclaim our moral capital. In December 1989, "the spirit of Timisoara" explicitly conveyed the unification of all ethnic (e.g., Romanians, Hungarians, and Germans) and religious groups (e.g., Reformed, Orthodox, Catholics, and Baptists).

- On the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, it is our moral obligation to keep the inter-ethnic and ecumenical spirit of Timisoara alive. The 1989 days recall and represent authentic European values, which began Romania's accession into the European Union.

- The Timisoara, Transylvanian, and Bucharest revolutionaries should inspire us to fight for a new and free Romania. Their example justifies our fight, because our plight has not changed in 20 years. We must follow their trail-blazing path, with persistence, to build a democratic society, which has been denied to us.

According to U.S. President, Barack Obama: "A new chapter started in Romania's history" two decades ago. May the twentieth anniversary of the 1989 Revolution begin a new chapter in our quest for genuine freedom in Romania, by renewing its zip, zeal, and zest.

Budapest, 23 December 2009

László Tőkés

Robert Schuman Medal Awarded to MEP László Tőkés by EPP Group Chairman Joseph Daul



In the context of the twentieth anniversary of the fall of Communism in Europe, the EPP Group Chairman Joseph Daul awarded the Robert Schuman Medal in a formal ceremony during an EPP Group meeting in Strasbourg to László Tőkés MEP in recognition of the decisive role he played in the Revolution of 1989 in Romania, overthrowing the Communist dictatorial regime of Nicolae Ceausescu.

Awarding the prize, Joseph Daul emphasized the historical role played by László Tőkés in the liberation of Romania from Communist rule. "Men of your courage and your strength made the reunification of Europe possible. Men like you best symbolize the humanistic vision of society that we, the EPP Group, do not cease to defend since the time of the Fathers of Europe. With all my heart, for Romanians and for Europe, I thank you."

Romanian Head of State decorates László Tőkés



On 19 December 2010, President Traian Băsescu awarded László Tőkés with the Order of the Star of Romania – Knight Rank. The Order of the Star of Romania is the highest civil order in Romania.

According to the decree signed by the Head of State, this decoration is awarded "On the 20th anniversary of the 1989 December Revolution as high appreciation for the courage and dignity he proved through his personal example, the historic revolt of the Romanian people against the communist dictatorship."

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 11, 2009

His Excellency Bishop Laszlo Tokes
Str. Jean Calvin nr. 2
410210 Oradea/Nagvarad
Romania

Dear Your Excellency:


I am pleased to send my warmest greetings to you on this special anniversary.

Two decades ago, countless Romanians united in a common cause and boldly stood for freedom and equality. In a time of great change, they helped forge a path of opportunity and hope, and began a new chapter in Romania's history.

Protecting these core values is an obligation shared by all people, and we salute those whose courage has helped make freedom a reality for people around the world.

As you celebrate this milestone, I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,



Communiqué

in support of five Hungarian young men imprisoned in Serbia

The physical attacks against native Hungarians in Serbia generated significant international media coverage. So much interest, that in January 2005, the European Parliament (EP) assembled a fact finding committee and commissioned it to investigate the cases.

In contrast, the Hungarian Boys of Temerin case remained unnoticed, since a Serbian man was "portrayed" as the victimized party. As a matter of fact, the Hungarian Boys of Temerin, have now been imprisoned for five years. This is for an incident, wherein Zoran Petrovich was assaulted. Nonetheless, from the start, it was obvious that the Hungarian men were actually the "victims." According to the ruthless logic of nationalism, the "majority view" became the de facto position. Falling victim to the indulgence of the Serbian authorities, this case is reminiscent of Malina Hedvig in Slovakia and Pál Cseresnyés in Romania, both retaliation cases.

There is a shocking similarity between the judgment and victimization applied against the Temerin Boys and Pal Cseresnyes. Unfortunately, our fellow Hungarians from Temerin and Targu Mures must bear the tragic consequences of their perverted nationalist aggressors, namely the Serbian Zoran Petrovich and the Romanian Mihaila Cofariu. In these cases, they were set-up by merely answering to the provocation of the majority. The anti-Hungarian powers chose to set examples, by imposing the most severe prison sentences in both cases. In actuality, it was the accused, who in fact became the "victims."

As a result of the pub skirmish, the five Hungarian young men were sentenced to 60 total years in prison. The sentencing included:



Anti-Hungarian graffiti in Temerin, Serbia ("Hungarians under the hail")

István Máriás (15 years), Zsolt Illés (13 years), István Szakáll (11 years), József Uracs (11 years), and Árpád Horváth (10 years). The incident as provoked by a Serbian drug dealer. The recent Serbian presidential election had a major impact in their conviction and sentencing. More precisely, the Serbian Radical Party exploited the "Hungarian Vandals" case for their political advantage.

The "Attempted Homicide" charge was unfounded. The sentencing for the physical assault was exceedingly excessive for the punishment. Thus, it is our natural and national responsibility to defend the accused and pursue their release, due to the unjust sentencing of the Temerin Boys.

Therefore, it is our human and national responsibility to jointly step up in order to defend and succeed in releasing the unjustly forsaken Temerin boys. Given this egregious situation, Imre M. Szabó, a television reporter and trustee of the 23 October 1956 Committee, produced a documentary film entitled: "The Temerin Boys – 60 Years Legally Binding." He previewed the film before a plenary session in the European Parliament. At which time, MEP László Tőkés raised his voice in the spirit of defense for the

prisoners, who have suffered for their ethnic Hungarian background.

Yesterday, at the EP session, MEP Edith Bauer and MEP Csaba Sógor also raised their voices against the anti-Hungarian Slovakian state language law. Professor György Schöpflin called Slovakia an absurd nation. On the other hand, the Slovakian spoke-persons attacked the Hungarian representative in a most vulgar manner.

In his one-line reply, Laszlo Tókes highlighted that Slovakian representative Monika Benova stated non-existing issues in her prejudiced comment.

The speech of MEP Csaba Tabajdi, Head of the Hungarian Socialist Delegation, stood in sharp contrast with the spirit of the Hungarian protection interests. At the same time, it generated dissonant feelings. In it, he praised the minority protection aspect of the Serbian legislature and propagated Serbia's entrance in the European Union.

László Tőkés' speech is attached to this communiqué.

Brussels, 8 October 2009

Press Office
of MEP László Tőkés

Remarks on the case of the Temerin Hungarian men

It has been five years, since five Hungarian Boys were imprisoned in Serbia, as a result of a pub skirmish in Temerin located in Voivodina, Serbia. They were each sentenced 10 to 15 years in prison. In truth, they were provoked by a Serbian drug dealer and critically assaulted.

The Hungarian Boys were sentenced to 60 total years. In reality, they became convenient pawns in an election campaign, exploited by a nationalist propaganda. Their outlandish punishment far exceeds the anti-humanitarian crimes imposed for the Balkan War.

Objectively speaking, their only sin was being ethnic Hungarians.

During the same period, 300 Hungarians were beaten in Serbia, without any legal consequences; a proportion of 300:1. In January 2005, the European Parliament (EP) commissioned a fact-finding committee to investigate Serbia. Their report on the brutal beatings of ethnic Hungarians has not yet been reviewed by the Human Rights Commission.

I ask the EP and President Jerzy Buzek: release the Temerin Hungarian Boys from prison. The

fulfillment of their outrageous sentencing will destroy their entire lives.

As a preliminary condition for Serbia's entrance into the European Union (EU), the EU should mandate that Serbia's jurisdiction is totally devoid of all discrimination. Further, the EU should initiate trials and impose threatening verdicts for the apprehension of authentic criminals; namely, Serbian War criminals, who remain at-large.

Brussels, 7 October 2009

MEP László Tőkés

Ethiopia's Stalled Democracy: A Spotlight on the Ogaden

It is a great honour for me to address the distinguished speakers and guests of today's meeting "Ethiopia's Stalled Democracy: A Spotlight on the Ogaden" organized with the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization and the African Rights Monitor.

As coordinator of the EPP Group of the Human Rights Committee, one of the main pillars of my activity is to speak up against violations of human and minority rights, hindering the development of democracy and rule of law around the world, values that our European family is based on.

Let these values be the starting point of our discussion today on the Ogaden: as Members of the European Parliament, we must all ensure that the EU upholds these values in its relations with the Horn of Africa and places the issue of human rights at the top of its agenda.



The Ogaden Basin may contain major oil deposits

The Ogaden is a region that in the past century was under different foreign occupations, leading to unrest and conflicts between the neighbouring countries and its communities for control over land and people. As a result of this turmoil, the lives of civilians have been and still continue to be today under threat coming both from the rebel groups and the authorities,

as the two sides are fighting over power in the region, at the expense of the lives of civilians.

As we all know, since the 2007 Ethiopian military crackdown of rebels (The Ogaden National Liberation Front) who attacked a Chinese oil-installation, the authorities, in their battle against them, have subjected civilians

▶ to executions, torture and rape, creating widespread violence and a humanitarian crisis. This threatens the survival of thousands of ethnic Somali nomads, forcibly displacing entire rural communities and destroying villages.

Because of the media blockade in the Ogaden region, it is impossible to establish the extent of the crisis today, but reports of international human rights organizations reveal massive brutality and killings by the ONLF, labelled as “terrorists” by the government.

As firm supporters of the rule of law in Africa, we can not stand silent and watch these killings take place in the Ogaden. The Ethiopian government needs to respect the rich diversity of its people, be they Tigrean, Oromo, Somali. Its current federalist regime – a system intended to give its peoples the right to administer their resources, protect their culture, practise their language – is being used for a corrupt and centralised elite, completely disregarding the constitutional right of people to self-administration.

After the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, we must ensure that democracy-building is a more

prominent element in the EU's external relations. Similarly, we must ensure that the EP upholds the values of those it has honoured for their commitments to freedom, democracy, and human rights – from Andrei Sakharov to Aung San Suu Kyi.

The ties the EU has across the Atlantic Ocean are also powerful instruments to encourage change through peaceful means, to communicate concerns over Ethiopia's human rights abuses, and to ensure unified action between those powers with the influence to bring change to Ethiopia: United States and European Union.

Similarly, the European Commission must ensure that its ongoing projects in the region indeed promote democracy and human rights in Ethiopia. They must also acknowledge the human rights abuses being perpetrated in the Ogaden, and work to combat them.

Aid must not be used as a weapon against those it is intended to help and donors have to be responsible in their allocation, delivery, and monitoring of aid distribution. Those who are repressed by the government cannot come

to associate the symbols of the European Union with a weapon of tyranny.

The film you will see paints a desperate picture that has not changed greatly since it was made two years ago. Famine persists. Freedoms of expression are curtailed. The space for political activism and nonviolent protest is constrained.

Ethiopia's people cannot be abandoned by outside powers as Hungarians were in 1956, or Czechs in 1968. Vocal protests must be matched with support for concrete actions to raise understanding of Ethiopia's complexity and the legitimacy of its peoples' demands.

This hearing is a step in that direction – by looking to the past we can recognize both risks and opportunities. But to look to the future we must understand the present.

Today, we gathered together as eager audience and eager speakers. I look forward to learning from the exchange and the dialogue to come.

Brussels, 7 December 2010

Question Time in DROI

India has witnessed massive violence against its Christian community in 2008, forcing 50,000 Christians to flee their properties. Many of them still live in refugee camps in an atmosphere of insecurity and fear.

The recent “reconversion” of 6,000 Christians to Hinduism in a so-called purification ceremony indicates that – since the violent attacks of 2008 – the government has made little progress in fighting against Hindu nationalism in order to protect its religious minorities.

The ongoing persecution of Christians is a violation of human rights that should not be tolerated in the region, or in any part of the world.

In its bilateral relation with India, in what ways does the EU engage with the Indian government to push for more religious freedom and strengthen communal peace?

What are the steps the EU takes to urge the government to respect the Christian community? How does the EU promote the positive role churches can play in society, contributing to stability and peaceful inter-ethnic cohabitation?

Brussels, 9 November 2009

DECLARATION

in Support of the Uyghur People

Gathering as democratically elected representatives to mark the twentieth anniversary of European Reunification and the liberation of millions of Europeans from the tyranny of Communism:

Whereas acknowledging that Communist regimes continue to actively limit the freedoms of millions of people in countries around the world and to denigrate the cultural, economic, linguistic, and religious rights of the individual and in particular, ethnic national minorities;

Whereas acknowledging the crucial and positive role that the moral support of Western Europe democracies provided over fifty years to those oppressed under Communist regimes and the role this played in the eventual fall of Communism in Europe;

Whereas paying tribute to the thousands of Europeans who had their lives taken from them in executions carried out by the Communist regimes of Central and Eastern Europe, and in particular as a result of the uprisings in 1956 and 1968;

Having regard to the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe that freed millions of people;

We, as individuals who are joined together through a common experience under the oppression of Communism but who have witnessed and played our parts in its fall;

Having regard to those articles of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China that promise all nationalities living in China the respect of their cultural, economic,



Rebiya Kadeer, President of the World Uyghur Congress

linguistic, and religious rights of the Uyghur people;

Having regard to the Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism;

Having regard to United Nations General Assembly Resolutions 62/149 and 63/168 calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty;

Having regard to the Council of the European Union's declaration (Nr: 15132/09) condemning the execution of two Tibetans;

Having regard to the forthcoming visit to the People's Republic of China of the Swedish President;

We hereby call for:

The European Union to maintain its public opposition to the death penalty and condemn the executions that have claimed the lives of nine Uyghurs in November 2009 with an additional call for the commutation of all outstanding death sentences;

The Chinese authorities to immediately end the "Strike Hard" campaign that is repressing the rights of all people in East Turkestan, while disregarding or addressing the causes of unrest;

The Chinese authorities to lift the media blackout in East Turkestan and to allow people to communicate freely, and to have uncensored access to, telephone, internet, and mail communication;

The Chinese authorities to observe the provisions of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China that protect the rights and freedoms of nationalities in China and to end its policy of population transfer in East Turkestan that can be cited an act of "cultural genocide."

Brussels, 12 November 2009

László Tőkés MEP

Gyula Winkler MEP

Csaba Sógor MEP

Letter

to Mr. José Manuel Barroso

President of the European Commission

Dear President,

On 16 April 2009, at dawn, a Bolivian internal-security commando killed three people in the Las Americas Hotel, in Santa Cruz: Eduardo Rózsa Flores, a citizen of Bolivia, Hungary, and Croatia; Romanian citizen Árpád Magyarosi and Irish citizen Michael Dwyer were shot to death in the attack. Two additional people, Hungarian citizen Előd Tóásó (born in Transylvania, Romania), and Mario Tadic, a citizen of both Bolivia and Croatia were arrested during the attack. Bolivian authorities accuse these five persons with "conspiracy against the state."

In fact, Mr. Tóásó was illegitimately arrested. Then, he was tortured and denied his "presumption of innocence" right. Further, Mr. Tóásó's human rights have been violated numerous times.

Political analysts are of the opinion that Bolivian President, Evo Morales, fabricated the "international terrorist group" to advance his election campaign to "portray" himself as under a dangerous threat. Perhaps this is why evidence was planted in the hotel rooms of the five Europeans and why bogus videos were aired on television. The death of three Europeans and the life of two Europeans (allow me to include Croatia as a European nation) were used as election campaign tools.

On 6 December 2009, Evo Morales was reelected president of Bolivia, beating his opposition party; Podemos (Social and Democratic Power), by a large majority of votes. Two of their representatives, Bernardo Montenegro and Pablo Banegas visited Europe last

week. On the basis of transparent international fact-finding, they evaluated the activity of the five Europeans and the actions taken against them.

We should mention that the Bolivian Parliament has its own fact-finding commission, including the above-mentioned two Podemos Party members. However, in their absence, the commission adopted a report, which stated that dissidents supported the five Europeans. However, the two Podemos party members do not consider that the case is solved and closed. On the contrary, they believe that the governing party wanted to close the investigations, because "damaging" evidence could be found, leading directly to members of the Bolivian government.

On 1 December 2009, the Charter of Fundamental Rights, an integral part of the Lisbon Treaty, went into effect. We also welcomed the nomination of Herman Van Rompuy, as President of the European Council, as well as, the election of Catherine Ashton, as High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

These clearly indicate that we envision a common Europe, which is based on human rights. Therefore, we are responsible for the protection of each European Union citizen, around the world. This is not only a duty of our member states, but

is also the collective responsibility of Europe.

I hereby ask you to support the efforts of the Hungarian and the Irish governments to establish their own fact-finding missions in this case.

Also, please use all your authority to promote the human rights of our fellow Europeans: Előd Tóásó and Mario Tadic. They should not be harmed, nor should their human dignity be violated. It is vital that these two European citizens survive, until their legal remedy is enforced.

"These clearly indicate that we envision a common Europe, which is based on human rights. Therefore, we are responsible for the protection of each European Union citizen, around the world."

I would also like to note that in 1997 the death penalty was abolished in Bolivia. However, in cases of military crimes or transgressions committed during wartime, the law still allows executions. We presume that this is the reason why the Morales regime is charging its Santa Cruz victims with crimes against the state. So far, nothing has been proven against Előd Tóásó and Michael Dwyer. But if "proven," they could be executed.

The risk is high; urgent action is needed now.

With warm wishes,

Timisoara, 14 December 2009

László Tőkés
Member of the European
Parliament

Invocation

on the Occasion of the Inauguration of the Global Virtual Museum on Communism

Almighty God,
Heavenly Father,

You promised us in the Holy Scripture that You “will bring forth Your righteousness as the light, and Your judgment as the noonday.” (Psalms 37:6)

Seeing and experiencing the enormous amount of injustice and frustrating lawlessness throughout the world, we often get desperate and we tend to lose hope.

Being fragile embodiments of the biblical David, how could we face the preponderance of the Goliaths in our world?

We are tormented by our own sense of guilt for our accomplice opportunism and cowardly decampment, which only make the evil stronger and even more

encouraged. Thereby, we betray truth, our fellow-creatures, and we let the oppressed down.

Forgive our sins and our defeatism which condemn us! Forgive our weaknesses and frailties, on which the strength of the evil is based!

Let us have David's faith, who surpassed his own selfishness and fears knowing that “It was You who fought for us.”

Bestow the certitude of the Psalmist in our hearts! David was aware that truth and equity shall rise as the shining sun. He was firm in his conviction that the legitimacy of your commandments will surely be carried into effect like the natural laws of your created world.

Give us, the oppressed ones, his confidence and courage in faith which shall enable us to present

an unbroken front for justice, and justness, and make us act and fight for each other.

We pray for You: deliver us from Evil! We show gratitude for your liberation and we pray for all the victims of an inhumane and ungodly regime. Console us, bless us, and elevate us: “Let your Kingdom come!”

Bless our Congregation, in the community of which, we inaugurate the museum serving as a healing remedy for the common memory. Let the memory of those, who have proven their certitude and faith, be blessed. This museum shall promulgate their ultimate Christ-like sacrifice. Amen.

Washington, 16 June 2009

László Tőkés

Threat of Environmental Catastrophe in Transylvania

It is a world-wide shame that the Rosia Montana Gold Corporation (RMGC), a Romanian-Canadian joint venture, plans to establish Europe's largest outcrop gold mine in Rosia Montana (Verespatak in Hungarian, Goldbach in German), Transylvania. Romanian Ministry of the Environment soon re-starts the process of licensing the Rosia Montana gold mine investment, despite, in April 2010, the European Parliament expressed its deepest concerns pertaining to the project which could lead to a natural catastrophe.

The 2005 General Assembly of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) also stood



► up for the historic heritage of the ancient site, thus offering protection against the barbarous destructions the mine-opening would cause. The Hungarian-speaking Churches of Transylvania jointly protested against the gold-mine project in October 2002, and the Romanian Orthodox Church acted similarly, in 2003. Greenpeace and the European Alliance of Green Parties also spoke out against the cyanide-based technology of the mining project. During the past years, in the EP plenary sessions and at different forums, MEP László Tőkés, President of the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania, has spoken against cyanide-based mining and for the protection of the natural and human environment, as well as, our waters.

Yet, with hundreds of millions invested in the project, RMGC continues to push for this massive gold mine in spite of local, national, and international opposition and numerous rulings against the company, and is now taking advantage of the silent support of the newly appointed government.

It is common knowledge that the Bucharest Supreme Court in its legally binding resolution passed on 2 June 2010 prescribed the Ministry of the Environment to emit the

license assessing the building of protective barrages for the Rosia Montana Gold Corporation.

The venture, which has been portentous and marked by a series of scandals, intends to implement the same potassium cyanide technology with the exploitation of metals, as Baia Mare, which poisoned the Tisza River fore-and-aft, in 2000. The mine exploitation based on the potassium cyanide technology now carries similar dangers in the case of the Rosia Montana gold and silver mine, which is planned to be opened.

The arrangements of its opening have been permanently overshadowed, by series of scandals since 1995. The arrangements – which have been in process since 1995 – ruined Rosia Montana's natural heritage entirely and pushed its inhabitants on the edge of social poverty. It seems that the unscrupulous hunger for profit of the multinational corporations, as well as, the greed of its national subsidiary companies would repeatedly ignore and sacrifice the natural environment, the historical heritage, and the basic interests of the indigenous community.

Two years ago, the Ministry of Environment Protection, led by

Attila Korodi, suspended the licensing process initiated by the Rosia Montana Mine. The new Romanian government, however, being heavily influenced by political and economic pressure exercised by the investors, now shows signs of tractability to give the green light to the infamous mine investment.

RMGC is a Canadian-Romanian joint venture. The enterprise submitted a new license for landscaping. The expert committee working within the frame of the Ministry of the Environment will examine the permit and will most probably re-initiate the procedure for licensing the investment, which was suspended by the very same institution in 2007.

Minister of Environment, László Borbély said that the department will thus honor the European and Romanian laws and standards. At the same time, he declared that he would support the license of the investment in case he is convinced beyond doubt that the procedure will not do any harm to the environment.

RMGC plans the exploitation of 330 tons of gold and 1,600 tons of silver near Rosia Montana. In order to accomplish this, they intend to open Europe's largest above ground mine, which has met heated, critical opposition on behalf of numerous Romanian non-governmental organizations so far.

Rosia Montana lies in the Transylvanian Ore Mountains and is said to be Europe's largest non-ferrous metal region. The corporation, which intends to yield the gold and silver supplies with cyanide-based technology, was granted the landscaping license, the third in row, by the Alba County local government in May 2010.

In order to launch the project, 255 acres of forest must be clear cut. The existing heritage site is first and foremost of Hungarian and



The mine would destroy about 900 houses, 9 churches and 10 cemeteries. The remains of the mining town include ancient industrial facilities, temples, baths, houses and tunnels. The latter have been described by UNESCO as „a unique archaeological complex of Roman mine galleries”, although company spokesman Adrian Dascalu has suggested that

► German origins. The civil heritage consisting of 317 buildings and the churches belonging to the Catholic, Unitarian, and Reformed congregations are to be found in the “protected area.”

In order for the project to be economically feasible, the Rosia Montana valley, one of the oldest documented settlements in Transylvania, would be carved into four open-pit mines. The neighboring valley of Corna would be transformed into an unlined cyanide storage “pond” covering a surface of up to 600 hectares (1,482 acres), held back by a 180-meter high dam. The pits would generate roughly 196.4 million tons of cyanide-laced waste.

Local opposition to the mine is based in part on the disastrous experience at the Baia Mare gold mine in Romania, where a cyanide spill in 2000 polluted the Tisza and Danube Rivers, contaminating

the drinking water supplies of 2.5 million people and killing 1,200 tons of fish.

Should the project continue, more than 2,000 people would be displaced – many of them are subsistence farmers who do not

want to leave their lands – and nearly 900 homes would have to be torn down in order to make way for the mine project. The mine would employ a workforce of 250 to 300 people over the mine's estimated lifespan of 15 years.



„They're more Austro-Hungarian than Roman". Most of these remains would be destroyed by the project.

COMMUNIQUÉ on the Rosia Montana Mining Project

At the beginning of last year, following a relatively long break, the debate on the famous Rosia Montana mining investment was renewed again. The issue caused great excitement in the European Union so that it was put on the agenda of the Strasbourg Plenary Session of the European Parliament on the 21 April 2010. The initiators of the so called Oral Question and the parliamentary debate were János Áder and László Tőkés, Members of the European Parliament (their Question attached). Obtaining a broad support to their initiative across different political groups, a common resolution was agreed on, which will be voted on the mini-session of the EP in Brussels at the beginning of May.

The law initiation on introducing a ban on cyanide-based mining

on a national level, introduced by the bizarre association of senators Gheorghe Funar and Péter Kovács Eckstein to the Romanian Legislation a few years ago can be counted as one of the preceding events concerning this issue and the current situation. Because of the interested economic circles, as well as, their tight links to the government, who demonstrated strong opposition, the law did not pass.

The Canadian Rosia Montana Gold Corporation took advantage of the silent support of the newly appointed government, and started an offensive in order to carry out the mining project, already in discussion and facing great difficulties for a long time. The Russian Romaltyn Mining Corporation which aims to continue the cyanide-based gold

mining in the mines of the Aurul company famous for causing the cyanide catastrophe on the Tisa river, and its descendant, the Transgold company, in the region of Baia Mare, is trying to reach its objectives with similar persistence. We have received similarly alarming news about the non-ferrous metal mine in Certeju de Sus, Hunedoara County, planned to be opened by the Deva Gold Inc. part of the Canadian European Goldfields association. Furthermore, it is throughout Europe that similar mining projects endanger human health and the environment. The circumstances created by the economic crisis have also lead to the current situation in which the governments of some countries – including Romania – cannot manifest enough strength and resistance to the profit-oriented,

- ▶ multi-national companies and certainly corruption also plays an important role.

According to all indications, Romania has not drawn the appropriate conclusions from the Baia Mare – Tisa river – mining catastrophe caused at the beginning of 2000. The entire Romanian Delegation of the European People's Party (EPP) of the European Parliament supports the Rosia Montana mining project, while Marian Jean Marinescu, vice-chair of the Delegation is against the official position of the Christian Democrat political group he belongs to. The Romanian Delegation has indignantly rejected the proposal of László Tőkés to uniformly oppose cyanide mining. Theodor Stolojan, Head of the Delegation, suggested the official position of the National Environment Guard operating under the Ministry of the Environment and Forest led by László Borbély as the "mandatory" position to be endorsed by the Romanian Members. According to this position "Romania has taken all the necessary measures in order to respect the recommendations of the European and national expert commissions." Romanian foreign policy is "strongly closed" in this case, and following its traditional display policies, on one hand relieves itself of the disastrous national mining conditions, and on the other hand tries to understate with a guilty irresponsibility the real dangers of cyanide-based mining. Jean Marinescu considers the situation of the Romanian mining as "being in order," and views the regulatory intention of the EU as interference in Romania's home affairs.

During the past year, in the EP plenary sessions and at different forums, László Tőkés, MEP from Transylvania, has spoken against cyanide-based mining and for the protection of the natural and human environment, as well as, our waters. He has done so according to the



most recent agreement between the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania and the Democratic Union of the Hungarians in Transylvania concerning the ban on cyanide-based mining throughout Europe. MEP Tőkés also addressed a letter to the attention of Mr. Stavros Dimas, commissioner for the environment, according to whom the issue should fall within national competencies and should be dealt with by the member states in question – Romania and Bulgaria.

Due to weather conditions and flight restrictions, MEP László Tőkés could not attend the plenary session in Strasbourg but he handed in his relevant speech in writing (see attached). He emphasized here – among others – that cyanide-based mining cannot be considered only a Romanian, even less an "ethnic" issue as it threatens the living environment and the population of the entire Europe with catastrophe. We can add that first of all it threatens those Romanian citizens who live in the mining area and whose interests should be represented by MEP Marinescu and his colleagues.

As a first input to the parliamentary debate, MEP János Áder, former chair of the Parliament of Hungary

urged to ban dangerous and outdated mining technologies. Prohibition is an urgent matter because parallel with the currently escalating gold price newer mines are to be opened which would apply these harmful technologies. "If we are serious about protecting our waters, we are not supposed to place cyanide poison-lakes by our rivers and lakes. If we are serious about protecting bio-diversity, we are not supposed to allow methods which destroy the life of our waters. We should not wait until another catastrophe warns us about this," said MEP Áder.

Commissioner responsible for home affairs, Cecilia Malmström, reviewed the mining policy of the Union, and, similarly to former commissioner for the environment Stavros Dimas, she emphasized the importance of observing the existing laws in force stating that "member states are responsible for opening gold mines in their own territory."

Richard Seeber, Member of the EPP Group, was of the opinion that alternatives are to be considered so that gold-mining becomes as safe and environment-friendly as possible.

Representing the official position of the Socialist Group, MEP Csaba

▶ Tabajdi argued for the ban on cyanide-based mining technologies within the Union. The head of the Socialist Delegation of Hungary to the EP said that European Socialist and Democrats, together with the Greens and EFA Members not only initiate but also request the Commission to elaborate a law on the ban of cyanide technology.

Michail Tremopoulos, Greek Member of the Greens/EFA Group, expressed his doubts on the ban, while pointing to the cyanide-based mining applied in his country, as well as, to the economic crisis.

Czech MEP Zuzana Roithová urged the worldwide ban of cyanide technology and promoted the introduction of new, alternative methods even if they cost more.

MEP Theodoros Skylakakis was similarly determined when requesting the restriction of "contaminators," i.e. companies.

Alajos Mészáros, MEP of the affected Slovakia, expressed his appreciation towards the initiators of prohibiting cyanide-based technologies.

Remaining consistent, MEP Marian Jean Marinescu actually fulminated against the proposal on the agenda. On the other hand, independent MEP Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu stated that cyanide technology must be banned – for the sake of the future.

Romanian EPP members ostentatiously objected the proposal which had been supported by most EP factions, including the EPP. MEP Cristian Preda intrinsically praised the "most efficient" mining technology. Total prohibition cannot be the only solution, said MEP Elena Băsescu. MEP Traian Ungureanu made the following absurd statement: "The environment is only a pretense, here; I think this is a bad political conspiracy."

German EPP politician Berndt Posselt warned that irreversible damages may occur in the lack of proper caution. The issue must be examined in the long run, and common principles must be elaborated on European level, he said.

In conclusion, Commissioner Cecilia Malmström stated that a total ban is not reasonable. Nevertheless, development must be traced and re-evaluated in 2012.

The 5-6 May voting will show who is stronger: the community which defends European values or the greedy economic lobby which would exploit nature?

Strasbourg, 22 April 2010

Press Office

of MEP László Tőkés

Plenary Speech

in the case of the Rosia Montana Mine plan, in Romania

It is common knowledge that the Rosia Montana Gold Corporation, Romanian-Canadian joint venture, plans to establish Europe's biggest outcrop gold mine in Rosia Montana, Transylvania. Already in a December 2004 resolution, the European Parliament expressed its deepest concerns pertaining to the project which may lead to natural catastrophe. The 2005 General Assembly of the ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) stood up for the historic heritage of the ancient site, thus offering protection against the barbarous destructions the mine-opening would cause.

The venture, which has been portentous and marked by a series of scandals, intends to implement the same potassium cyanide technology while the exploitation of metals, which poisoned the Tisza River fore-and-aft, in 2000. The arrangements, which have been planned since 1995, ruined Rosia Montana's natural heritage entirely and pushed its inhabitants on the edge of social poverty.

It seems that the Romanian government is prepared to lift the ban from the investment and permit the development of the mine, respectively.

I request the European Parliament to intervene in order to save Rosia Montana and protect the unique beauty of its natural environment. In addition, the European Commission should contribute to the rehabilitation of the demolished city and its surroundings, as well as, support its inhabitants.

Strasbourg, 23 March 2009

MEP László Tőkés

Ban on the use of cyanide mining technologies in the EU

Oral Question

Cyanide is a highly toxic chemical used in the gold mining industry that can have catastrophic and irreversible impact on the environment and human health. It also qualifies as a main pollutant under the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Ten years ago more than 100,000 cubic meters of cyanide-tainted water had been released from a gold mine reservoir in Baia Mare (Romania) into the Szamos – Tisza – Danube River system and caused the largest ecological disaster of Central Europe at that time. Toxic materials killed many organisms damaging the ecological system, food chain, and essential human use of the river for many years.

Although multiple EU legislation has been adopted to strengthen the rules permitting cyanide in mining, some member states have

introduced a ban on the technology, even though it can still be legally used within the territory of the European Union. Nevertheless, prudent rules and proper financial guarantees are still missing. In addition, the implementation of the existing legislation depends on the skills of the executive powers of each member state.

Thus, there is no real guarantee that such an accident will not happen again. Taking into account the escalating extreme weather conditions, ascribed to climate change, the risk remains. There are several existing and planned cyanide mining projects across Europe. It is only a matter of time before human negligence and dangerous conditions collide and cause a natural catastrophe.

We note that the European gold mining industry represents only

1% of the global gold production. It is primarily performed by multi-national companies, utilizing cyanide mining, which is technology-driven and not job-driven. Further, it runs the risk of enormous cross-border ecological damage. Therefore, a general ban on cyanide mining should be considered at the European Union level.

Given the precautionary principle of the EU environmental legislation and in the light of the commitments under the WFD to prevent and control pollution, as well as, to restore and preserve the “good status” of the waters, will the European Commission propose an EU-wide ban on the use of cyanide in gold mining?

5 May 2010

János Áder MEP
László Tőkés MEP

The Trianon Peace Treaty Lingers on in its Consequences

Even after 90 years, Trianon cannot be down played as a chapter in the history books, because it still affects daily life. Self-pitying, fruitless reminiscing, and the ignoble pursuit of complaining about the past can be misleading and harmful.

The religious and ecumenical program entitled “Healing of Memories” offers an exquisite example of putting history into proper perspective. This practice is beneficial and healthy. As mentioned, the program seeks the historical roots of inherited opposition and hostile affairs, among specific nations. In

particular, cultures and religions are assessed, with an attempt to find social remedies. This healing program was presented in South Africa, Northern Ireland, and recently in Romania and its neighboring countries.

In the spirit of this grand idea, let us begin the process of historical healing and appeasement. Let us put an end to the traditional opposition dividing nations, who live next to each another.

Let us put into practice the generally acknowledged ideas of peace and truth.

We must start to honestly discuss this topic, which is generally regarded as a taboo subject.

We must disclose the historical amnesia, which enshrouds the Trianon Peace Treaty.

We must promote the scholarly, scientific, and political integrity to publicize Trianon’s history and all its subsequent consequences.

(Fragments of MEP László Tőkés’ manifesto on the Healing of Trianon)

From Trianon to Schengen – on the Way of Truth and Reconciliation

Outstanding historical figures, literary giants, and geniuses in art and science are known among great nations. With universal appeal, they are well-known worldwide. As Hungarians, we also appreciate these celebrated people.

But the picture is quite different, regarding the important figures of small nations. Traveling abroad, we would be happy if someone already knew about Ferenc Puskas, the magnificent football player, of the “Hungarian Golden Team.”

As a community of nations, the European Union offers a spirit of reciprocal recognition, respect and solidarity, and an abiding esteem for each other. As such, our collective values provide us with a basis to share our cultures. Now, we take the opportunity to introduce outstanding Hungarians – who might be worthy of world-wide fame but remain unrecognized – even among our European Sister Nations. Sharing our shining stars is the objective of this exhibition entitled: “Well-Known Hungarians – From the Trianon Past to the Schengen Future.”

Coincidentally, this exhibition shares a grim anniversary.

A sampling of important Hungarians include: János Bolyai, physicist; Ferenc Liszt, composer; Mihály Munkácsy, artist; Endre Ady, poet; Béla Bartók, another musical genius; Sándor Márai, a prominent author of 20th century prose – only to mention a few of the best.

Looking at a map of East-Central-Europe: where were these outstanding Hungarians born? One could search for their native places in Hungary to no avail. Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca is



George Clemenceau and Lloyd George leave the Trianon Palace Hotel at Versailles during the Paris Peace Conference, in 1919

in Romania; Doborján/Raiding is in Austria; Munkács/Munkacsvo is in the Ukraine; Érmindszent/Mecentiu and Nagyszentmiklós/Sannicolau Mare are in Romania; Kassa/Kosice is in Slovakia; and the list could continue with the South Slavic states too.

This unconventional “tour map” includes the birth places of famous Hungarians. It also reminds us of the 90th anniversary of the Trianon Peace Treaty, signed at the end of World War I, which butchered Hungary. As a result, Hungary lost two-thirds of her territory and more than half of her population. Millions of Hungarians were transferred to the authority of neighboring countries. Immediately, they were subject to minority status and ethnic oppression. They became “second class citizens” and targets of “forced assimilation” overnight.

“Revisionist” ideas are far from us. We do not intend to offend our neighboring nations. We are all neighbors. We all belong now, or

soon will belong – to a Common Europe. However, 90 years after the greatest disaster in Hungarian history, we feel that everyone needs to face our common historic reality; a suppressed or denied history. As our great poet, Attila Jozsef, said, we need to “confess the past” and to “settle our common issues.”

Last year, the European Parliament faced the horrors of our communist past. During atheist-communist dictatorship, Trianon’s impact and the oppression of minorities were taboo. We were threatened and silenced. We could not properly mourn the persecuted and those killed for their Hungarian tradition. We could not even bury the dead with dignity. Instead, National Communism falsified the historical record. National communist regimes denied us our right of human mourning and deprived us of our final goodbyes.

In a free and united Europe, we join efforts to establish the House of European History. I feel the time

► has come to speak the truth. Similar to Antigone, we must confront the Kreon-type post-communist power and bury Polyneices with honor. Our brothers died with the tens of thousands, during the Soviet “Malenki Robot;” during the massacres of Tito’s partisans; during the murders of the Maniue-Guards; or they fell victim to Czechoslovakian deportations, or Ceausescu’s “homogenization” policy.

As Hungarians, we are ready to confess our own historic faults. Clearly, no nation can be member of the united Europe with a good conscience. We cite the burden of crimes committed and recorded by the mass-graves in the Lagers and in the Gulags.

However, “Coping with the past” and reconciliation begin with confessing the reality and speaking the truth. Then, reconciliation continues with the recognition of the human and collective rights of all – not just the ruling majority but also the minority – peoples and nations. Turkey cannot become a genuine member of the European Union without atonement for the Armenian Holocaust either!

The words of Sándor Márai were inspired by such “clear springs,” when he envisioned the following: “The Europe of the future cannot possibly be seen otherwise than a great common producing and distributing territory with no customs frontiers, where the European Spirit will at last be able to exert her capacities unhindered by petty local interests.”

Brussels, 1 June 2010

László Tőkés
Member of the
European Parliament

Carpathian Basin Ecumenical Assembly

Szeged, 30 August 2009

Speech of Right Rev László Tőkés, Member of the European Parliament

From Babel to Pentecost

I am referring to the Words from the First Book of Moses and from the Acts of the Apostles – those Words, which depict Europe today. We are supposed to follow from Babel to Pentecost. These words will shine a light on our path and lead us away from our present condition. One characterized by confusion, created by numerous spoken languages, a phenomenon triggered by sin, human greed, misunderstanding, and hostility among peoples. The ending will be the miracle of Pentecost, implying mutual understanding and reconciliation. Then, by the Holy Spirit, “each one hears them speaking in the native language of each,” as on the first Pentecost (Acts 2:6).

Driven by our faith, here in the Szeged Dome, we too are walking on this path. Having a firm belief in Europe’s Christian roots and a set of values, we confirm the words of Transylvanian Bishop, Antal Jakab: “Christianity and the Hungarian community are one and undividable. Once we attempted to separate them it would be like the spirit leaving the body: death.”

Let us complete this statement by adding István Széchenyi’s words: “A nation lives in its faith and language.”

While listening to the Word of God “in our sweet mother tongue,” we join forces and avow community with our sisters and brothers, who can not listen to the Word in the Hungarian language, neither in the Kassa/Kosice Dom in Slovakia, nor in the Hungarian-Csángó churches in Moldova, Romania.

Together, we sympathize with our brothers and sisters, who are deprived

of educational and religious rights in Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, Serbia, and Central Croatia (including some western parts of Slavonia).

On 27 July 1995, we held a similar Carpathian Basin Assembly in the Reformed Grand Church in Debrecen (Hungary). On that day, we raised our voices for our Hungarian schools, beyond the borders of Hungary; the parity of the Hungarian language; and the equality of the law for all European nations.

It is quite revealing and sad that 15 years later, and 20 years after the fall of the national communist regimes, we have not achieved any progress. We must still fight for our language rights – not to mention our right to self government. Keep in mind the continuous delay of granting autonomy for our native communities, beyond the borders of Hungary.

Recently, the malignant President of the Slovakian National Party threatened with the intent of revising the Peace Treaty of Trianon, which would “push Europe into another military conflict” (sic!).

Today, on the 69th anniversary of the second Vienna decision, let us calm Mr. Jan Slota and his fellows, who take political advantage of persecuting the Hungarian minority. To wit, Hungarians are demanding no territory, but rights for territory. We claim human rights, minority rights, and self governance for our indigenous community within the European Union federal system.

However, the infamous Benes decrees, the Slovakian state language law, and President László Sólyom’s repulsive expulsion from Slovakia are all examples of an antagonistic, alien, and disconnected European mentality held by our opponents. ►

► In the spirit of our common Christian heritage and European legal order, we unanimously announce our fundamental legal demands, before our sister churches and the forums of a unified Europe. These include:

- It is the unalienable right of every nation and national community to use their own mother tongue in their respective country and homeland.
- In a Europe, which is grounded on the principle of “unity in diversity,” equality in language, and the free right to language are considered fundamental values.
- Under such circumstances, we demand the unconditional withdrawal of the Slovakian state language law.
- Rightfully, we expect the European Union to address this issue and reject the language law, which is contrary to its own fundamental standards and values. Generally, the European Union should think of the minority question as a universal European matter; not an internal affair of particular member states.
- The European Parliament should promulgate and pass an enforceable legal system, addressing the protection of minorities. Once and for all, the discrimination and hardship of ethnic and religious minorities must be settled.
- To avoid similar instances of encroachment on minority rights



Participants of the Carpathian-Basin Ecumenical Meeting in Szeged, Hungary

– like Slovakia and Romania, the European Union should introduce universal monitoring. And it must continue – even after the accession of the new member states.

I would like to say thanks to the hosting Szeged-Csanád Bishopric, personally to Bishop László Kiss-Rigó; to Archbishop Balázs Bábel of Kalocsa, as well as, to all other representatives and guests of the high clergy and public life; to Pál Schmitt, Vice-President of the European Parliament and our guest of honour, MEP Berndt Posselt. I am especially grateful for those Slovakian politicians – Members of the European Parliament – who stood up against the Slovakian state language law: Anna Zaborska, Miroslav Mikolasik and Eduard Kukan, and also to Mikulas

Dzurinda, former Prime Minister of Slovakia. I would like to show my gratitude to this Congregation and all our supporters.

In conclusion, let me send a message to the participants of the upcoming protests both in Dunaszerdahely (Dunajská Streda) and Brussels, on 1 September 2009, and to the Hungarian youth. The message is a quotation from His Holiness', Pope John Paul's II speech uttered in Budapest:

“Keep up your courage! Follow the path of truth and faith! ... Let you become the constructors of such a new world, which is built upon the fundamental values that also inspired the acts of King Saint Stephen of Hungary”.

László Tőkés

DECLARATION of the Carpathian-Basin Ecumenical Meeting

At the beginning of the twentieth century, poet Endre Ady formulated his biblical change-hastening question regarding the national-ethnic relations dominating the Carpathian Basin at his time, as well as, the injustices and subjections oppressing the peoples of the

Austro-Hungarian Monarchy:

“Will the Babel of enslaved nations/ finally awaken?”

His answer resonated with universal validity:

“For Hungarian, Romanian, Slaw sorrow/will forever remain one and the same.”

Twenty years ago, the Babel-like construction of a communist dictatorship and the inheritance of fascist totalitarian regimes

► crumbled. The Lord “confused the languages of those” who built their “sky-high” national godless regimes, on a foundation of lawlessness and injustice (Moses 1:11).

After the fall of atheist communism the “enslaved peoples” – countries and nations – returning to Europe’s free community are appropriately described by the words Pope John Paul II uttered on the occasion of his visit to Budapest, in September 1996:

“Hungary looks to Europe, who bestows a common trust, whereby every nation must be allowed its own distinguished expression. For this to happen, among and between nations, it is necessary for a coexistence based on a solid foundation of law, justice, solidarity, and cooperation.”

On the twentieth anniversary of the 1989 change of regime, in the ecumenical community of our churches, thousands of faithful congregants gathered at the Dome of Szeged. These individuals seek fraternal solidarity between each other. Whether located in Hungary, the Carpathian basin, or beyond, these communities are still haunted by the late Soviet Bloc.

The spirit of national communist regimes linger. And their prevailing practices continue: universal oppression, disenfranchisement, anti-Hungarian intolerance, anti-minority discrimination, and disarming political methods.

In Szeged, the church, civil, and political leaders of the Carpathian-Basin Ecumenical Meeting raised their voices in solidarity, with the 600,000 Hungarians in Slovakia, who represent 10% of the nation’s citizens. They wish to draw attention to the issue of the Slovakian State Language Law, which becomes effective 1 September 2009.

They demand an international democratic review, more specifically,

its immediate revocation by the post-communist Slovakian government.

We firmly reject this “oppressive law designed by the communist-chauvinist Slovakia government” endorsed Jan Slota, “a xenophobic, anti-Hungarian politician,” who threatens the Slovakian Hungarians’ ethnic identity and pursues “ethnic totalitarianism,” “linguistic imperialism,” and “cultural fascism.”

We consider it unacceptable for the European Commission to relegate overt discriminatory actions as “internal matters” for its member states. This official position is incomprehensible. The Slovakian language-law enactment and the scandalous expulsion of László Sólyom, President of Hungary, violates EU law.

Corroborated by Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, we seek the help and support of organizations and institutions committed to a united Europe. In addition, we seek support from our international sister churches and ecumenical organizations. The EP president declared:

“This law hurts not only Hungarians but also the spirit of European integration and the principles of democracy. This is no longer a mere Slovakian-Hungarian matter. The issue becomes a problem of the whole European Union that we, the EP-representatives, need to deal with.”

In the same spirit, our Carpathian-Basin Ecumenical Meeting draws attention to the human and minority-rights offenses suffered by Hungarians from other EU member states.

We cite: the Csango-Hungarian “forced assimilation” in Romania; the newly drafted education law (that discriminates against minorities) in

Romania; the Hungarian beating incidents in Serbia; the methodical crippling of minority education in Ukraine.

Further, our churches are subject to interdiction by virtue of the Hungarian language limitations during worship by brethren in Slovakia and the Catholic Csángós in Moldova.

In 2008, our Hungarian Churches celebrated the Year of the Bible. During which, special emphasis placed on following the Lord: through his Holy Word and speaking to all nations in their own tongues. The 2009 International Bible Exhibition at Brussels voiced the same message.

On the first Pentecost, after the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, everyone gathered “was hearing the words of the Disciples in his own language,” as written in the Bible (Acts 2:6).

We hope and pray for a Europe, where each nation and each language is honored. We raise our voices, calling for Godly virtue, where human dignity is championed and not smothered by oppressing minority politics, laws, or measures.

In a Europe unified in its diversity, in the spirit of our Christian and national roots, values, and heritage, we hold on to our identity and freedom acknowledging that “The nation lives in its faith and its language.”

This is the hope that we have for a European Pentecost, through the Lord’s Word and Holy Spirit. In the Carpathian Basin, we desire it for Croatians, Hungarians, Romanians, Serbs, Slovaks, and Ukrainians.

Szeged, Hungary, 30 August 2009 ►

► **Signing on behalf of the Carpathian-Basin Ecumenical Meeting:**

László Kiss-Rigó, Roman Catholic Bishop of Szeged-Csanád

Right Rev László Tókés, Member of the European Parliament

Balázs Bábel, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kalocsa-Kecskemét

Antal Spányi, Roman Catholic Diocesan Bishop of Székesfehérvár

Lajos Pápai, Roman Catholic Diocesan Bishop of Győr

István Bogárdi Szabó, Reformed Bishop of Dunamellék

József Ötvös, General Director of the Transylvanian Reformed Church

István Csúry, Assigned Bishop of the Királyhágómellék Reformed Church

László Fazekas, Bishop of the Slovakian Reformed-Christian Church

Retired Bishop Dr. Géza Erdélyi, President of the Hungarian Reformed Universal Synod

Péter Gáncs, Evangelical-Lutheran Bishop of South Hungary

Retired Bishop Árpád Mózes, Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Transylvania

Ferenc Bálint Benczédi, Bishop of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church

László Balázsi, Deputy Bishop of the Unitarian Church of Hungary

Dr. Zoltán Bóna, General Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of Hungary

Dr. Kálmán Mészáros, President of the Hungarian Baptist Church

Pál Csáky, President of the Hungarian Coalition Party in Slovakia

Pál Schmitt, Vice President of the European Parliament

József Szájer, Member of the European Parliament

László Surján, Member of the European Parliament

Tamás Deutsch, Member of the European Parliament

Anna Magyar, President of the Csongrád County Council

Zsolt Becsey, President of Seven Frontiers Association

Zsolt Balog, Hungarian MP, President of Hungarian Association of Civil Cooperation

Dr. Csaba Hende, Alliance for the Nation Foundation

Dr. Mátyás Szűrös, Former President of the Republic of Hungary

Sándor Lezsák, Vice President of the Hungarian Parliament

József Éhn, President of the Association for Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin

Péter Weisz, President of Barankovics Israelite Workshop

István Kamarás, Director of the Gypsy College

Csaba László Farkas, Gypsy Voivode of Békés County, Director of Roma Scientific and Arts Association

Ildikó Orosz, President of the Hungarian Pedagogical Association

Pál Lászlóffy, President of the Hungarian Teacher's Association of Romania

András Ágoston, President of Vojvodina Hungarian Democratic Party

Sándor Páll, President of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Vojvodina

Miklós Kovács, President of the Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Alliance

Sándor Jakab, President of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Croatia

Dr. Béla Széchey, Ecumenical and Diaconal Order of Jesus's Brothers and Sisters

From the Black March of 1990 to the March of Love in 2010

In Romania, after the Liberating Christmas of 1989, in the enthusiastic atmosphere of the people's revolt and the regime change, citizens liberated from the communist dictatorship dreamed about their common future. The National Salvation Front (NSF), a political movement created to ensure the transition from dictatorship to democracy, stated its guiding principle in its 5 January 1990 Declaration: "The National Salvation Front firmly condemns the former dictatorial regime's policy towards ethnic minorities and solemnly declares that it will attain and guarantee individual and collective ethnic rights and rights to freedom."

The Romanian, Hungarian, and other ethnic communities were called to action. The price of freedom was paid with the bloody sacrifices of martyrs and victims. The price of freedom demanded a spiritual stand: good vs. evil. The price of freedom ignited a spirit of collaboration and solidarity, among the nation. The flames of the Timisoara Revolution burned in the belief that democracy and its values would prevail in Romania, ending the communist dictatorship.

The communist dictatorship oppressed the nation, through fear, intimidation, and power, against the unarmed, unconnected, and unheard masses. The unprincipled and unbelieving communist party adherents and members continue to pursue their own self-interests. Along with the former communist nomenclature, they desire to retain their reign of uninterrupted dominion, since post World War II, even after the so-called "fall of communism."

Further, the notorious communist party state secret service, the Securitate —"servers of violence"—



Előd Kincses is reading the public summons of the Torch Light March of Truth

remain a constant, controlling, and coercing "invisible hand" that sweeps through society, with unscrupulous and unprecedented guile and greed.

The NSF's seemingly "overnight" evolution was not truly organic or natural in any way. Clearly, in hindsight, it was a rehearsed script written for the counter-revolution. Ion Iliescu, who took over the reins from executed dictator Ceausescu, masked former communism with a pseudo, "window dressing" democracy. In January 1990, Iliescu's propaganda easily manipulated the crowds, by rousing them into a blind nationalism. By enflaming the nation with fervent declarations of "separatism" by the Transylvanian counties, Iliescu set the stage for a violent ethnic confrontation. His simple psychological ploy worked.

In Târgu Mureș (Marosvásárhely), with the quiet assistance of the police, Romanian striplings were

coaxed and teased into beating ethnic Hungarians. Turning a "blind eye," Iliescu's "new administration" did not denounce or detest the atrocity. In fact, the "new administration" acted exactly like the "old executed dictator." The perpetrators were not even detained or charged with their crimes. Thus, Iliescu's regime de facto approved of ethnic abuse.

Consequently, the "new administration" conveniently overlooked the atrocity and no doubt enjoyed their childish trick; playing a simplistic "school-yard" game of "divide and conquer" that set Romanians against the ethnic Hungarians. In Târgu Mureș, the anti-Hungarian organization, Vatra Românească (Vatra) was organized as an extreme right-wing political group.

A candle-lit demonstration, calling for the re-opening of formerly closed independent Hungarian-

- ▶ language schools, was planned for 10 February 1990.

On 11 March 1990, the 8th point of the Timisoara Proclamation required the formulation of a specific legislative request: Romanian elections should prohibit former communist activists and former state commission officers from becoming candidates in three consecutive election cycles.

On 15 March 1990, the local activists of Vatra Românească interrupted the commemorative events of the 1848-1849 anti-Habsburg freedom fight of Hungarians. After nearly 50 years of communism, the first “free” Hungarian national celebration was organized, throughout Transylvania. However, in certain locations these “protests” degenerated into physical violence, actions instigated by the Vatra Românească activists.

In Târgu Mureș, on 16 March 1990, Hungarian people were beaten outside a pharmacy, because they posted a bilingual (Romanian-Hungarian) notice on the exterior pharmacy wall. In Târgu Mureș, on 17 March 1990, a fascistic series of anti-Hungarian actions were systematically instituted, with the “assistance” of the local police.

On 19 March 1990, the Vatra Românească transported 13 busloads of “demonstrators” into Târgu Mureș, from the nearby villages. The majority of these “demonstrators” were drunk. Initially, they first tore down all the Hungarian language notices. After which, these enraged “demonstrators” became a malicious mob, attacking ethnic Hungarians and the headquarters of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DAHR). The Vatra Românească thugs stormed the DAHR headquarters with axes and clubs.

General Ion Judea promised safe passage to the ethnic Hungarians trapped in the building. Upon their exit, they were beaten by the

same thugs with clubs and chains. Transylvanian Hungarian writer, András Sütő, was so badly beaten that his left arm was bruised, several ribs were broken, and he literally lost one of his eyes. These savage attacks occurred, while the army watched without intervening.

Unequivocally, the “new administration” initiated this pogrom, which symbolizes the pseudo, “window dressing” democracy of the Ion Iliescu regime. Instantly, the indigenous people of Romania knew that the Christmas Revolution had changed nothing.

On 20 March 1990, once again, the Vatra Românească transported busloads of Romanian peasants into Târgu Mureș. Armed with scythes, axes, and pitch-forks, they attacked the peaceful ethnic Hungarian demonstrators, who demanded justice, for the prior attacks. All the while, the army and its armoured tanks stood silent, as the bloody conflict ensued. The “new administration” led by Ion Iliescu instigated a second pogrom, in as many days.

After two decades, nobody expected that the perpetrators, of these atrocities, would remain scot-

free and evade the Romanian court system. But in Romania, the national leadership does not enforce its own constitution, so the guilty criminals remain on the loose. Meanwhile, the ethnic Hungarian, Pál Cseresnyés, was convicted for his participation in the melee and has been tortured in prison.

The Christmas 1989 Romanian regime change has been detoured by these pogroms.

The counter-revolution script, written by the founding voice of Ion Iliescu, still echoes the guilty conviction of executed dictator Ceausescu. At the beginning of 1990, the former communist nomenclature and the former Securitate, which was left intact, did everything possible to delay and even “hijack” the change of regime, to serve their own interests.

On the 19-20 March 2010, the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania commemorated the Black March of Târgu Mureș 1990, so that the common remembrance based on truth shall lead us from the Black March of our stolen revolution to the March of Love that promises to bring about a desired better future.



Participants of the Carpathian Basin Ecumenical Assembly in Marosvásárhely (Târgu Mureș), Romania

Common Past – Common Future

In Marosvásárhely (Târgu Mureș), on 19 March 2010, Friday evening, about fifteen hundred people gathered in front of the Cultural House. They participated in the Torch Light March of Truth, which commemorated Marosvásárhely's Black March of 20 years ago. The event was organized by the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania (HNCT) and the Pro Europa League (PEL).

The mobilization of civilians against ethnic minorities is tantamount to "treason" and "hate crimes" and "conspiracy" – all of which – are grounds for prison in democratic nations. Without any disclosure and prosecution, Romania de facto brands itself as a "lawless" nation, where "vigilantes" rule at will, and "hoodlums" escape arrest, prosecution, and sentencing.

A public summons was addressed to Romanian President, Traian Băsescu, Romanian Prime Minister, Emil Boc, and Romanian Public Prosecutor, Laura Codruța Kövesi.

It was read aloud, in Hungarian, by attorney Előd Kincses, a former dignitary from Marosvásárhely. Associate President of the PEL, Smaranda Enache read the summons aloud in Romanian. The supporters of the public summons request the identification of the persons, who initiated, organized, and implemented the transportation of the armed Romanian peasants to Marosvásárhely.

On the second day of the commemorations, a conference was held under the theme "Common Past, Common Future – At Home in Europe."

Conference organizer László Tőkés, President of HNCT, voiced his hope that "Our commemoration will transform the past into peace." In his speech, he affirmed: "This



Archive photo of the Black March of 1990

event serves reconciliation. At the same time, we cannot keep quiet about those manifestations that are initiated by Romanian extremist circles and try to find self-confirmation, through once again, playing out the card of the Hungarian threat."

This statement refers to the Romanian rally planned near Marosvásárhely, for 20 March, on the exact anniversary day of the 1990 anti-Hungarian pogroms. Further, László Tőkés stated, "Extremists have picked up the accusation of separatism again, in order to undermine the plan of the autonomous Szekler Land region." MEP Tőkés emphasized that we should not talk about inter-ethnic conflict, since there was no symmetrical relationship. Rather, we should talk about aggressors and victims.

In her welcome, Smaranda Enache, Associate President of the Pro Europa League (PEL), called attention to the common fate that she and Előd Kincses shared after the March 1990 Marosvásárhely pogrom. Both of them were

denounced as public enemies of the Romanian State. Enache was driven from her job and Kincses was driven into exile. In addition, both were hindered from entering the inaugural parliamentary elections.

Enache also noted the importance of the civil sphere's contribution to unveiling the past, which is why the Torch Light March was organized. It is also crucial for Romania and Jewish historians to participate in the conference, besides Hungarian historians.

Pointing out the rights of ethnic minorities, the human rights fighter, Enache, called special attention to the rights of the minority Hungarian community. Transylvanian Hungarians are entitled to these rights via their historical past. And these rights must be sustained – even if other minorities also claim these rights.

A Bucharest human rights fighter, Gabriel Andreescu drew attention to points that have escaped the national discussion. Beyond the tragedy, Romanian intellectuals remain lost in a myopic maze of

► narrow-minded and homogenized state-perspective. As such, the minority issue is avoided and shunted aside, without any positive perspective. With their own culture and heritage, the ethnic Hungarian minority contributes creatively to the diversity throughout Romania's modern society.

At the conference, there was participation by distinguished Romanians, including militant anti-communist historian Marius Oprea,

journalist Mircea Toma, and MEP Monica Macovei, former Romanian Minister of Justice. Together, they drew a uniform set of conclusions, which followed the orchestrations of a well-scripted event known as Black March 1990.

On 20 March 2010, the finale event, the Second Carpathian-Basin Ecumenical Commemoration took place at the Castle Church. In August 2009, representatives gathered at the Szeged Cathedral

and raised their voices in defense of the Hungarians from Slovakia. The 2009 event united the historic Hungarian churches from the Carpathian Basin. In 2010, they commemorated the victims of Marosvásárhely's Black March and prayed for reconciliation. Ioan Fărcaș, Romanian Greco-Catholic primate dignitary from Balázsfalva (Blaj), emphasized the importance of dialogue, openness, and listening to each other.

László Tőkés

Letter

to Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission

Dear President,

We turn to you with a case of insulting nature which concerns the Hungarian community in Romania of almost 2 million souls. Furthermore, we request the immediate intervention of the European Union on behalf of this affair. The fact that the majority of the Hungarian executives of various public institutions were dismissed generated indignation among our community members.

There has not been such a clear-cut case and example for ethnic discrimination in the previous 20 years. This process takes place, both in the Szekler counties, where the majority of the population is Hungarian, and also in such administrative regions where Hungarians dwell. The procedure is a memento for discriminatory cases practiced in the darkest Ceausescu era.

In the Szekler Harghita County, where more than 85.5% of the population is Hungarian, the aftermath of the mass replacement of Hungarian official executives is the most grievous. Final data has not yet been made public. Still, it is already common knowledge that a Romanian inspector, who does not speak Hungarian, was assigned

a top position in the Hungarian educational system.

Until this incident, the proportion of Hungarian executives was 50%. As a consequence, only a few Hungarians will be left in charge of government tributary offices. In the adjacent Covasna County, where 77% of the inhabitants are Hungarian, only 6 of 37 public institutions retain Hungarian executives.

Other Hungarian majority-population Transylvanian counties and regions have been subject to ethnic discrimination, where Hungarian executives have been replaced.

The Romanian government and legislature did not consider the proportion of national minorities in these counties, before deciding on its mass replacement of Hungarian officials at its county administrative offices. Political membership and support drove the choices in appointing the new executives.

A government coalition was formed by the two major Romanian political parties, PDL (Democratic Liberal Party) and PSD (Social Democratic Party), respectively, are members of the European People's Party, and European Socialist Party. Thus,

Hungarian politicians were replaced with Romanians.

This Romanian ethnic-political purging was implemented, by a Romanian democratic liberal-socialist government, through colonization and ethnic transformation methods. Its impact is highly pernicious upon the Hungarian educational system.

The political machinery, behind this ethnic-political purging, exposes blatant discrimination. By replacing the Hungarian executives, the rights of the Hungarian-majority community are supplanted, neutering the public life of these counties.

EU principles entitle the Szekler Land to a reasonable ratio of legal representation, within all national administrative offices.

Accordingly, in the Szekler Land, appropriate legal representation would require that 75-80% of public office holders must be ethnic Hungarian, with the balance divided among the Romanian governing parties.

Likewise, we would expect this principle to be instituted in every county, based on ethnic proportion.

▶ Today, we are going to hold a demonstration in Csíkszereda/Miercurea Ciuc, against the replacement of Hungarian office-holders in Romania. It is organized by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DHAR), a member of the European People's Party (EPP), the Alliance of the Hungarian Educators in Romania (AHER), the Harghita County government, the Mayor's Office, and the local branch of the Hungarian Civic Party (HCP).

Representatives of the Hungarian historic churches and civil organizations will attend, as well. This demonstration follows a protest organized in Sepsiszentgyörgy/Sfântu Gheorghe in February 2009.

Dear Mr. President,

We resolutely protest against this anti-Hungarian instance of discrimination that can not be tolerated within the European Union. Legal measures taken against minorities and Hungarians in Romania and other former countries belonging to the Little Entente are entirely intolerable and incompatible with the unifying European spirituality.

Besides our protest we would like to express our firm conviction that only the institution of autonomy could guarantee the rights of the Hungarian minority of millions residing outside Hungary throughout the Carpathian-Basin. In other words, autonomy would safeguard the principles of equal

opportunity and observing the fundamental laws and rights, the preservation of self-identity and dignity for our community in the EU.

We respectfully request your determined intervention against this case of discrimination, which harms the Transylvanian Hungarian community along with those discriminatory cases against minorities that are recurring phenomena in Serbia, Slovakia and the Ukraine.

22 May 2009

László Tőkés, MEP

Gyula Winkler, MEP

Csaba Sógor, MEP

Statement of protest

In the Hungarian-Szekler community, approximately 700,000 people live right in the middle of Romania, in the Szekler Land. Not even in the darkest "forced assimilation" period of Dictator Ceausescu could he dissolve the ethnic proportion of this community. But the red-handed dictator tried hard to do so. Although endangered, the Hungarian majority of the Szekler Land retained its culture and identity.

However, under the mask of "democracy," the "homogenization" policy of artificially changing ethnic proportions, and the attempts to intimidate national minorities have continued after the fall of Ceausescu's dictatorship – as we have brought it to the attention of the international community on numerous occasions.

Besides Orthodox expansion (more than 2,000 Romanian Orthodox churches have been built since the fall of the communist dictatorship in settlements and counties with

a relative or absolute majority ethnic Hungarian population), the militarization of Szekler Land (an excessive number of military units were located in the neighbourhood of Hungarian towns) can be referred to as a common practice of the state power, which focuses on its own nation-state efforts.

This militarization process is also revealed by the irrationally high number of cadre, within State institutions throughout Hungarian settlements in Romania.

The number of Hungarian-speaking persons within State institutions in charge of citizen security and safety is insignificant. (It was actually 2010 that the national Police Academy opened its doors to ethnic Hungarians, reserving fifteen places per year for them in Bucharest.)

Members of the armed forces deployed to Szekler Land from other regions of Romania are granted danger money – while the number

of ethnic-based atrocities against Hungarians has lately alarmingly risen. Furthermore, these "hate crimes" are often committed by members of the armed forces and the police force, or their family members.

The chronology of recent "hate crimes" against Hungarians follows:

In November 2009, six young Romanians seriously hurt a 22-year old Hungarian in the parking lot of a restaurant in Kézdivásárhely (Târgu Secuiesc). After having told him not to talk in Hungarian on his mobile phone, the attackers dragged him to the ground and started kicking him, broke one of his arms and stabbed a knife in his left palm. (Just prior to the attack, unknown perpetrators had several times damaged Hungarian public signs in Târgu Secuiesc and the neighboring villages.)

On 5 April 2010 several young Hungarians were injured, who attended a program organized ▶

► by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania in Medgyes (Medias), in Sibiu County. Around 8 p.m. individuals of unknown identity turned up who showed no willingness to leave the facility even at the organizers' repeated request. Moreover, they verbally insulted and physically assaulted the Hungarian participants. Two young persons, who sustained severe injuries, had to be taken to a hospital. The attackers also caused significant material damage, vandalizing the furniture.

On 23 April 2010, on the night of Saint-George days two Hungarians were beaten by the police in Sepsiszentgyörgy (Sfântu Gheorghe). A police patrol intervening in a dispute knocked the young men down and pushed them towards the police car. They took their personal belongings away and carried them to the police station, where five officers continued beating them. They were released without any police record.

Most recently, on 15 May 2010, unknown people committed an assault on six young people in Kézdivásárhely (Târgu Secuiesc),

among them three journalists, just because they were speaking their mother tongue. A group of ten people provoked the group fighting. The attackers shouted at them not to speak Hungarian.

Mr. Zsigmond Karácsonyi, executive director of the Hungarian Journalists' Association of Romania, asked the press to follow the case, stating that the authorities were about to cover up the incident because one of the aggressors is the son of a Romanian army executive. Therefore the authorities might intend to cover-up the case and present it as a simple street skirmish.

We call upon the Romanian government, especially Mr. Vasile Blaga, Minister of Home Affairs to immediately terminate ethnic hatred, within State institutions in charge of citizen security and safety, funded by the Hungarian speaking taxpayers of Romania.

The historical Szekler Land is neither a colony, nor a terrorist nest. Nothing could justify the extent of this animosity coming from people, who swore to protect and safeguard citizens.

Similarly, we call upon the responsible authorities to take legal action against those persons, who committed aggressive crimes, regardless of their nationality. Violence will only lead to other instances of aggression. In a difficult economy, emotions should not be exploited, by taking advantage of citizen despair.

In March 2010, we commemorated twenty years, since the sad events known as "Black March," when Romanian people were incited to attack peacefully demonstrating Hungarians.

We request that international public opinion pressure the Romanian government to immediately examine these cases. We do not wish to carry our historical heritage as a burden, as manifested by the ethnic opposition and hatred manifested by the national-communist state.

Strasbourg, 19 May 2010

László Tőkés
Member of the European
Parliament

Letter

to Mr. Joseph Daul, Chairman of the EPP Group in the European Parliament

Dear Mr. Daul,

I contact you today in order to present a request to establish an Ecumenical Intergroup in the European Parliament. I do this in the spirit of my commitment to strengthen Europe's Christian roots, as I have strived so far throughout my mandate since January 2008.

Emphasizing the importance of our Christian heritage in creating a prosperous, stable, harmonious, and competitive Europe is indispensable. Therefore, establishing the Ecumenical Intergroup would be the most suitable tool to achieve this.

Being a former bishop in the Királyhágómellék Reformed Church District of Romania, my experience has lead me to believe in the significance and in the need to give further weight to these values, while a Member of the European Parliament. Therefore, being a church leader has brought an added value to my contribution to the strong Europe that we are all committed to create.

In the same spirit, allow me to mention the great success that our Bible exhibition at the end of last year. We had the honour to present a great and diverse collection of

Bibles of the peoples of Europe, at the European Parliament for all interested colleagues and fellow citizens. This event – together with other similar events involving a number of ecumenical delegations I welcomed at the European Parliament in the past year and a half, from the Carpathian Basin – has again reinforced me in my beliefs. I consider it another clear sign of the necessity to create the Intergroup.

Keeping the above mentioned in mind, I kindly ask for your support to establish the Intergroup. As we believe in the importance of a Europe of values, I am firmly convinced that

► our Christian heritage needs to be a priority for all of us. In addition to solidarity, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, I feel a great responsibility, not only vis-à-vis my electorate, but also to all Europeans, to stress these values.

Please allow me to add, Mr. Daul, that I find it very important that the European Union – the European Parliament and the European Commission – continues its efforts to join forces with our churches for the

common cause of Europe. We had the chance to especially witness this in the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. The commemoration of Pope John Paul II also reflected these efforts. I am firmly convinced that the institutional parliamentary representation of the spirit of the international and the European ecumenical movement – in harmony with the visions of the Founding Fathers – will greatly contribute to the protection of the unity of Europe.

I hope that you will seriously consider my request. I would like to discuss the matter with you at your earliest convenience, knowing that the time to act is now, as we are in the constitutive process of the new Parliament.

Thank you in advance,

Strasbourg, 13 July 2009

László Tőkés MEP

2010 Global Round Table Limits to Sustainability

Sustainability – Values – Responsibility, 4-5 November 2010 Budapest

Speech of László Tőkés, Vice President of the European Parliament

The subtheme of this conference is composed of three key terms: sustainability – values – responsibility. Allow me to develop some of my ideas alongside these terms.

Ten years ago, the Conference of the World's Scientific Academies issued a statement in Tokyo, which described sustainability, as follows: "Sustainability is to meet the present needs of the humanity with preserving the natural resources for the future generations."

In case we tend to accept this definition, we need to point out its limitation: an important time-component – namely "past" – is actually missing out of this determination. However, the "past factor" is of utmost importance for us in East-Central-Europe, within the states of the former Soviet Bloc.

On one hand, the "past factor" is an essential and delicate issue for the East-Central-European post-communist countries, because

– despite of some isolated and/or incidental positive instances
– coping with our recent history has not yet happened. We still carry huge burdens – severe historic injuries – into the 21st century. This is a significant obstacle in front of genuine European integration (especially if "integration" means to make common European values part of our inner nature, above empty – just formal – suitability).

On the other hand, the "past factor" provides our region with virtual "ecological bombs" inherited from the socialist-communist heavy industry and mining industry. Basically, at the beginning of post-communist transition, we did not realize that East-Central-Europe is fully fraught with these huge ecological threats. Gradually, we learned then that "responsibility" is an unknown term for most post-communist privatizers.

An obvious example is the recent man-made, red-mud disaster in Hungary. Also, we should mention the 2000 cyanide spill that polluted the Tisza River at Baia Mare (Nagybánya) in Romania and the Danube River, which contaminated the drinking water source of 2.5

million people and killed 1,200 tons of fish.

I believe that the European Union should not pretend that it has nothing to do with these phenomena. The European Union should not act as if communist dictatorships did not belong to its own history. Because it is clear, that – including the human rights aspects – these problems affect Europe as a whole. To put it in another way: the Chernobyl radiation did not stop at the Iron Curtain.

At this point, I should identify the greatest enemy of sustainability, which is globalization. From a European perspective, a global market is indeed the greatest obstacle to sustainable development. It is obvious for many, that the unification of Europe has two major objectives: the political and the economical unity of our continent. And many believe that these two aspects are cohesive. We might see that Europe's present day economic challenge is to compete with great economic powers in a globalised market. The globalised market is dominated by great economic powers, and individual

- European states would never have a chance to win that contest.

And the great economic powers – The United States of America, China, India, etc. – are not seriously devoted to sustainability; especially not when it comes to environment protection. This means, that those states which are ready for “self-limitation” to protect the environment, are predestined to loose the contest.

This raises the question of how to convince our economic competitors that it is worth following our rules. Keeping in mind that we do not have the tools for “economic pressure,” this becomes a very difficult question.

From a historic perspective, we also need to speak, with pride, about a common European heritage, because it provides our present and future with a strong value content to build on: Europe’s Christian roots. Among civilizations, European culture is to be considered the most successful mixture, between competition-based development and preservation of values. The secret of this success is simple: for a thousand years, Europe could overcome all difficulties by targeting changes and development, but without giving up the Christian roots of our civilization.

Christian Europe was able to maintain her civilization frames and unity even when modern secularization brought about a considerable decline for the social influence of the religion. This was possible because “secular thinking” and “independence from religion” occurred in the democratic frames, the basic values of which – like the respect of human dignity or freedom – were founded by Christianity. The globalization processes as we saw them, in the last decades have been directly questioning the frames of Christian



Vice-President Tőkés

civilization. They have been destroying the community forms, where Christian values, including their secular interpretations, exist in relative balance.

The concept of sustainability itself might be an essential base on how to balance turnover and crisis of values should be overcome.

From an European perspective, we should simply re-formulate the Tokyo definition of the Conference of the World’s Scientific Academies: “Based on the values of our common heritage, sustainability is to meet the present needs of the humanity with preserving the natural resources for the future generations.”

We need this new definition so that the concept of sustainability does not only remain an issue of environmental crisis, as well as, draining energy and stock resources, but also addresses the present day crisis of values which is strongly straining all our community frames. This new perspective would connect the ecologically sustainable development with the new – yet in the rough – strategies of community-based

development. Thus, besides the basic ecological frames of social life, we should also protect the basic forms of community value preservation and transfer. The issue of sustainability cannot be addressed properly, without answering the question of how to preserve the cultural, linguistic and community diversity. Besides bio- and eco-diversity, linguistic and cultural variety, the concept of community diversity could be an important element to shape the European architecture focusing on sustainable development.

And what would this mean?

We should not allow the economic and innovative contest which is actually determining our modern civilization to happen in “shore-less” global frames. We should direct the contest towards such political and economical models which provide us with community frames.

Would we have any tools to do this? Well, I think the identification of such tools would be one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century. At the moment, I can only mention elements of such tools, as follow:

- ▶ - re-discovering nature-friendly farming cultures (as in the most beautiful part of Romania, in the Szekler Land); adding these to the structures of eco-agriculture;
- establishing and strengthening local markets;
- the political institutionalization of community diversity via ethno-regional autonomies.

I believe the identification of these tools and methods might be a

vocation for Europe. Due to her history and endowments, Europe is the land of community diversity. This is expressed in the political concept of "Europe of Regions," as well as, within the image of Europe which is a "Community of Communities."

We should continue on this road, for the sake of sustainability.

One of the frequently cited mottos of the European Union is: "Unity in Diversity." The idea of

sustainability is based on diversity. However, global unity can only be achieved by a value-based approach. Not cold rationality, but value-centered efforts will make our present and future sustainable. The strengthening of these values is however our common responsibility.

4 November 2010

László Tőkés

Caritas in Veritate – Conference

Brussels, 14 September 2010

Welcome address

In the tense relation of Church and politics, Reinhard Marx, Archbishop of München and Freising, addresses the following question with flat openness: "Is it worthwhile for bishops to make comments upon economic and political issues? Are they competent to share their opinions on these areas? Are they commissioned to do so?" These questions seem to be well founded since, in our age of intricate economic and political challenges, the impression that the participants of the profession and politics are no longer interested in the Church's teachings and active contribution in worldly matters has been created. In contrast with this attitude, Reinhard Marx's perspective is that "global challenges cannot be solved without paying attention to fundamental moral principles and conviction in well based values." According to his point of view, worthy of our consideration, the Church should also participate in dealing with problems. By the clarification of the fundamental principles of cohabitation and development, the Church serves the benefit of humanity.

In the new phase of modern day "integrated consumerist society"

and economic globalization, humankind has to face more grievous hardships than ever. Nothing has remained and nothing should stay unchanged. Turnovers of political and social stability conceal growing hazards which threaten with the dehumanization of our civilization. There is a real threat that humankind will forget about the idea uttered in 2008 by His Holiness Benedict XVI in his encyclical letter *Spe Salvi*: "...man always remains man." The world "forgot man and forgot man's freedom." Growing globalization "keeps on hardening the lives of the poor and will not do anything for curing hunger, poverty, and social inequalities." Furthermore, it "destroys the environment," we may add, with the words of His Holiness John Paul II.

In the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010), I salute the participants and lecturers of the European Parliament Conference on Charity in Truth with these conscious-provoking ideas. I welcome the dignitaries of the clergy, as well as, my colleagues dedicated in faith to our mutual European issues. At the same time, allow me to appreciate the tremendous

headway this conference brings to the implementation of Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty which commits the European Union to maintaining a dialogue with religious communities.

To advance the significant Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty, European Parliament resolution of 13 January 2009 already emphasized the importance of the dialogue between the European Union and Churches and Religious Communities.

Under such circumstances, the President of the EP delegated one of the Vice Presidents to take specific responsibility for dialogue with Churches and religions, as well as, intercultural dialogue.

I commenced my work as recently elected Vice-President of the EP in full awareness of this specific responsibility. In this position, I participated in the Church Leader's Meeting of 19 July this year. I have joined the efforts of the EPP Group Responsible for Inter-Religious Dialogue and Intercultural Activities for genuine dialogue and cooperation, which has been in a wider range promoted by the Commission of the Bishop's Conferences of the

- ▶ European Community (COMECE), as well as, the Church and Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches (CEC-CSC).

Last week, commenting President Jose Manuel Barroso's "State of the Union" speech, EPP Group Chairman Joseph Daul emphasized that "Europeans want more Europe." We must grow stronger, we must join forces in order to become more efficient and bring Europe to a higher level, he added.

Continuing Chairman Daul's line of thought, I feel that more participation of our churches is also expected with the desire for "more Europe." European unity cannot be fulfilled without the participation of churches, and it cannot be fulfilled without their good cooperation.

It is good to see that the European Union; the decision-makers of the EU; and member states who adopted the Lisbon Treaty, all share the same point of view on the particular issue of the European partnership of churches and religious communities.

"Churches and religious communities are important providers of social services in EU member states. If we want to combat poverty effectively, it is essential to draw from their long standing and wide ranging experiences," stated President Barroso at the Church Leader's Meeting on 19 July.

At the same event, Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, also highlighted the decisive role of churches. "Their experience has never been as valuable as it is today in a time of crisis," the Polish Protestant European leader declared.

The encyclical letter of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, entitled *Caritas in Veritate*, which appears to carry an epoch-making significance, attributes an exquisite spiritual dimension to the aforementioned



With Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission

objectives and conceptions. Let me hereby quote its introductory sentence: "Charity in truth, to which Jesus Christ bore witness by his earthly life and especially by his death and resurrection, is the principal driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity."

The encyclical offers an outstanding religious and theological program for our world in the dual unity of love and truth, which aims for authentic progress, for humans, and for humanity. According to the principle and paragon of truth accomplished in love, it is believed that love can solely be understood in the light of truth, and it can only be justified and practiced by truth. Only this way can sentimentality and its twisted crookedness be avoided. The co-existence of love and truth and their interdependence is as important as the symbiosis between faith and sense. Without these, one cannot speak of God's real presence in the world; we cannot speak about a genuine dialogue; neither can we speak about a "good society," which is based upon Christian values, nor about true integral human development, which is embracing the whole existence

(see *Caritas in Veritate*, points 4 and 56). In the relation between love and truth, the apostolic encyclical outlines the primacy of love in a more determined – and biblical – meaning. Namely, love and charity demand truth, they however surpass the latter. "Love and charity transcend justice and complete it in the logic of giving and forgiving" (see *Caritas in Veritate*, point 6). Love filled with justice is the sole effective remedy for globalization problems and the crisis – we may assert in terms of topically following the teaching outlined in the *Caritas in Veritate* (see point 5).

Searching for the path of progress and solutions for Europe, which suffered the terrors of the world wars of the last century, as well as, the global crisis and hardships of the new century, let us, with utter confidence and hope, tread upon the path of Love and Justice, following the godly Rule of Love.

László Tőkés

ISLAM, CHRISTIANITY AND EUROPE

Second Series – 4th Seminar, Brussels, 11 October 2010

The role of religious actors in protecting and promoting religious freedom

May I greet each of you present today, who driven by the faith in God, are seeking and striving towards peace, with the words of Apostle Paul:

The grace and peace of the Lord may be with you!

May I then express my appreciation towards the Organizers of this seminar: the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE); the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD); and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), for serving the dialogue between cultures and religions through this series of seminars that has now arrived at its fourth event, thus fostering the mutual approach between Christianity and Islam, as well as, the putting into practice of Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty. Religious public figures bear a special responsibility in transforming the values of democracy and the European ideals of social peace into everyday reality – in the spirit of our religious beliefs. I wish to start my opening thoughts, with a passage from a parable, in the Old Testament.

At the Diet of Shechem, at the end of the wondering in the desert, on the Promised Land, Joshua turned to God's chosen people, to the generals and leaders of Israel:

"Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. (...) But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve. (...) But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24: 14-15).

No doubt that Joshua and the members of his family stood up



Protests against killings of Christians in Egypt

for their belief with the firmest conviction and highest praise for God whose overwhelming grace they enjoyed. Nevertheless, the man of God does not question for a moment the freedom of choice – of conscience and of religion, he does not want to deprive anyone of their right to make their own decisions. "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve," he tells his people.

Starting out from this classic Biblical stance – today, let us look at the people of Europe and of the world. Let's take this very perspective, when observing the religious variety of different continents and countries, regions, and cultures; and let us find in it orientation among the persistent relations of religious intolerance, church-persecution, and frequent violence that strikes minority religious groups.

As believers committed to freedom of religion, as well as, reconciliation and democracy, and as religious public figures we should act in the spirit of Joshua who was not hindered by his own religious and spiritual conviction in acknowledging others' right to choose and their

right to religious freedom – which is in perfect harmony with the European ideal and right of every person to confess, practice, or even change his or her own religious convictions and/or beliefs.

Our decent life in peace, security and freedom on the land that the Lord has gracefully given us to live on – the "Promised Land," which might be located in the unified Europe or any other part or country of the world – can only be realized through acknowledging and respecting others' human dignity and rights, their freedom of conscience and religion. In protecting themselves and others, religions and churches of the world must strive towards this ideal.

Last week, a conference of broad interest took place in the European Parliament, regarding the persecution of Christians that continues to devastate numerous countries round the world today. Speakers were invited from Sudan, India, Vietnam, and Iraq. The organizers of the conference, MEP Mario Mauro and MEP Konrad Szymanski, who belong to two different political groups

► of the Parliament, reported that even in the 21st century, certain religions and minority communities are still discriminated against in approximately one-half of all the countries in the world. Characteristically, circumstances reveal that 75 percent of religious persecution victims are Christians. In addition, more than 170,000 Christians are harassed for their religious beliefs every year, around the world.

We were astonished to hear reports about places of worship being torn down and bishops being killed these days, and hundreds of thousands of people fleeing their homelands – as shared by Louis Sako, Archbishop of Kirkuk (Iraq). Kok Ksor Vietnamese speaker offered a horrific view of the brutality of the communist dictatorship ruling his country. Even though freedom of religion is granted by the Constitution in Vietnam, the regime appropriates churches and keeps entire Christian villages in constant terror, not shying away from using chemical weapons against them.

Of course, one must not remain silent about the fact that oppression and persecution is not the exclusive “prerogative” of Christians, as in certain countries, especially in Asia and Africa, as well as, in some fundamentalist Muslim regimes, other religious minorities – Hindus,

Buddhists, etc. – suffer similar atrocities. In numerous countries in the world – as for example in Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, Somalia, Yemen, present-day or former communist regimes like Russia, China, Azerbaijan, North Korea, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Laos, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, or Vietnam – the right to religious freedom continues to be restricted by the law.

Be it about anyone and anywhere, we need to stand up for the freedom of each religion, belief or denomination and for the religious rights of every single person and every minority, with the confidence phrased by father Piotr Mazurkiewicz, general secretary of COMECE: “The respect of religious

rights is the direct measure of the respect of fundamental human rights.” In other words: “Freedom of religion is a pillar of human rights,” as it is stated in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Art. 9.1).

Therefore, we should strive to make this principle and this spirituality prevail more and more in the relations, between Christianity and Islam, in Europe, and in the relations, between Europe and so-called third countries.

Brussels, 11 October 2010

László Tőkés
Vice-President of the European
Parliament



Christian youth protest against deadly attacks

COMMUNIQUÉ on Ecumenical Dialogue

On 8-9 December 2010, a delegation representing the People's Party of the European Parliament visited Istanbul, Turkey, historically known as Constantinople (between 330 and 1930) and the ancient city of Byzantium. The primary objective of the visit was to enhance and develop the links between the Orthodox Christian Church and the European Union (EU).

The six-member delegation made an important visit to Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople. As Archbishop of Constantinople and New Rome, Patriarch Bartholomew I occupies the First Throne of the Orthodox Christian Church. His All Holiness, Bartholomew I is the 270th successor of the 2,000 year-old local Christian Church founded by St. Andrew, the Apostle.

On 8 December, Patriarch Bartholomew I received his guests at the headquarters of his church, at the historic archbishops' palace. The Orthodox Christian Church is also called the Orthodox Catholic Church (but is commonly referred to as the Eastern Orthodox Church). As Ecumenical Patriarch, he is the spiritual leader of 300 million Orthodox adherents' world- ►

► wide, making him one of the world's most influential spiritual leaders.

The East-West Schism of 1054 AD, also known as the Great Schism, divided medieval Christianity into Eastern (Greek) and Western (Latin) branches, which later became known as the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church, respectively.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (now Istanbul, Turkey) is the honorary and spiritual center of the Orthodox Christian Church throughout the world. The Orthodox adherents are primarily distributed along the coast of the (northeast) Mediterranean, in Eastern and Northern Europe, as well as, in the Middle East. But the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is worldwide.

Despite the leading role of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Orthodox Church of Turkey only counts 100,000 members.

During World War I and in its aftermath, a mass deportation degenerated into a massacre, genocide, and a series of pogroms. Seeking religious exclusivity, the Turkish government enabled the slaughter of minority Christians. Upwards of 1.5 million Greek Orthodox and 1-2 million Armenian Christians were slaughtered by their own countrymen.

Despite this, Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople is considered one of the most influential international figures fighting for religious freedom and human rights. His early focus was the rebuilding the persecuted Eastern Orthodox Churches of the former Eastern Bloc, following the fall of Communism in 1990. He is "the universal apostle of love, peace, justice, and reconciliation."

Patriarch Bartholomew I, among others, played an important role in the peace-making processes in South-Eastern Europe, as well as, on



His Holiness Bartholomew I, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch

the Balkan Peninsula. In addition, he is one of the leading representatives in charge of the Christian-Muslim-Jewish religious dialogue. He is a signer of The Bosphorus Declaration (Istanbul, 9 February, 1994) that asserts: "A crime committed in the name of religion is equal with a crime against religion itself."

Organized under the chairmanship of Romano Prodi, President of the European Committee, and the Patriarch of Constantinople, a European conference published the 2001 Brussels Declaration. It clearly stated the following principle: "It is the responsibility of religious leaders to prevent religious fervor from being used for purposes that are alien to its role."

The delegates of the European Parliament sought out the Orthodox clergyman, who in our times, beside Pope John Paul II, did the most for the reconciliation between Eastern and Western Christendom's (i.e., the Orthodoxy and Catholicism).

On behalf of the delegates, MEP Othmar Karas, Vice-Chairman of the European People's Party Group, and President of the Group responsible for the Intercultural Dialogue within the People's Party, greeted the head of the church. The

Austrian MEP, in the spirit outlined in the Treaty of Lisbon, Article 17, expressed the European Union's intent to support the enlargement of the existing dialogue with churches and religions. Furthermore, he voiced his appreciation regarding the Patriarch of Constantinople's merits.

László Tőkés, Transylvanian MEP, in his address expressed his gratitude to Patriarch Bartholomew I for undertaking the role of chief patron on the occasion of the Bible Exhibition, which was organized in the Brussels center of the European Parliament at Advent, 2008. At the same time, the former bishop of the Reformed Church in Romania, Királyhágómellék District, voiced his acknowledgement of the patriarch's ecumenical peace-making endeavors.

"The Patriarch of Constantinople has always stood for a European reconciliation, surpassing all past grievances," MEP Tőkés stated. In order to support the possibility of cooperation, he made reference to the two members of the delegation from Slovakia, one from Hungary, Transylvania, and Austria, all of which were formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and now are working side-by-side. ►

► MEP László Surján, Vice-President of the KDNP (Christian Democratic People's Party, Hungary) on behalf of Zsolt Semjén, President of the Party, Deputy Prime Minister, expressed his friendly greetings to the patriarch.

In his welcome speech, Patriarch Bartholomew I testified his deepest appreciation for the European Union's work that is based on outstanding values. He distinctively emphasized those moral principles in the absence of which Europe would be unable to find its way out of diverse crises. In the spirit of Christ's Gospel he confessed his belief in the importance of love, reconciliation, social justice, and global unity.

Further, he mentioned the values of Christianity practiced in Turkey apropos to the fact that Istanbul, next to Pécs, Hungary, was chosen as Europe's cultural capital, in 2010. That evening, he was to attend the opening exhibition featuring Greek Christian artwork from Turkey. The patriarch told the delegation that Armenian Christianity artworks were previously on display in Istanbul.

Vice-President László Tőkés presented the English booklet on the Brussels Bible Exhibition and invited the Patriarch of Constantinople to visit the European Parliament again.

It should also be mentioned that Patriarch Bartholomew I visited Romania and performed various religious services in October 2010, which celebrated the 125th anniversary of the proclamation of the independence of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the autocephalous legal stand. (Within the Eastern Orthodox Church, the head bishop does not report to any higher-ranking bishop. "Autocephalous" in Greek literally means: "self-headed.")

* * *

In the morning of 9 December, a symposium on the cooperation with Orthodox churches was organized in the conference hall of an Istanbul hotel.

Othmar Karas, head of the delegation, in his opening speech emphasized the necessity of "certain radicalism on the part of Christian politicians" in the context of Christ's teachings. Referring to Abraham Lincoln, he sought the answer to the question of whether "God stands on our side when we bring a significant decision."

Representing the official policies of the European People's Party, he stressed the dialogue between churches and religions to be essential in the creation of the ideal foundations for European integrity.

His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel of France, President of the Conference of the European Churches (CEC), being the keynote speaker of the conference, expressed his personal views, as well as, the principles propagated by the Orthodox Church of France.

In general, these views highlight the necessity of preserving and strengthening the European values and identity in a globalizing world. In the name of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, His Eminence Emmanuel voiced his gratitude to the European People's Party in the European Parliament for its dedication in testifying for the cause of maintaining a dialogue with the churches.

In addition, he acknowledged the Treaty of Lisbon ruling, pertaining to the dialogue with churches. In the meantime, he stressed that the aforementioned ruling should be implemented, as soon as possible. "Europe's strength lies in its own cultural identity," the Orthodox leader highlighted. This self-awareness, however, hosts the whole cultural exuberance and diversity of our continent.

Zoran Krstic, Professor at the Theological University in Belgrade, Polish MEP Jan Olbrycht and Slovakian MEP Anna Záborská, were lecturers at the conference. At the end of the lectures and discussions, the conclusions were summarized by Jaime Mayor Oreja, Spanish MEP, and Vice-Chairman of the Group of the European People's Party.

After a short break, the conference continued under the chairmanship of Vice-President László Tőkés, on the theme of "Religion and the European politics" with presentations by George Tsetsis, Greek Orthodox theologian (Geneva) and MEP László Surján. After which, the round-table discussion was summarized by Miroslav Mikolášik, Slovakian MEP.

Throughout history various political institutions and ideologies, emperors and kings, attempted to use religions and churches for their own benefit, the Greek theologian pointed out. Despite the contradictory relation existing between religion and politics, the churches cannot renounce their prerogative to express their moral views on timely social and political matters.

This "moral-politics," by our churches, could contribute to the creation of European integrity and an authentic "Spiritual Europe" for our communities and nations, László Tőkés concluded, adding that churches have a moral responsibility to speak, which is bestowed by God. According to László Surján, this commitment should be the attribute of all faithful politicians.

Istanbul, 9 December 2010

Press Office of

MEP László Tőkés,

Vice-President of the European Parliament

A Statue of Christ is transported to Doberdo (Italy)

Today, 17 December 2010, a pilgrimage began to Doberdo (Italy). Participants will carry a marble statue of Christ with them, which was kept in Debrecen (Hungary). The sacred object was saved by a Hungarian lieutenant-colonel, after the destruction of a church near Doberdo, at the end of WWI. Since then, after nine decades, the Debrecen family protecting the statue has requested that the sacred statue be brought back to Italy and presented to a church.

The participants of the pilgrimage include: Zoltán Lomnici, President of the Council of Human Dignity, László Tőkés, Vice-President of the European Parliament, László Kiss-Rigó, Roman Catholic Bishop of Szeged-Csanád, and Miklós Szunai, Architect. The latter restored the chapel as a personal gift. Hungarian soldiers began rebuilding the church but were unable to finish it.

The Battle of Doberdo was one of the bloodiest battlefields of World War I, fought in August 1916 between the Italian and Austro-Hungarian Army, composed mostly of Hungarian and Slovenian regiments.

Zoltán Lomnici reminded us that in 1916 approximately 100,000 Hungarian soldiers perished at Doberdo, Italy. However, the WWI death toll claims 600,000 Hungarian lives. At 3:00 p.m., the victims will be remembered at a ceremony. On this occasion, Transylvanian MEP László Tőkés issued the following communiqué.

COMMUNIQUÉ

**“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests” (Luke 2:14)**

The Christmas gospel adds genuine depth in the painful passion of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Those who crucified Him virtually stole God's grace: “they pulled down the saint heavens onto earth” disastrously perverting peace and benevolence.

On the deadly war stage at Doberdo, only God knows how many times, it was “the son of man,” who was crucified. Therefore, the dignity of man, with God's reflection shining on his face, was blemished.

“Every man's unalienable and sacrosanct elementary rights, which stem from the eternal divine law and nature, is that his dignity should be recognized and respected, as well as, protected under every circumstance,” the Budapest Communiqué states on human rights and dignity, issued in the autumn of 2010.

We stand by the human dignity of those several hundred thousand,

Hungarian, Slovenian, Italian, and of other ethnicity, who gave their lives at the Battle of Doberdo. We transport the statue of Christ, which was saved 90 years ago, to the rebuilt church, the Hungarian Chapel which was inaugurated by the President of Hungary, László Sólyom, in 2009. This is a parable of our tormented fate.

The principal purpose of the Council of Human Dignity is to erect the 17th century marble statue, as a symbol of reconciliation, between nations who once waged war against each other. Furthermore, the Council of Human Dignity plans for the Doberdo battlefield to be named a European world cultural heritage site. This designation would declare the final resting place of European heroes and victims, who for the most part are interred in unmarked graves.

Thus, let the “Capella Ungherese,” dedicated to the memory of Saint

Benedict, become the European symbol of reconciliation, as a future sanctuary for European remembrance.

When the Hungarian term for the European Union presidency arrives, we intend to announce our proposal, seeking Doberdo as a European world cultural heritage site. The project is organized under the joint sponsorship of Hungarian, Italian, and Slovenian nationalities.

Quoting Attila József, the Hungarian poet, we believe and proclaim that: “The war fought by our ancestors is dissolved into peace by remembrance.”

Budapest, 17 December 2010

László Tőkés

Vice President of the European
Parliament