

# **ROMANIA: Centenary of the unification of Transylvania with Romania**

HRWF (17.10.2018) – On 16 October, MEP Tókéş László hosted an event at the European Parliament about the relations between the Romanians and Hungarian communities. The conference was held on the occasion of the commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Unification of Transylvania with Romania. On 12 October, in Kolozsvà/ Cluj, a joint declaration about the centenary was signed by 12 Romanian and 12 Hungarian prominent personalities of the two communities.

## ***Joint Romanian – Hungarian Declaration***

Many celebratory events dedicated to the Centenary of the Unification of Transylvania with Romania had anti-Hungarian overtones and worsened the series of misunderstandings between the two communities. These events started before the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2018 and continued until the last few months. Taking into account the symbolic importance of the moment, adversarial behaviour has the potential to poison interethnic climate for many generations to come. These are the reasons why we, the signatories initiate and support the following declaration:

Transylvania was and may again be transformed into an area characterised by complementarity, thus becoming a model of cultural and religious pluralism. Promoting the identities and traditions peculiar to Transylvania serves both Romanians and

Hungarians. The safety of both communities depends on stable frontiers and the observance of minority rights.

Today, there is nothing to set in opposition the interests of Romanians and Hungarians. Hungarian aspirations for cultural and territorial autonomy stem from a desire for better organisation and, hence, are beneficial to us all. Perpetuating the confusion between the concepts of autonomy and independence reflects at times certain misinterpretations, other times ill-willed manipulation.

Today, there is nothing to set in opposition the interests of Romania and Hungary. The leadership of the two states may or may not embody the ideals of the respective societies; and might as well proceed correctly or make mistakes regarding the issue of interethnic relations. The criticisms formulated by domestic or foreign actors and levelled against the two leaderships, respectively, should not affect the long-term relationships between the two peoples. Political leaders do change, as their accession to and ousting from power at specific moments of time is dependent on the nature of the democratic systems in which we live.

Hungarians living in this country are citizens of the Romanian state, having equal and inalienable rights to propose models to rebuild the common state-and-homeland. The distance they kept from the celebrations of the Centenary sheds light on a fundamental topic concerning the history of the last one hundred years, namely: what meaning does the Hungarian community attribute to the last century. Speaking on their behalf, Hungarian political leaders in Romania pointed out repeatedly that almost all Hungarians perceive this period as "100 years without fulfilments". Nonetheless, it is rather

natural to treat this year as the year of drafting the balance sheet and meeting the unfulfilled desires of the minority, since these are not in conflict with general societal interests, and allow Hungarians to feel comfortable in Romania – i.e., in their own country.

The Centenary of the Unification of Transylvania with Romania offers Romanians and Hungarians the opportunity to revive the ideal formulated in 1918, which is: to become – for Romanians, Hungarians and other state-forming minorities – a homeland, devoted to fulfilling the aspirations of all these communities. This goal cannot be achieved overnight; but we can transform this ideal into a project for our country in order to complete it during the next years. We call on our fellow countrymen and public authorities to honour the Centenary by rejecting nationalistic instigation and avoiding interethnic conflict, while favouring constructive behaviour and rising people's hopes.

Only in this manner can the Centenary become a natural celebration of Romanian communities from all over the world as well as of the Hungarian community in Transylvania.

Kolozsvár/Cluj, 12 October 2018.

### ***Signatories***

1. **Gabriel Andreescu**, activist pentru drepturile omului,

- politolog (R)
2. **Tőkés László**, az EMNT elnöke, európai parlamenti képviselő (H)
  3. **Lucian Nastasă-Kovacs**, istoric de arte, director (R)
  4. **Szilágy Zsolt**, az Erdélyi Magyar Néppárt elnöke (H)
  5. **Marius Tabacu**, director, Filarmonica Transilvania (R)
  6. **Bodó Barna**, politológus, egyetemi tanár (H)
  7. **Cristian Sandache**, istoric, profesor universitar (R)
  8. **Toró T. Tibor**, az Erdélyi Magyar Néppárt ügyvezető elnöke (H)
  9. **Radu Răileanu**, coordonator, Active Watch (R)
  10. **Bakk Miklós**, politológus, egyetemi tanár (H)
  11. **Sabin Gherman**, jurnalist (R)
  12. **Dávid László**, egyetemi tanár, a Sapientia Erdélyi Magyar Tudományegyetem rektora (H)
  13. **Ramona Băluțescu**, scriitor, jurnalist (R)
  14. **Péntek János**, nyelvész, egyetemi tanár (H)
  15. **Liviu Antonesei**, profesor universitar (R)
  16. **Florin Mihalcea**, președinte al Societății Timișoara (R)
  17. **Kolumbán Gábor**, a Civitas Alapítvány elnöke (H)
  18. **Mircea Toma**, jurnalist, activist pentru drepturile omului (R)
  19. **Molnár Gusztáv**, filozófus, politológus (H)
  20. **Ovidiu Pecican**, scriitor, istoric (R)
  21. **Szilágyi Ferenc**, egyetemi tanár (H)
  22. **Cristian Pîrvulescu**, politolog, profesor universitar (R)
  23. **Kincses Előd**, ügyvéd (H)

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