

**STATEMENT BY HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER JÁNOS MARTONYI
ON REACTIONS FROM NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES TO THE ADOPTION
OF THE LAW ON HUNGARIANS LIVING IN THE NEIGHBORING
COUNTRIES BY THE HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENT
(BUDAPEST, JUNE 20, 2001)**

Forward-looking and historic decisions are often received with unfounded misinterpretations and misunderstanding. The Law adopted on June 19 by the Hungarian Parliament is no exception to this, although during the past 18 months we have been providing information on a regular basis to our neighbors on its preparation, objectives and content. The 92% majority approval in the Parliament and the unanimous support by Hungarians living in the neighboring countries expressed a solid sense of national bound. In the spirit of good-neighborly relations we duly expect our neighbors to fully respect this broad national consensus. The Law will not result any negative discrimination with respect to the citizens of the neighboring countries. Only those persons will wish to utilize the direct and indirect forms of benefits and support to be provided under the Law in order to preserve their cultural and linguistic identity who share this identity and who belong to communities embodying this identity.

Benefits will be available in Hungary. Hungary has been providing support to persons of Hungarian identity and to their communities in the neighboring countries, and this has not been so far criticized as contradictory to the domestic laws and regulations of these countries. Similarly, Hungary has and will continue to welcome the support by, for example, Romania and Slovakia, aimed at helping the Romanian and Slovak national minorities living in Hungary to preserve their cultural identity and the language and to promote their prosperity.

The Law will not have any impact or consequence that would not be in full conformity with the domestic law of our neighbors. In conjunction with the implementation of the Law, administrative measures will not be taken by Hungarian authorities in the territory of our neighbors. The Law does not have any extraterritorial effect, therefore there is no reason for, and no sense of, repeatedly raising the question whether it will, or could, be applicable in the territory of our neighbors.

The idea and the spirit of the Law is fully in harmony with our vision of the future of Europe. By adopting and supporting this Law, Hungary and the Hungarians living in the neighboring countries clearly expressed their firm intention to promote the realization of our common objective of a unified Europe of the 21st century and beyond, enriched by its diversity, and not to retreat backwards into the 19th, and not even into the 20th century.

[Quelle: www.mfa.gov.hu/Szovivoi/2001/MartonyiJ/mjstvangol.htm]

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