

**STATEMENT BY HE ADRIAN NĂSTASE, PRIME MINISTER OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA CONCERNING THE LAW ON
HUNGARIANS LIVING IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND THE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT
OF ROMANIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
HUNGARY, CONCLUDED IN BUDAPEST ON THE 22ND OF DECEMBER
2001**

The Government of Romania has analyzed the stage of implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Romania and the Government of the Republic of Hungary concerning the Law on Hungarians Living in Neighboring Countries and issues of bilateral co-operation and, implicitly, of the implementation of the Hungarian Law, „filtered” by the agreement having both legal and political dimension, which was concluded by the two Governments on the 22nd of December 2001.

Following this process of reflection, in order to prevent the selective implementation of the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding and in conformity with the provisions of the Memorandum, the Romanian side proposed the organization of a meeting of the Committee on the Co-operation on issues related to national minorities within the Joint Intergovernmental Romanian-Hungarian Commission, taking into account the attributions of this Committee, which have been re-endorsed by the Memorandum of Understanding.

The Hungarian side transmitted positive signals, totally accepting the validity of the Romanian-Hungarian Memorandum of Understanding and the necessity of the amendment of the Law on Hungarians Living in Neighboring Countries. These positive signals, which we welcome, should be, nevertheless, concretized in a precise calendar, with short delays.

The Hungarian side assumed the obligation to amend the Law at the end of a decisive debate in which an important say had and continue to have together the Council of Europe – especially by the European Commission for Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe – the European Commission and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, and the neighboring States of the Republic of Hungary.

The particular attention which is being paid by the European bodies for solving out the issue of the Law on Hungarians Living in Neighboring Countries is generated by the necessity to ensure the overall observance of some essential principles for the simultaneous achievement of an effective protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and of a perfect co-existence among States, based on the principle of good-neighborliness. These are the principles that the Venice Commission highlighted and that the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities re-confirmed: the principle of territorial sovereignty, respect for human rights, especially the principle of non-discrimination, friendly relations among States and the principle *pacta sunt servanda*.

The Government of Romania wishes to express its conviction that the availability to act in conformity with the standards “homologated” by the great European family will determine the elimination of the norms which are contrary to the fundamental principles of the

international community and will allow the joint effort of the two States to be channeled towards further developing all fields of bilateral co-operation within the framework offered by the Romanian-Hungarian Active Partnership.

[Quelle: <http://www.gov.ro/engleza/index.html>]