

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

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STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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Potápi: enhancing national cohesion at the level of the Carpathian Basin

On Wednesday Minister of the Prime Minister's Office János Lázár appointed the state secretaries of his ministry. Árpád Potápi – who was formerly head of the Committee on National Cohesion – became State Secretary responsible for Hungarian Communities Abroad. His scope of action covers the strategy for Hungarian communities abroad, under the control of minister without portfolio Zsolt Semjén. Talking on the TV program *Közbeszéd* on Duna TV, Mr. Potápi said that the policy for Hungarian communities abroad has been a successful area of the Government's activity. As an example he mentioned the procedure for simplified naturalization. He emphasized that so far more than 630,000 people have applied for Hungarian citizenship and more than 580,000 have taken their oath of citizenship. The state secretary added that there are also areas which are “not as spectacular”, such as the support of civil organizations, various programs, the question of Hungarian theaters abroad, and the support of Hungarian senior elementary school children abroad. Mr. Potápi said that it will be one of his tasks to coordinate these programs.



Romanian government: Romania is not obliged to ensure ethnic autonomy

For the first time, the Romanian government has responded to the petition of the Szekler National Council (SZNT) adopted on the Day of Szekler Freedom on 10 March 2014 in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş. The document issued by the directorate of Public Affairs and Communication states that “Romania is not obliged by any international agreement to ensure territorial autonomy based on ethnicity or to guarantee collective rights for national minorities. International law ensures only the personal rights of individuals belonging to national minorities which can be exercised together with others.”

Statue of Albert Wass erected in private area is seized

On Thursday Romanian authorities seized the statue of the Transylvanian Hungarian poet Albert Wass which was erected on Pentecost Sunday by a resident in the grounds of his own house in Szováta/Sovata in Maros megye/ Judeţul Mureş. The owner of the statue said that his house was searched by the authorities and he will also have to attend a police interview on Tuesday 17 June in Marosvásárhely/ Târgu Mureş.



MKP expects the new president to stop assimilation

On Sunday Andrej Kiska was sworn in and officially became the President of Slovakia. In his speech he emphasized that he wants to be the president of all citizens living in Slovakia, irrespective of their political or ethnic orientation. In the second sentence of the oath national minorities were also mentioned: “I will do everything for the prosperity of



the Slovak nation and for that of the national and ethnic minorities living in the territory of Slovakia.”

At a press conference held after the session of the National Council of the Party of the Hungarian Community (MKP), the head of the party József Berényi said that the greatest help for the Hungarian community in Slovakia from Mr. Kiska would be if he recognized the legitimacy of the measures taken for the permanence of the community and if he also drew attention to the importance of these steps. He said that “If a President said that the Government should consider that the demands of the Hungarian community are legitimate because they serve their own permanence and not the destruction of the country, he would help us a lot”.

Constitutional Court decision on Citizenship Act scheduled for 17 September

The Constitutional Court is examining if the Slovak citizenship act is compatible with the Constitution, and it is expected to give its ruling on the case in September. The plenum of the Constitutional Court led by Iveta Macejková decided at a closed session held on Wednesday that the public discussion of the case will take place on 17 September 2014. The Ministry of the Interior is also dealing with the Citizenship Act and is preparing an amendment to it which is expected to be submitted to the legislative assembly in the summer. The main concept of the law under preparation is that those Slovak citizens who acquire the citizenship of a country where they have permanent residence will not be deprived of their Slovak citizenship. As shown by data from Slovakia’s Ministry of the Interior, over the past four years 830 individuals have been deprived of their Slovak citizenship as a result of assuming the citizenship of another country.



Trócsányi: Relations with neighboring countries are of primary importance

In an interview published in the Hungarian-language Vojvodina daily Magyar Szó, Minister of Justice László Trócsányi has said that Hungary’s relations with its neighbors are a top priority for the country’s justice administration. He underlined the importance of relations with Serbia and noted that he planned to meet his Serbian counterpart in Belgrade this autumn and would also hold talks with leaders in the province of Vojvodina. He said that the autonomy of Vojvodina is one of the most exciting autonomy models in Central Europe since – as he said – “There has always been a tradition for autonomy in this area.” The Minister said that Vojvodina knows how to achieve autonomy, how to use it, how to exercise the spheres of action and how to endeavor to have partnership with the center. He added that all these facts give cause for optimism, since “There is a system of conditions by which national minorities can negotiate with the representatives of the majority nation.”





Tibor Navracsics offers alliance to Slovenia in international relations

In Ljubljana on Wednesday, during his first official trip abroad as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Tibor Navracsics offered alliance to Slovenia in international relations. At Lendva/Lendava – the first stop on his trip – the Minister met the representatives of the local Hungarian community. After the meeting he said that although there are controversial issues, the situation of Hungarians in Slovenia is one of the best among countries neighboring Hungary. The Minister added that Hungary supports Slovenia's political intention to “summarize the rights of national minorities in a modern, unified, coherent and transparent law”. He emphasized the importance of the Slovenian community in Hungary's Rábavidék, who – together with the Hungarian community in Slovenia's Muravidék/Pomurje – play the role of a bridge between the two countries. After the meeting, the President of the Self-governing National Community of the Municipality of Pomurje Ferenc Horváth said that the fact that it was Slovenia where Hungary's new Minister for Foreign Affairs made his first official trip was more than simply a gesture.