

The seven points from the Hősök tere (Square of the Heroes)

or

What does the Szekler nation request in 2017

To:

The government of Hungary and Romania

The Parliament of Hungary and Romania

The self-government of the Romanian community living in Hungary

The Romanian nationality advocate of the Parliament of Hungary

The Committee on National Cohesion of the Parliament of Hungary

Subcommittee for the problems of the Hungarian community of the Committee for the Human Rights in the Parliament of Romania

For information to:

The High Commissioner for Human Rights of the UN

The High Commissioner on National Minorities of the OSCE

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe

We, the signatories of this petition ask the government and Parliament of Romania to follow the example of Hungary with respect to the protection of the national minorities and to assure for the Hungarian community (more than 1.2 million people, 6.1% of the population of the country) living in Romania the same rights which are granted by Hungary for the minorities living on her territory, among them the Romanians (about 35,000 people, 0.36% of the population of the country), in the framework of the cultural autonomy.

The relevant Hungarian laws:

- Article 29, paragraph 1 and 2 of the Constitution
- Law 179/2011 about the rights of the national minorities
- Law 19/1998 about the criminal procedure
- Law 202/2011 about the use of the coat of arms and the flag of Hungary and the state awards
- Law 1/2010 about the birth registers
- Order 17/2013 of the Ministry of Human Resources about the Directive regarding the education of the nationalities
- Law 77/1993 about the rights of national and ethnic minorities

We ask the political leaders of the Romanians living in Hungary to underpin the legitimacy of our request and be our partners in the dialogue process with the Romanian government.

This is what we request in concrete:

1. Recognize in the Constitution that the indigenous communities living in Romania are state-forming communities, just like the Romanian one.

2. Assure the free use of the Hungarian language in the public institutions, because this right exists only in principle. To hire officers that are in direct contact with the public who are proficient in the Hungarian language (i.e., they speak and write), to assure bilingual forms, etc, and to take action against all those (even high ranked officials) who curtail these rights or prevent citizens from using them. The state should assure the financial means needed for this purpose, the institutions which have to guarantee the bilingualism should be granted with additional resources in order to be able to complete that task.

3. Stop using the courts as means for violating the minority rights by judgments that contradict the laws, and which disadvantage the Hungarian community living in Romania (like the great number recent judgments about removing Hungarian inscriptions and local of regional symbols).

4. Guarantee the free use of the national and regional symbols (flag, coat of arm, anthem), any time, place and circumstances. As we learned form the media, the flag of Szeklerland is removed from public institutions and –places, while the flag of Hungary is prohibited to be hoisted even on private properties. By contrast, in Hungary, the Romanian flag flutters freely on any public institution.

5. Guarantee that members of the officially recognized ethnic minorities are issued with birth, marriage and death certificate records, passports, school certificates, and other relevant documents, in two languages (in Romanian and in their native language).

6. To reduce the threshold stipulated in the laws regarding the use of mother tongue in public offices from the current 20% to 10%.

7. In line with the need for dialogue mentioned in the declarations of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Hungary and Romania, we ask the Government of Romania to initiate dialogue with the representatives of the Szekler people, namely politicians, members of the civil society and the Churches, because we also agree that good relations can be reached only by dialogue.

The Romanian community living in Hungary has the rights mentioned above because

Hungary grants them cultural autonomy, a right, that after almost 3 decades of democracy Romania still refuses from her ethnic Hungarian citizens.

25 March 2017

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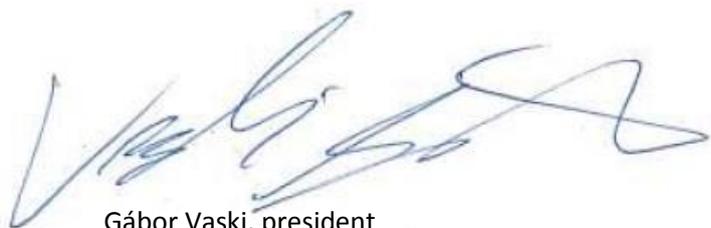
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