

# The Abridged Version of the Annual Foreign Policy Review by the Prime Minister

## Introduction

- Hungary has covered a long distance in the past 15 years or so. Its internal economic and political system were fundamentally transformed together with its external relations and alliance systems.
- We have completed the 'obligatory performance' in the historical sense.
- Hungary:
  - Parliamentary democracy
  - Social market economy

- NATO and EU membership
- Most of cross-border minorities are over common EU borders rather than separating ones

So it is timely and justified to take a look at where we are and to identify a foreign policy in line with the new environment.

### The short 20th century

- **Historians often talk about the 'short' 20th century.** In fact in the historical sense, the century behind us started in 1914 with the launch of the first world war and lasted until 1989, the conclusion of the cold war.

- Not even experts and politicians could predict at the completion of the cold war how the world would look like afterwards. For instance, a well-known American politologist, John Mearsheimer wrote the following in early 1990: as one of the superpowers have disappeared from the scene, the European continent will be the scene of bloodier wars than ever. **Mearsheimer was afraid of the danger of 'hyper-nationalism' in the area.** He referred to earlier Romanian-Hungarian conflicts as a single example, which, in his opinion, may easily lead to a war between the two countries in the future. He did not mention the possibility of the dissolution of Yugoslavia.
- Where are these times? **Who could have thought in 1989 that – ahead of everyone else – friendly relations will first develop actually between the Hungarian and Romanian governments?** Who would have thought that the political elites of the two countries

and the leaders of cross-border Hungarians were substantially wiser and more temperate than assumed by the West, to soon go on towards intensive cooperation?

- **Who would have thought that the representatives of the two countries would enter into the closest alliance as members of first the transatlantic defence and political organization and then of the European economic integration after a historically short period of time? As members of the two organizations who are the number one advocates of progress and multilateral cooperation in the world today.**
- **Who would have thought in 1989 or 1990 that after Trianon, the Romanian government – and not incidentally the Slovakian one as well – would have members of Hungarian origin some day?**

## After the cold war

- Using the words of Brzezinski, 'the cold war ended up with a lukewarm peace, as opposed to cold peace, which usually follows fiery wars. The renowned politician and politologist referred to the fact that the cold war did not have declared winners and losers – nobody was forced to sign a humiliating peace treaty. Leading politicians in the West learned from history and intended to avoid the Versailles syndrome in their relationship with Russia; in the meantime – correctly and fortunately for us – they took a common stand for the fact that the countries becoming independent could really decide in a sovereign manner on their associations.
- **After the elimination of the two-pole system, the question was: what world order was to be established.** Many people envisioned a one-pole system, with the US in the centre as a superpower left on its

own. Something else happened. It turned out that existence as a superpower was actually relative. This concept can only be interpreted if a pole to the contrary exists.

- Is this the golden age of peace that has dawned on us? Well, not really. Still, there was reason for confidence as the first decade was characterized by nearly unclouded security policy cooperation among the leading powers in the world.
- In 1991, the Iraqi aggressor was beaten out from Kuwait by a multilateral military force under American control. The Security Council representing the international community ordered to take economic embargo measures against Libya organizing a terrorist attack. The Bosnian war was brought to a close by the NATO military force. And as far as the so-called Kosovo war is concerned, it was also fought by NATO.

- Yes, and there were three beautiful years (1996, 1998 and 2000), when not a single veto was raised in the Security Council.

## After 2001

- However, this successful multilateral cooperation was brought to a halt after the terrorist attacks of 11 September. America's right to weaponized self-protection against the Thalib system was recognized by everyone then. **Nevertheless, the world came to be divided when the elimination of the Saddam regime was put on the agenda.** No resolutions were passed in the Security Council any longer, and serious fractures occurred between the great powers that used to closely cooperate earlier on.

- It was obvious for everyone that after the termination of the bipolar world, the United States would operate as a global power. As the only power with the political, economic, and military capabilities to be able to act as a global player in any region of the world.
- It also turned out, however, that not even this global power could manage world conflicts independently. Which means that it is unable to guarantee long-term security and order all by itself. Experience in recent years has shown that we only have a realistic chance to avert threats endangering security and to manage conflicts in a permanent manner only on a multilateral basis. It is perceived that Washington is of the same perception these days.
- After September 2001, the United States was frequently accused of the fact that it preferred unilateral solutions in possession of – and being aware of – its global capabilities. On the other hand,

many people in the United States accuse us, Europeans of the fact that we insist on multilateralism only because of our weaknesses. Let us not deny it – as all of us here in this hall know it – that both statements can be supported by a number of arguments.

- We should see clearly that **Europe and America are two different political entities – in spite of their common interests and common values.** The United States came to be a global power as a federative state; and the European Union intends to appear in the international arena as an organization comprising 27 members. However, **the Union has hardly any chance to become so integrated as the United States.**

### **The Islamic challenge**

- After 11 September 2001, many people found that the theory of the 'war of civilizations' was proven. They deemed that the course

of history would be determined by the resulting anti-terrorist wars and their security policy consequences for a long time. This seemed to be supported also by the explosions in Madrid, London, or Tel Aviv.

- However, these deeds of horror are not related to the 'Islamic world' in general but to its extremist, fundamentalist trends. The borderlines are not at all located between the Euro-Atlantic community and the Islamic world but between those who accept terrorist methods and those who do not.
- So in the historical sense, we should not talk about the 'war of civilizations' or the 'Islamic challenge', but about considerable rearrangements in global civilization.

- As a member of the NATO and the European Union, Hungary must also take part in the struggles against extremist fundamentalist terrorist organizations.
- We must go after terrorism if we do not want terrorism to reach us.

However, Hungary must use its modest means to contribute to the resolution of other conflicts of civilization background, also reducing this way the danger of the spread of fundamentalism and terrorism. This can be manifested in a great variety of forms ranging from the dialogue of civilizations and cultures to the enhancement of cooperation based on mutual interests.

**Old and new Europe (West Balkans)**

- Long-established EU member states should never forget about the fact that the history of our region after 1945 was lacking in the organic development leading to the establishment of the European Union. Moreover, in broader historical perspectives, our countries were confined to the peripheries of European processes for centuries, frequently losing their state sovereignty.
- Yet, it does not follow from this that we should make a difference between the states pertaining to the 'old' and the 'new' Europe. Not even if we remind ourselves that the fracture generated in 2003 was not actually produced between Europe and America, but within the Union itself.
- Hungary's interest is to have a strong European Union with individual capacities to make decisions and to act, which is a partner of equal rights – and not a counterweight – to the United

States. We are clear about the fact that our destiny is common with that of Europe, and that Hungary cannot be successful in a Europe lagging behind in terms of global competition. Therefore our responsibility for Hungary is inseparable from our responsibility for the future of Europe.

- I have represented the following for years: Hungary is our motherland; the Union is our common denominator in Europe and our interest and value community as well; all the more, if we want so, it is our home – and America is our ally. At the same time, of course, we are competing – not infrequently, both with our allies and friends as well.
- We are sincerely support the further enlargement of the already 27-member European Union, since the Republic of Hungary is also a winner of the enlargement process. We experience that the

extension of integration definitely contributed to the transformation of states in Central and Eastern Europe; we expect the same in the coming years.

- Hungary is not only an advocate of the Constitutional Treaty but one of its ratifiers as well. Hungary deems the European Constitution as an important landmark of European developments. Because it determines and strengthens the common values of Member States. Because it makes EU operations more transparent and democratic; and because it provides opportunities for further increasing integration.
- It is important for Hungary to preserve the balance of the compromise achieved in the wording of the Constitutional Treaty. It is none the less important, however, that the stalemate around the destiny of the Constitutional Treaty be resolved, having been a burden for the EU agenda for long.

- Hungary shares the views of Chancellor Angela Merkel: in 2009, EU citizens must know what they vote for. Therefore we support that solutions be provided for institutional issues yet unsolved until 2009. Each Member State owes this to its citizens.
- **We deem it necessary to sustain the principle of open gates, to admit Croatia as soon as possible. It is also important for us that the states of the Western Balkans approach the Union as fast as possible** because we deem this region to be strategically important from the viewpoint of Hungarian external relations.
- Without being organically integrated into the European political and economic circulatory system, the West Balkans would permanently remain to be a crisis area of the continent.

- And this is so, even if we know all so well: the West Balkan settlement is the largest ordeal so far of the European foreign and security policies.
- This is why a European commitment must be formulated in West Balkan countries not only at the level of official government policy but as an authentic social programme as well.
- The EU must support civil contacts, the most unobstructed crossing of borders as possible.
- As regards the future of the region, Serbia plays a key role. The regional radiation of an economically strengthened Serbia with a stable vision may play a predominant role in whether the region can overstride the shadows of wars, nationalism and provincialism.

- The EU has particular responsibilities in the fact that the Serbian society seek for development opportunities in the European perspective. This particularly applies following the difficult decisions regarding the status of Kosovo.
- Hungary is confident that the future status of Kosovo will rest on a viable solution approved by the UN Security Council which will actually enable Kosovo residents to control their own destiny, ensuring full respect for the rights of local communities and offering chances for development for the entire region. The Ahtisaari proposal package provides a good starting point for this.
- Hungary understands and respects aversions to Turkey's EU membership, still to be perceived in a number of countries. However, this train of thought also justifies the fact that Hungary continues to strategically support Turkey's EU membership, an Islamic but secular

country, hopefully to comply with membership criteria. What a grand message it will be for moderate Islam advocates: behold, the European Union is such a community organized along the values of democracy and liberty, in which both moderate Christians and moderate Islamic people can accommodate themselves. The actual fortes of the European Union include moderateness and temperance. This must be testified, expecting it, of course, from its citizens and from those who intend to be citizens if the Community.

- Hungary's future can only be interpreted if integrated into the general vision of Europe. We have a common destiny: Hungary cannot be successful in a Europe lagging behind in global competition. Therefore our responsibility for Hungary is already inseparable from our responsibility for the future of Europe.

- Our pretension to get the European Union to deepen its internal integration and expand the areas involved as necessary, originates from this responsibility of ours.
- At the same time, deepened integration cannot eliminate national character nor the concept of national interest.
- We raise the dual claim of openness against Europe: openness towards neighbours, including the perspective of admission, and openness towards other areas of the world, encompassing a wide range of forms of cooperation.
- Enlargement is a competitiveness and growth reserve for Europe, a high-priority means of regional stability. **At the same time, the further progress of the process must be in accordance with the internal consolidation of the EU, rather than undermining it.**

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- Hungary is ready for rational compromises, as well as for an inaugurator role in order to enable the EU to focus on further common assignments.

## National radicalism in Central Europe

- As far as Central Europe is concerned, we experience that a number of economic, social, and ethnic tensions – mostly hidden before – were brought to the surface by the political changes in the 1990s. And tensions suppressed earlier led to the emergence of national and ethnic radicalism at many places.

- Due to the nature of national radicalism, it is provincial and against modernization. It cannot be reconciled with neither the demand for progress nor with the European value system. Actually, national radicalism is always characterized by a fear of 'foreigners', by xenophobia. Competition: it is a challenge. It is always more tiring to face it and hold out in it than to find a scapegoat. This is the pedestrian explanation for the stubborn subsistence and reproduction of xenophobia and anti-Semitism. These phenomena are perceivable in many countries of the region, simultaneously as well. This is so in Hungary even in spite of the fact that after the thousand-year mingling of peoples living here nobody could become a 'stranger' in this region. In Central Europe, a region of multicultural traditions.

- **Another feature of radicalism is withdrawal – in extreme cases a total alienation – from basic European values such as democracy or market economy.** Finally, national radicals are also similar to each other in that they can get broader-range social support by a social and economic demagoguery which is always the simplest but offers pseudo-solutions. What is said and done by national radicalism is not the solution but the problem itself. This is my starting point when I warn you and the region that we should not always look and opt for the easiest way. This is a cul-de-sac many times: the dead-end street of radicalism and populism.
- **Only modern patriotism can relieve the problems of transition. According to this concept, a country is made successful by a national progress which amalgamates, in terms of its concept of the nation, the values and experiences of European**

modernization and middle-class developments with national traditions and specificities. *Homeland and progress* – as we, Hungarians cite the words of our great predecessors.

- There are radical ideas in Western European countries as well. In Central Europe, however, national radicalism gaining ground is more dangerous. It is more dangerous because in the West, these trends remain at the edge of the political palette most of the time. Looking around in our region, we can see that some of the political forces of prestige in government positions are willing to associate themselves even with the representatives of radical views. It is to be feared that in such associations, not the central parties will pacify radicals, but the latter will 'infect' the centre.
- As regards the domestic situation, our foreign policy must serve the success of internal reforms above all. Without reforms, the

country would sooner or later be confined to the periphery of the continent, and would increasingly serve as fertile ground for national radicalism, a policy of closing up and release.

- Reform policy is the only effective antidote to lagging behind, exclusion, and confinement to the peripheries in Central Europe.
- Therefore hindrances thereto would do bad for both Hungary and Europe. Losses arising from domestic political struggles, already becoming permanent, are suffered by the entire country, not by the government or the opposition. And not only today's but tomorrow's Hungary as well – the Hungary of our children.

## Cross-border Hungarians

- While it is obvious that we need to talk about an altered foreign policy environment, there is one aspect that has not changed in Hungary's system of relations: its responsibility for cross-border Hungarians.
- This is an element to the three foreign policy priorities formulated at the time of the change of regime, which the current Hungarian government must assume primary responsibility for. **Hungary is not adjacent to itself – as some say, indulging in the past –, but it is surrounded by friendly states inhabited by Hungarians as well.**
- As regards the past one and a half decades, the most important change in the situation of cross-border Hungarians is that their vast majority can already live in irreversibly democratic, prospering, and

successful countries. In states which Hungary is linked to through EU membership and NATO alliance as well.

- We will do our best so that our Hungarian fellow-citizens living outside the EU can be in an at least similar situation. For example, in order that our integration in the Schengen system should not be accompanied by the appearance of a new iron curtain at Hungary's southern borders, we continue to support the successful conclusion, as soon as possible, of the negotiations to facilitate visas between the EU and West Balkan countries, initiated some months ago.
- Therefore Hungary urges that the EU should submit a proposal, as soon as possible, for the schedule of visa liberation measures to assist Schengen travels by citizens of West Balkan countries.

- The most important criterion for the retention of cross-border Hungarians is that the conditions for economic and cultural success become more open for Hungarian communities than until now. Therefore – besides the support policy so far – the future is for development policies. Responsibilities therefor not only lie with neighbouring governments but with the political organizations of cross-border Hungarians as well.
- It has raised anxiety for a long time that the cause of cross-border Hungarians is attempted to be used for domestic policy purposes for some Hungarian political parties. We should primarily strive for and support the fact that cross-border Hungarians look for and find their success according to their interests, rather than according to the interests of a party or some politicians.

- National policy should not be about exports of party policy divisions but about 'imports' of the ability of national collaboration.

## Russia

- The success of economic development gave rise to a self-confident and conscious Russia. However, this new situation surprised the rest of the world. The 'Russian patient' recovered quicker than expected. However, it seemed for years that the weakened patient was awaiting lengthy treatment. It did not happen this way. **What has happened is an opportunity for Russia and a challenge for us.**

- This is also true even if the self-assurance of Moscow is deemed or shown to be a threat by many.
- I think that it is in the interest of Hungarians, the EU, and the world that Russia:
  - can preserve and strengthen its internal stability;
  - develop and modernize its economy;
  - strengthen its socio-political democracy;
  - undertake an open, collaborative role in solving global challenges.
- Instead of mutual fears and uncertainties, cooperative partnership is needed together with mutual understanding.

- It would be a problem if mistrust was strengthened instead of confidence.
- We see the signs indicative of this, and if there is responsibility in this respect, it is not unilateral.
- **If there is responsibility assigned to the fact that mistrust has strengthened recently, it is not unilateral to be certain. The two parties seek for the reasons for mistrust in each other, and by today, not only Russia has become distrustful against Europe but the other way around as well. Recent energy conflicts played a decisive role in this. This happened in spite of the fact that Moscow did not want to threat Europe, still less to blackmail it.**
- **This course of events was highly influenced by the fact that Europe is becoming increasingly exposed to energy supplies. Actually, EU states hardly have some per cent of the verified oil**

reserves of the Earth while they are among the major energy consumers in the world.

- Yet, mutual mistrust does not lead far, only to even greater mistrust. And this cannot be in the interest of either Moscow or the European Union.
- Hungary is interested in the fact that those states which are at partly different political standpoints should maintain their relationships based on mutual benefits. Budapest is also interested in the fact that the conflicts developed should not result in the establishment of new dividing lines in Europe.
- As far as the issue of oil and gas transports is concerned, the most appropriate solution in our opinion is to develop a common European energy policy. Until this is realized, we will perceive Budapest's attempts to find independent solutions for ensuring its

energy supply to be completely legitimate. The common energy policy will then be developed with our involvement, and we will naturally conform to it.

- The issue is not raised as either common energy policy or Russian supplies, but a combination of the two. The common energy policy will certainly exist on paper some day, but it cannot be used for heating apartments today or tomorrow. I would like to remind you that several major European countries have recently signed long-term supply contracts with Russia, valid even until 2013. In their case, however, the issue is not raised in the way as in the case of Hungary, namely short-term energy security versus long-term common energy policy. In these countries, the two proposals are managed to be interpreted together. At the same time, it is obvious that Europe is an irreplaceable customer for

Russia. Therefore there is a mutual dependence. We depend on each other.

- As regards NATO enlargements so far, we do not share Moscow's concerns. The broadening of the Trans-Atlantic Alliance is rather a factor to strengthen all-European stability which is not directed against any country, but provides protection for us in terms of global security challenges posing new types of real threats; besides, it serves to deepen the system of relations of the alliance with the countries that profess identical values with Hungary.

## China

- China, the permanent state of the most ancient civilization in the world, has achieved spectacular economic development results in the course of the past two decades. It is well-known for everybody that the GDP of

the country has quadrupled in 20 years. This was primarily attributable to the fact that the country started to gradually abandon the planned economy system. The private sphere appeared in the economy, and foreign venturers were also allowed to settle in some zones of the country. Last year, GDP growth exceeded 10%; this made Chinese leaders think whether this rate of development should be somewhat harnessed. I wish we had to struggle with similar problems!

- Naturally, it follows from all this that China is a high-priority area for the Hungarian external economy. We must do everything to expand our foreign trade. I feel that my 2005 visit to China contributed to the intensification of the relations between the two countries.

## Our global role

- Hungary's borders are not required to be defended either in the east or in the west, because as a result of historical changes since the end of the cold war all direct external threats have been eliminated. **Therefore, modern security policy is not about protecting our borders but about protecting our national interests in the broader sense. And these latter must be represented far away from our borders many times.**
- We are often asked in Hungary why we are present in Afghanistan. Our reply is that we would not like would remain to be the largest drug-producing area in the world, effecting large volumes of 'exports' to Hungary as well, by the way. The greatest danger is considered to be the fact that drug production revenues are used for supporting terrorism.

- Actually, the same European and American states demand our participation in international missions with which we would like to cooperate to the closest degree possible in other areas as well. We cannot tell to our German friends, for instance, that although we do not wish to contribute to peace in Afghanistan but we definitely request their support in some issue of EU agricultural policy which is important for us. At present, three thousand German soldiers are stationed in Afghanistan and Germany has managed NATO forces as well for a long period of time.

## Conclusion

- **The government of the Republic is confident in the successful continuation of foreign policies.** As youngsters, people in my generation were partakers in the miracle of the changeover of the

political regime in 1989 and the radical transformations of the surrounding world. Such miracles happen only once in one's life, but we are now ahead of a new opportunity for change. After the changeover of the political regime and the firm establishment of democracy, a change in social attitudes, the renewal of the country await us.

- **And it would be criminal negligence if we abandoned the opportunities in the shaping of the active foreign policy of the republic.** We believe that we will be able to efficiently react to new and further external challenges and to exert an influence – favourable for us – on international processes.
- I can assure all attendees that Hungary **will be a reliable and stable partner for everyone in the future as well.**

Thank you very much for listening to me.