



United States Mission to the OSCE

Concerns About a Restrictive Civil Society Law in Hungary

As prepared for delivery by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Kate Byrnes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
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Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In light of relevant OSCE commitments, the United States is troubled by the Hungarian parliament's passage of and the president's signature of legislation that unfairly burdens a targeted group of Hungarian civil society organizations, many of which focus on fighting corruption and protecting human rights and civil liberties. This new law, particularly in the context of government rhetoric portraying civil society organizations receiving foreign funding as acting against the interests of society, stigmatizes local organizations and will have a chilling effect on the ability of Hungarians to organize themselves and address their concerns to the government in a democratic manner.

This law constitutes a step backward from the freedoms of association and expression, and from our shared OSCE commitments to supporting civil society. Any claims that this legislation is based on laws in the United States are false.

We call on the government of Hungary to uphold its international obligations and OSCE commitments to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to reject restrictions on the work of civil society organizations in Hungary. We urge the government to reconsider this law and support, not undermine, the essential work of independent civil society organizations.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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