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WORLD FEDERATION OF HUNGARIANS

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Subject:

Today's problems of Hungarian minorities in Serbia

Dear Chairman, Ladies and Gentleman!

The Serbian mentality and the circumstances of the Hungarians in Vojvodina are understandable only with the knowledge of past and present events in the region. The total area of Vojvodina was an integral part of Hungary for 1000 years until the end of the first W.W.

The peace treaty of Trianon disregarded the will of the population and annexed southern Hungary to the Serb-Croat - Slovene kingdom. The promised and indispensable public vote was never held. In 1920 there were 600,000 Hungarians in the region but now only 290 000 call themselves Hungarian.

The partisans of Tito, going from house to house, killed 40 000 innocent, Hungarian civilians in 1944-45. Many of those were brutally tortured before being killed. The victims included many Roman Catholic priests. The Hungarian population of numerous settlements were chased from their homes and displaced. We call this "Hungarocidum", ethnic cleansing because they were killed and persecuted only because they were Hungarians.

The Milosevic regime forced 50 000-60 000 Hungarians out of Yugoslavia and 600 000 Serb refugees were settled in Vojvodina to change its ethnic composition. Hungarian young man were enlisted in the civil war much higher proportion than the Serbians. Some of them died and many of them returned physically or mentally crippled.

After the fall of Milosevic

- **Hungarians are still handled as second class citizens. The general economic and social conditions of the Hungarian population are continuing to change for the worse, due to the expectations of the Serb refugees. The situation is further worsening, because from the Kosovo region newer resettlement forcing.**
- **The Serb habitants, and refugees are given jobs, government helps them for starting a business or for buying a house. Even in cities with 80% of Hungarian populations, the well paid government jobs are filled by Serbs. The jobless rate of Hungarians is 50-60%, and that of the Serbs is 5-10%.**
- **The laws created for the benefit of minorities are ignored by the executive authorities.**
- **At the law courts judges make racial decisions. We know about 200-250 atrocities committed by Serbs against Hungarians, but in 95% of the cases the culprits were not found. In a known one or two cases when a Hungarian harms a Serb, the police worked quickly, and the punishment was unjust. In the case of five Hungarian boys from the town of Temerin, while nobody died, the court, without objective evidences or witnesses, sentenced them for 10 to 15 years prison, because they beat a Serb young man. The judge who convicted the boys on first step is now under the investigation for misusing his position. The one of the member of the trial Court already on serving his sentencing of 8 years. Against of these facts the Court refusing retrial the boys cases. In other case a Serb refugee had an argument with a Hungarian in Magyarkanizsa. The Serb drove home (15 km far), took illegal hand gun, drove back and then he killed a Hungarian man. For that he got 5 years and 10 months of prison.**
- **Last year the Serbian parliament created a Constitution what guarantees the collective rights only for the Serbian population.**
- **The Serbian government demands full autonomy, guaranteeing all rights, for Serbs living in Kosovo, but they deny the same for the Hungarians living in Serbia.**

Practically, we are a nation without mother country. Unfortunately, we cannot count on Hungary. The government does not represent the interest of Hungarians in Serbia, but rather shows hostility against them. The Hungarian government refuses to give Hungarian dual citizenship to Hungarians living in Serbia. The prime minister of Hungary personally campaigned very vigorously against a petition.

Our demands to the Serbian government:

- **Grant regional and personal autonomy, with all rights, to the Hungarians living in Serbia.**
- **Do not settle Serbs into areas inhabited by Hungarians or other ethnic minorities.**
- **Investigate the atrocities committed against Hungarians in Yugoslavia and identify and call to account the criminal.**
- **Release the youth of Temerin from jail and hold a new trial with new judges.**
- **The Constitution of Serbia should include minority right guarantees, the right of minorities to autonomy.**
- **Vojvodina Hungarians should be recognised as a consitutive ethnic community.**
- **The Serb government should secure parliamentary mandates for ethnic minorities according to their numerical proportions.**

Requests to the statesmen of OSCE:

- **To promote the timely review by the Court of Strasburg the submitted request in the case of the boys of Temerin in order to release them from the jail as soon as possible.**
- **We are still protesting against the forcing the nationalist Benes Decrees in Slovakia. We are asking for help from the OSCE, to declare the Benes Decrees invalid for ever.**

Racz-Szabo Laszlo
Member of the Presidium of WFH from Serbia