



ANNOUNCEMENT

Expression of concern relating to the vandalism of the Verecke Hungarian memorial

It is with grave concern that we learned of an incident that took place on the 10th of March, 2014. On that date, „activists” loyal to the current government in Kiev spilled an inflammable liquid on the Hungarian Settlement memorial at Verecke and set fire to it. The memorial, which was designed by Péter Matl in 1996, a local sculptor, had become, during the last twenty years, a national symbol for Hungarians all over the world. Annually tens of thousands of pilgrims flock to the Verecke Pass to commemorate our ancestors. This incident is merely one of many previous attempts by Ukrainian extremists to desecrate this place of commemoration. According to our information, the memorial and the marble altar stone were both seriously damaged. It is our belief that this is serious racist provocation designed to sow discord between Hungarians and Ukrainians.

We also believe that, while Ukraine is on the verge of disintegration and economic collapse, the first measure introduced by the new parliamentary majority, backed and funded by the West, was a new language-provision restricting the use of minority languages. This bodes ill for the 150 thousand Hungarians residing in Carpatho-Ukraine/Kárpátalja.

The majority of the Carpatho-Ukrainian Hungarian community live in an ethnically homogenous area next to the Hungarian-Ukrainian border, in spite of the fact that the Ukrainian authorities have deliberately divided the area into four distinct administrative districts. Among the four districts, a Hungarian majority may only be found in the Beregszász district. It is our opinion that in order for the local Hungarian minority to remain and prosper, the areas with a Hungarian ethnic majority should be united in one administrative unit within Ukraine, the sub-Tisza district.

Therefore it is imperative that the Government of Hungary - utilizing the diplomatic opportunities at its disposal - put pressure on Ukraine in return for the EU political and economic assistance, and demand respect for minority rights and the creation of the sub-Tisza district.

The Ukrainian political crisis is an excellent occasion for solving several minority rights issues that have not been addressed thus far, especially with regards to the Hungarian community in Ukraine. The creation of a Tisza Regional District encompassing the local Hungarians has some support even among Ukrainians. Now is the time to act!

Community of Hungarian Patriots