

Securing the democratic guarantees in Hungary

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Dublin, Ireland, on 2-4 June 2022:

Notes that:

- the elections on the 3rd of April 2022, resulted in another supermajority of FIDESZ. Member Parties of ALDE are seriously worried on the further dismantlement of the democratic institutions, the rule-of-law mechanism, and free media landscape;
- democratic guarantees assure the healthy working of every democratic society. Election of opposition representatives in the Parliament to control purposefully the government is an integral element of democracy and should not be treated as hostile activity;
- populist leaders aim to frame opposition activity as frivolous or harmful and therefore they limit opposition representatives' power; change the electoral system in their favour; and create controlled and unbalanced media landscape. States with populist and illiberal democratic structures systematically distort electoral will;
- the illiberal government of Hungary has reportedly used the Pegasus spy program to monitor journalists researching corruption, opposition politicians, and businessmen;
- the European Charter of Fundamental Rights gives distinguished importance to the Protection of Privacy and Personal Data in Articles 7 and 8. The extra-judicial monitoring of individuals is in breach of these rights.

Believes that:

- democratic guarantees are key elements for the healthy functioning of liberal democracies as they help preserve individual freedom rights, safeguard market freedoms and protects minorities;
- opposition Members of Parliaments must be granted the necessary rights and authorisations to execute actual democratic control on the government and on the operation of public bodies;
- electoral systems must follow real electoral trends and support the expression of local electoral needs. Changing the rules of the electoral systems autocratically (gerrymandering, creating unbalanced structures, supporting party narratives with governmental tools) are heavily undemocratic;
- free and independent media is a key element in building an educated and inclusive democracy. State media channels must thrive for balanced distribution of information about the work of opposition politicians, who should be regularly invited to express their views and

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react on critics. Russian propaganda must be stopped immediately in state-owned media;

- the state-of-emergency was a necessary tool to combat COVID-19 virus and secure citizens' well-being. The progression on the vaccination created a situation where the virus can be kept under control. Since state-of-emergency limits civic freedom rights, wherever the situation allows, the sanctions related to coronavirus must be lifted.

Calls on ALDE and all member parties:

- to stand up for democratic guarantees in Hungary;
- to condemn the trends of autocratic change of the electoral system without alignment with other parties / party alliances, and the narrowing of local governments' powers and rights and autocratic change of the election system of local municipal representatives;
- to support: the nomination of the appointed leaders of the National Media and Infocommunications Authority on consensus in order to secure the body's independent and unbiased operation. Russian propaganda should be checked and called out by the authorities; the restoration of powers and authorities of the Representatives to express control on the government and on the operation of public bodies; the initiation of board of enquiries for factions in oppositions in the Parliament; and cease the state-of-emergency as COVID-19 cases suggest in order to allow the complete restoration of civic freedoms;
- to raise awareness of the usage of surveillance technology being used to trample democratic movements opposing authoritarian regimes;
- to strictly regulate the production and trade of military-grade technological equipment, prohibiting states with authoritarian tendencies from getting their hands on spying software.

Calls on ALDE and all member parties in government:

- to highlight the above-mentioned concerns on a bilateral level.

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