



SÁNDOR-PALOTA

BUDAPEST

Of the people, by the people, for the people.

We all know the most famous words of the Gettysburg Address. However, fewer people know that Abraham Lincoln borrowed these words from one of the greatest Hungarians, Lajos Kossuth, the leader of our 1848 War of Independence. Who was born on this very day, 19 September.

Dear Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

" All for the people, and all by the people. Nothing about the people without the people." This is the main purpose of the sovereign Hungarian state and the guarantee of our freedom.

The Hungarian people want peace and security. We have a thousand years of turbulent history in the heart of Europe - in the draughty Carpathian Basin - with wars, oppression and occupation, revolutions and wars of independence. We know the feeling of vulnerability. We know what it's like to live divided and what suffering wars cause. We know how precious freedom is and how painful it is to be deprived of it.

I myself was born during the decades of Soviet oppression, when my country was not free. A childhood spent in a softening communist dictatorship left indelible marks on my generation. The rejection of any kind of oppression has become an instinct in us.

That is why we condemn clearly and unequivocally the violation of international law, the attack on another state, the Russian aggression against Ukraine, which has caused immense suffering and destruction and has destroyed the peaceful life of Europe. We are for the victims and against further escalation.

This is why we are providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine and to all those fleeing the war. We help beyond our size and strength.

This is why we emphasise that there are one hundred and fifty thousand Hungarians living in Ukraine, in Transcarpathia, who share every hardship and struggle, sacrifice and

success. This war also directly affects us Hungarians. It is not just in our neighbourhood. Hungarian fathers and sons living in Ukraine are also giving their lives in the trenches.

Thus we want peace. In our country, in Ukraine, in Europe, in the world. Peace and the security that comes with it.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Hungary stands for the territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine. We understand Ukraine's desire to be part of the community of European countries, thus we expect it to uphold the values that characterise our community, including - expressly - the protection and full guarantee of the rights of national minorities. Not in words, in deeds.

At the invitation of President Zelensky, I have been to Kiev twice since the outbreak of the war. I have seen the suffering that families go through. I have seen what they experience when the peace is broken. I have met Ukrainian and Hungarian people who have lost family members. I have met Ukrainian children for whom a kindergarten was set up with the help and support of Hungary; children from whom the war is depriving a happy childhood.

The suffering affects families first and foremost: mothers who lose their husbands and sons, fathers who go into battle with their barely grown-up sons, children who lose their sense of security and faith in the future.

There is no alternative to peace. The killing, the terrible destruction, must stop as soon as possible. War is never the solution. We know that peace is only realistically attainable when at least one side sees the time for negotiations as having come. We cannot decide for Ukrainians about how much they are prepared to sacrifice, but we have a duty to represent our own nation's desire for peace. And we must do all we can to avoid an escalation of the war.

We mothers know: in every war, children are the most vulnerable. War hits them hardest. Although they are the ones who need security and stability the most. These are lost in war.

Hungary has always been respectful towards other nations. We are loyal to our allies and our partners alike. Proud and active members of the United Nations, NATO, the European

Union and the Council of Europe. We do our share of the joint tasks, even beyond our size and economic weight. As an equestrian nation, we speak honestly, with a straight posture.

Here we are at the UN in New York, heads of state and government, world leaders. We have come together, as we do every year. In the United Nations, created by our ancestors' desire for peace. Demand a ceasefire and a just peace!

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

*Of the people, by the people, for the people.* I would also like to take this opportunity to send a message to the world from young Hungarians. I have asked youth delegate of Hungary to the United Nations, Csenge Offenbächer, who is here with us today, to help us articulate the message of Hungarian youth. This is the sentence they gave me: "*Today we need solidarity with each other more than ever.*"

So young people feel that we must look out for each other, that we must not let go the hands of others reaching out towards us.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This spring, in Budapest, Hungary, in the nation's main square, the square named after the aforementioned Lajos Kossuth, Pope Francis prayed in the presence of tens of thousands of people with the following words: "*pour into the hearts of the leaders of men and of peoples the desire to build peace, to offer to future generations a future of hope, not war; a future of cradles not graves;*"

The 5th Budapest Demographic Summit, the most important international forum on demographic issues, was concluded three days ago.

A large part of the world is facing, in addition to war, a difficulty that is oppressing it from within. In Europe and in many of your countries, the demographic winter has turned into an ice age.

Public leaders, thinkers, demographers, and the representatives of family organisations and professional workshops from sixty countries and five continents sought answers on how to protect and strengthen families.

If we do not address this, it will have an immeasurable impact on our economies, societies,

and security in the near future.

Elon Musk may be right when he says that demographic decline is a more serious problem than the climate crisis. Little attention is paid to the real and irreversible change of the world. If there is no child, there will be no future. What is the point of looking after the Earth if we don't have children and grandchildren to pass it on to?

If childlessness becomes widespread, if fewer children continue to be born each year than the number of those who pass away, our beloved world that we believe to be secure will be shattered.

We Hungarians see the solution to the demographic crisis in strengthening and supporting families. Our aim is for everyone to have a full and happy family life and to have all the children that young couples want.

Hungary was the first country in the world to put the strengthening of families and the tackling of the demographic crisis into the focal point. We have built up a broad family support system. In the European Union we are the ones who spend the most on family support. This has not destroyed the Hungarian economy, on the contrary: strengthening families is positive in economic terms.

We protect parental freedom. We strongly believe that the right to raise children does not belong to the state, nor to NGOs, nor to the media or the knowledge industry, but to parents.

Anyone who has a child is ready to fight at any time to ensure that their child can live in peace and freedom. Families pass on their values from generation to generation, in the face of every difficulty, every historic trauma, every challenge.

The message of the Demographic Summit of Budapest, our capital city which is 150 years old this year, is clear: pro-family forces stand up for their values and interests. Even at a time when anti-family and anti-child ideologies are on an unprecedented offensive. In fact, especially then.

We recognise that family is the key to security. A strong, united and healthy family is a guarantee of security.

Thank you for listening.