

## PHOTO OF THE DAY

MTI/Prime Minister's Press Office/Vivien Cher Benko



PM Orbán at a panel discussion at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**EU interior, justice ministers meet in Brussels**

**Parliament meets**

**Events related to the wars in Middle East, Ukraine**

## TOP STORY

# ORBÁN: 'SEEMINGLY NO WAY OUT OF UKRAINE WAR'

There seems to be no solution to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and that leaves European politics "paralysed", Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum on Friday.

"If you think that time is on the Ukrainian and the Western side, and continuing the war can provide military success for the Ukrainians, it's reasonable to continue. If you think that time is more on the Russian side, and continuing the war would bring more success to the Russians, for the Ukrainians it is better to stop now. I belong to the second camp," Orbán said. He said "we are in trouble" because many countries consider the conflict as "our war" and "if the enemy proves to be stronger ... you belong to the losers ... and it's very difficult to explain how to behave and how to get out of a situation when you lose a war". Hungary was not viewing the war "through the eyeglasses of Ukraine or those of Putin" but from a Hungarian perspective, Orbán said. Orbán noted the ethnic Hungarian community in Transcarpathia, who have lived there for one thousand years and are now being conscripted to the Ukrainian army. Peace in Ukraine would ensure that Hungarian lives were safe, he added. "That's one reason, among others, why we Hungarians are very much committed to peace," Orbán said.

Hungary Matters is an English-language newsletter produced and distributed by the Media Service Support and Asset Management Fund (MTVA) with content provided by Duna Media Service Provider exercises copyright over all content. No part of this publication may be copied, reproduced, redistributed or transmitted without prior written permission from the publisher, with the exception of copies made by individuals for private use, educational purposes or scholarly research, provided that such transmissions do not exceed the extent justified by the purpose and are not aimed at financial gain, even indirectly, and the source name are indicated at all times.

All rights reserved. Enquiries should be made to the English Help Desk at +361 441 9340  
For MTI's real time coverage please visit <http://english.mti.hu>, <http://econews.hu>



## **ORBÁN: HUNGARY HOPES FOR CONSERVATIVE TURN IN EP**

Hungary's government is hoping for a conservative turn in the European Parliament after the elections in June, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán told the Antalya Diplomacy Forum on Friday.

Currently, Europe is based on a progressive, liberal ideology, Orbán said, adding that the notions of nation and national pride were considered with suspicion. "Family values are not respected either, because the family does not exist anymore in Europe," he said. The prime minister said the difference of opinion between liberals and conservatives was growing, but added that the current majority should accept that there were conflicting positions. Hungary wants to stay a member of the EU, but wants to see the conservatives gain a majority, Orbán said. The prime minister said the upcoming EP elections would change the composition of the European Parliament, in which the right wing would have greater weight.

Concerning Sweden's joining NATO, Orbán said those endeavours had been clear from a geopolitical point of view from the beginning, and expressed Hungary's support. He added, however, that Sweden could not belong to the same community without respecting Hungary. Orbán said Sweden had actively supported suggestions in Europe that Hungary had violated the rule of law. "I said if

you would like to join NATO, we have to rebuild the trust and confidence between each other ... So please come and do it. And then they came and we did," Orbán said. The prime minister confirmed that he would meet with former US President Donald Trump in Florida in the coming week. Orbán said he was convinced that if Trump had been in office when the war in Ukraine broke out "there would have been no war now", adding that there would only be a serious chance for peace if Trump was able to come back. Asked if he would meet President Joe Biden, Orbán said "I'm always at his disposal", adding however that it was up to the American people to decide on the next US president. Trump's return, Orbán said, would be more desirable for Hungary and for peace. Asked about Hungary's upcoming EP presidency in the second half of this year, the prime minister said its priorities included the EU's enlargement in the Balkans and Europe's competitiveness.

## **SZIJJÁRTÓ CALLS FOR 'EVERY EFFORT' TO AVOID CONFLICT BETWEEN NATO, RUSSIA**

"Every effort must be made to avoid a conflict between NATO and Russia," the foreign minister told public radio on Sunday.

Addressing French President Emmanuel Macron's recent remark that "nothing could be ruled out" when asked about the possibility of deploying Western troops to

Ukraine, Péter Szijjártó told Kossuth Rádió that Europe was suffering from "war psychosis". He welcomed responses by the majority of European politicians who said they did not wish to send troops to Ukraine. After Western Europe's deliveries to Ukraine progressed from helmets to ammunition, to armoured vehicles and rockets, he said it was no surprise that some Western politicians were talking about the deployment of ground troops. "That is diametrically opposed to joint decisions taken till now," he added.

He noted that NATO members had issued a declaration two years earlier, stating that NATO was not a combatant and that all efforts should be made to avoid a conflict between NATO and Russia. Comments by Western politicians on the deployment of troops to Ukraine are in violation of that declaration, he said. He added that NATO was a defence alliance and attacking anyone was not its purpose. He said that Hungary's prediction made at the start of the war that sanctions against Russia would not work and that there would be no solution on the battlefield, had proved correct. He warned that the longer the war lasted, the greater the threat of that "terrifying danger called the third world war".

Szijjártó said the scenario in which Ukraine made advances on the battlefield that would put the country in an advantageous position to start negotiations had failed. "Time is on Russia's side," he added. He reiterated

Hungary's position against sending weapons or troops to Ukraine, and for urging a ceasefire and peace talks.

Speaking about a recent summit of Visegrad Group leaders, he acknowledged differences on positions concerning the issue of peace, but said cooperation was an advantage when representing interests that converge, such as illegal migration, keeping energy supply a sovereign matter and agriculture development.

### **SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARY NOT TO SACRIFICE ENERGY SECURITY FOR 'WAR WE ARE NOT PART OF'**

Hungary will not sacrifice its energy security for a conflict "that is not our war", the foreign minister told the Antalya Diplomacy Forum on Saturday. Speaking at a panel discussion at the forum, Péter Szijjártó said it was unfortunate that the European Union approached the issue from an ideological standpoint, adding that optimal solutions for member states could be found only if the issue was "considered a matter of physical reality". Energy supply needs infrastructure, and the procurement of energy resources will always be determined by the delivery routes at hand, he said. Hungary's government sees energy supply as a priority, he said. Noting that Hungary had been granted exemption from implementing

certain EU sanctions on the Russian energy sector, Szijjártó said the country's supply would be impossible without cooperation with Russia.

Replacing Russian energy deliveries with European ones would be realistic only if Europe could supply resources at the same price, quantity and schedule, Szijjártó told EU foreign ministers, according to a ministry statement. Hungary would be "in grave danger" if ideological considerations were to "cast a shadow" over energy policy, he said. On the matter of nuclear energy, Szijjártó said it was the only cheap, safe and sustainable way to produce large amounts of electricity. Hungary finds it "unacceptable" that the EU is considering excluding nuclear energy from the category of "clean" energy, he said.

Hungary has been cooperating with Russia on nuclear energy production for nearly 50 years, he said. At the same time, the Russian contractor working on the upgrade of Hungary's nuclear plant is employing US, French and German subcontractors, he said. "That goes to show that economic players are ready to think more realistically than certain governments." The government has also been working on "a sensible" energy diversification. Türkiye is expected to deliver 275 million cubic meters of gas to Hungary this year, he noted.

Szijjártó also touched on the Green Energy Corridor, a delivery route planned to deliver green energy from Azerbaijan and Georgia. The planned

1,100 kilometre pipeline connecting Georgia and Romania would be the longest underwater pipeline in the world, he added. Increasing capacity is all the more important as Hungary is set to become the second largest battery manufacturer in the world, and the sector is extremely energy-hungry, he said. Meanwhile, Szijjártó also called for expanding the natural gas infrastructure in south-east Europe, which is key to drawing new resources, he said.

### **CULTURE AND INNOVATION MINISTER ADDRESSES HUNGARIAN-EGYPTIAN RECTORS CONFERENCE IN CAIRO**

The mission of higher education is to help people understand each other better, the minister for culture and innovation said in Cairo on Sunday. In a speech opening the Hungarian-Egyptian Rectors Conference, János Csák noted the two countries' long-standing cooperation in archaeology. He pointed to the importance of cooperation in facing technological and demographic challenges impacting societies and economies. Establishing cooperation and working communities is a key element of Hungary's education policy, he said, and welcomed the chance to expand scientific cooperation with Egypt. Mohamed Ayman Ashour, Egypt's minister for higher education and scientific research, also addressed the opening of the conference.

---

## **ORBÁN MEETS CONGO PRESIDENT IN ANTALYA**

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán had talks with Felix Antoine Tshisekedi, the president of Congo, in Antalya on Saturday, the PM's press chief has said. The talks focused on further developing bilateral ties, with regard to promoting Hungarian investment in Congo, Bertalan Havasi said. At the talks, Orbán noted that the Hungary Helps programme had aided Congo with a total 2.4 million dollars in 14 health, education, and welfare projects since 2018.

Later on Saturday, Orbán travelled to Belgrade for talks with President Aleksandar Vučić. They discussed the war in Ukraine, the Western Balkans' European integration and national sovereignty.

---

## **ORBÁN TO SPEAK AT HERITAGE FOUNDATION EVENT, MEET TRUMP IN US**

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán will participate at a panel discussion with Kevin Roberts, the head of the conservative Heritage Foundation, in Washington D.C. on Thursday, March 7, the PM's press chief said on Sunday.

The discussion will focus on the future of ties between the US and Hungary, Bertalan Havasi said. On Friday, Orbán will meet for talks with former US President Donald Trump in Florida.

---

## **SZIJJÁRTÓ: BULGARIA, TÜRKIYE RELIABLE TRANSIT ROUTE FOR GAS DELIVERIES TO HUNGARY**

Bulgaria and Türkiye will remain a reliable transit route for gas deliveries to Hungary, ensuring the country's energy security, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said on Friday, after bilateral talks with the Bulgarian and Turkish presidents on the sidelines of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum. The two countries play an important role in ensuring the delivery of gas to Hungary which will "most certainly" remain the case considering that Hungary already receives gas from Russia via Türkiye, Bulgaria and Serbia, he said. "The Bulgarian and the Turkish presidents both expressed a clear viewpoint and pledged that their countries will ensure a reliable transit route for us in the coming years," he said. Szijjártó welcomed an agreement signed with Türkiye under which that country will deliver 275 million cubic metres of gas to Hungary in the second and third

quarters of this year. He noted that Hungary had over 4 billion euros worth of bilateral trade with Türkiye and over 2 billion euros with Bulgaria in 2023.

---

## **HUNGARY'S RAISZ ELECTED UN ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY VICE PRESIDENT**

The United Nations Environment Assembly has elected Hungary's Anikó Ráisz, state secretary at the energy ministry, as its vice president, the ministry told MTI in a statement. On her election in Nairobi on Friday, Ráisz noted the Hungarian government's aim to make Hungary a dominant player in international cooperation in the areas of environmental protection and the green transition, too.

---

## **TURKISH AIRLINES FLIGHT LANDS IN BUDAPEST AFTER CABIN PRESSURE PROBLEM**

A Turkish Airlines flight en route from Istanbul to Copenhagen landed at Liszt Ferenc International Airport at midday on Sunday because of cabin pressure problems, the spokesperson for Budapest Airport told MTI. Katalin Valentinyi said there were 166 passengers on the aircraft along with the crew.