

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Zoltán Balogh

Former President János Áder and his wife Anita Herczegh at charity auction

UPCOMING EVENTS

EU General Affairs Council meets in Brussels

Events related to war in Ukraine

TOP STORY

SZIJJÁRTÓ URGES COOPERATION FOR PEACE

After the “troubles war has brought on the world”, it is time for countries to cooperate to achieve peace, the foreign minister has said.

Péter Szijjártó said on Facebook that the broadest and most appropriate platform for such a cooperation was the United Nations General Assembly, currently under way in New York. “I have the honour to represent Hungary for the seventh time at this global political event; this year’s assembly will be a special one as there is a war raging in a neighbouring country,” he said. “The measure of the assembly’s success this year will be whether we come closer to peace or not. The world organisation is standing before the most important test of its history,” Szijjártó said. Meanwhile, Balázs Orbán, the political director of the Prime Minister’s Office, said in Bratislava that China and the US may benefit from the war in Ukraine dragging out but Europe certainly would not gain anything from it. At a roundtable of Visegrád Group country representatives, he said inflation, the energy crisis and unemployment could send central Europe into a spiral of economic decline. Hungary’s standpoint is to focus on pushing in the direction of peace and securing a ceasefire as swiftly as possible, he said.

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PALKOVICS DISCUSSES HUNGARY ENERGY AND TRANSPORT PLANS WITH TIMMERMANS

Hungary’s energy resources such as geothermal and wind could be made sufficient for the country to become “independent and green”, the technology and industry minister said in Brussels on Monday. After presenting Hungary’s plans to European Commissioner for the European Green Deal Frans Timmermans, László Palkovics said he briefed the commissioner on Hungary’s planned 16 billion euro revamp of Hungary’s electricity network which would be largely financed from the EU’s Recovery and Resilience Facility. “The project is about green transition and digitalisation,” Palkovics said. The investment would lean on wind, geothermal and biomass energy, he added.

Hungary could produce more biogas than it does now, he said. “We currently produce 80 million cubic meters of biogas, whereas we are capable of producing 1.5 billion cubic meters.”

At the same time, Hungary’s economy based on oil and natural gas would need time to transition to green alternatives, “which is why the country has taken a more resolute stance in the EU” on the matter, Palkovics said. Hungary continues to strive to reduce its dependence on Russian exports and

it will eventually gain independence, he said. Meanwhile, Palkovics said the government’s decree on cutting the red tape for firewood production had been “misinterpreted”, adding that deforestation was not necessary to fulfil demand.

GOVT OFFICIAL: EUROPE WON’T WIN BY DRAGGING OUT UKRAINE WAR

China and the US may benefit from the war in Ukraine dragging out but Europe certainly will not gain anything from it, Balázs Orbán, the political director of the Prime Minister’s Office, said on Monday in Bratislava at a roundtable of Visegrad Group country representatives. A combination of inflation, the energy crisis and unemployment could send central Europe into a spiral of economic decline, Orbán said at the conference organised by the Ladislav Hanus Society. Hungary’s standpoint is to focus on pushing in the direction of peace and securing a ceasefire as swiftly as possible, he said, adding that other governments may emphasise other factors for the time being, but working towards the strategic necessity of a ceasefire would not shred Visegrad cooperation but strengthen it. Central Europe’s success hinges on its economic achievements, he said, arguing that the region is taken seriously due to its economic performance. Military defence on the V4’s eastern flank is also of prime importance, he said, so

all four countries must strengthen their military capabilities.

Meanwhile, Orbán said Hungary was seeking to attract manufacturing and research and development capacities to the country with a view to closing the gap between western and central Europe within the next 10 years. Energy-intensive sectors would be key to achieving this goal, so without cheap energy, the region would lag behind when it came to competition in technological sectors. He said central Europe had the wherewithal to catch up with the West and leave southern Europe behind, but this aim was compromised by current events. Countries should not shift from one energy dependency to another, but look to new vistas for obtaining cheap energy, even during the transition period to green alternatives, he added. Orbán argued that if Europe gradually declined on the world stage, “the Brussels bureaucracy” could opt to intensify centralisation efforts. “Central Europe must be in a position to oppose such efforts that are against its own interests,” he added.

JUSTICE MINISTER: ‘INTERESTS OF EU STATES AS IMPORTANT AS UNITY’

The interests of EU member states ought to be seen as important as unity, the Hungarian justice minister said at the Conservative Summit held in Bratislava. Addressing a panel discussion, Judit Varga discussed the “opinion hegemony” of progressive

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liberals in the European Union and their purpose, and conservatives' tasks on the matter. "The progressives are forging ahead ... aiming to eradicate national characters and questioning sovereignty and the traditional structure of society," she said. "Meanwhile, national conservatives have failed to expand [their influence] globally, allowing the progressive opinion to dominate the discourse on the continent," she said.

In Europe, where the issue of centralisation had been a controversial issue from the start, "a radically one-sided left-wing liberal concept has come to the fore which openly or covertly aims to create a United States of Europe" through "questioning national sovereignty, deeming national self-determination illegitimate and weakening the national powers of member states," she said. The method progressives use includes "attacking the building blocks of sovereignty, the historic churches, the family, the nation and regional cooperation", she said, adding that the task of conservatives was therefore to protect "these natural communities".

Varga said the European Union should be built on the cooperation of nations. "Europe cannot exist without nations, the nations are Europe's foundation, let's preserve them, because only strong nations can form a strong Europe," she said, adding that rather than limiting the national powers of EU member states, their cooperation must be further strengthened and made more

effective based on respect. The justice minister called for respecting national sovereignty within the framework of treaties in order to ensure that diversity in Europe can be maintained. The annual Conservative Summit was launched last year. This year's event focuses on the vision of a conservative Europe, family policy and the war in Ukraine.

DK MEP DOBREV PRESENTS SHADOW CABINET

Opposition Democratic Coalition (DK) MEP Klára Dobrev on Monday introduced members of its shadow cabinet, declaring that the shadow cabinet was there to ensure that DK was ready to govern. Dobrev told a press conference that Hungary could emerge from its "crisis" only if Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's "irresponsible" government were dislodged.

She said shadow cabinet members were "respected experts" in their respective fields. Deputy party leader Csaba Molnár will take up post of shadow chancellery minister and shadow deputy prime minister responsible for EU affairs and public administration reform. Zoltán Bodnár, a former deputy governor of the National Bank of Hungary, will be shadow finance minister, the only non-elected official, Dobrev said, noting Bodnár's expertise in budgetary, fiscal and monetary policy. MEP Sándor Rónai, the shadow foreign minister, is tasked with restoring Hungary's image

abroad and reviving Visegrad Group cooperation. The post of shadow interior minister has been assigned to Géza Mustó, deputy mayor of Budapest's 10th district, while Ferenc Dávid will be shadow economy minister. Among other shadow cabinet posts, Ágnes Vadai, former defence minister, will take up the shadow defence job.

Asked why Ferenc Gyurcsány, the former Socialist prime minister, has not been tapped for a shadow cabinet position, DK's spokeswoman Olga Kálmán said the DK leader had already made it clear that he would focus on leading the party and its parliamentary group, and would not accept a government position.

Ruling Fidesz said in reaction that Dobrev's shadow cabinet was an attempt by Gyurcsány to return to power. "We said so a long time ago and now they're not even trying to hide the fact that Ferenc Gyurcsány is the one in charge on the left and wants to get back in power, and with his own people, no less," the party said in a statement. Fidesz said the left-wing opposition's spring election campaign had been nothing more than "a show", insisting that Gyurcsány had been in control then, too. "Gyurcsány and his people have already demonstrated how they govern," Fidesz said. "They brought the country and the Hungarian economy to ruin, pushed Hungary to the brink of bankruptcy and into mass unemployment, and impoverished the people with a series of austerity measures and utility bill hikes."



SOME 12,000 REFUGEES ARRIVE FROM UKRAINE ON SUNDAY

Fully 6,007 people crossed into Hungary directly from Ukraine on Sunday, while another 5,927 from Ukraine crossed from Romania, the national police headquarters (ORFK) said. Police issued temporary residence permits valid for thirty days to 182 people, ORFK told MTI on Monday. Holders of such permits must contact a local immigration office near their place of residence within thirty days to apply for permanent documents, it added.

HUNGARIAN, ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES: OVER 4,000 ILLEGAL ENTRANTS DETAINED ON BORDER THIS YEAR

Thanks to close cooperation between Hungarian and Romanian police, border patrols detained over 4,000 illegal migrants on the border of the two countries between January and August this year, the head of

the Oradea regional border patrol unit said at a press conference held together with Brigadier-General Zsolt Polyák, the head of the Csongrád-Csanád County police in south-eastern Hungary. General Bondar Marin said most illegal crossings are attempted at the motorway crossing at Csanádpalota-Nădlac (Nagylak), where the authorities have detained 2,600 people in the Jan-Aug period this year. On the green border, joint Hungarian-Romanian units patrol 10km into the territory of both countries, he added.

Polyák also praised cooperation between Hungarian and Romanian police, and noted that while the police worked together, the migrants discovered at the Csanádpalota-Nădlac crossing fell under Romanian jurisdiction. So far this year the Romanian authorities have launched 105 procedures for people smuggling after the detection of 160 cases where illegal migrants had been hidden in the cargo hold of trailer trucks or in cars, he said. Great experience and expertise is required to uncover border violators hiding in lorries, and this task has been made even more difficult given that

freight traffic at the Csanádpalota crossing has grown by about 20% this year, he said.

WIZZ AIR TO ADD 75 A321NEO AIRCRAFT TO FLEET

Hungarian low-cost carrier Wizz Air on Monday said it negotiated the purchase of 75 new A321neo aircraft from Airbus. Wizz Air will take delivery of most of the more fuel efficient aircraft in 2028-2029. "The combination of Wizz Air's ultra-low cost operation and the market-leading Airbus A321neo aircraft together create a strong platform for Wizz Air's future growth in the coming decade as we further strengthen our position as one of the world's most sustainable airlines," CEO József Váradi said. "We remain on track to become a 500 aircraft airline group by the end of the decade while delivering our commitment to reduce our already industry-leading CO2 emissions by 25% by 2030," he added. Wizz Air has a fleet of 165 Airbus aircraft at present. They are one of the youngest short-haul fleets in the world.