

PHOTO OF THE DAY



4th Drone Summit and Expo opens in Budapest

UPCOMING EVENTS

Second day of UN General Assembly

War in Ukraine

TOP STORY

FM CALLS FOR DISMISSING NEW SANCTIONS

Europe suffers from the sanctions introduced in response to the Ukraine war more than Russia itself, so it would be best to dismiss the eighth package of sanctions, the foreign minister said at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

Péter Szijjártó said after an informal meeting of the foreign affairs council that the punitive measures introduced so far “have beyond doubt hurt Europe much more than Russia” because they have resulted in soaring inflation and utility costs on the continent. He said the “vast majority” of the world outside of Europe already realised that the effects of the sanctions were more severe than the effects of the war, because the challenges that the world currently faces result from the sanctions and not directly from the war. “The European Union should stop talking about an eighth package of sanctions and stop calling for measures that could further exacerbate the energy supply difficulties,” Szijjártó said. Supply challenges will worsen in the winter, he added. Szijjártó said it was a “waste of time” not to use the UNGA to achieve peace. Further, the International Atomic Energy Agency’s efforts in connection with the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant should be supported in order to guarantee the security of reactors, which requires all war activities to stop in the region, he added.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHOULD BE PLATFORM TO PUSH FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE

The world should use the United Nations General Assembly as a platform to promote peace in Ukraine, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in New York on Monday. This is the position that the Hungarian government will represent throughout the week, including Monday's EU Foreign Affairs Council session, the foreign ministry cited Szijjártó as saying. The focus should be on achieving peace rather than on deepening and escalating the conflict, he said.

Szijjártó said the war in Ukraine meant that this year's UN General Assembly was being held under "extraordinary circumstances". The impact of the conflict is felt worldwide, for instance, in the form of the uncertainties around energy supply and rampant inflation, he said. Hungary's interest lies in the quickest possible end to the conflict, Szijjártó said, adding that peace was the solution to all the problems and challenges faced by Hungary, Europe and the world.

This requires an immediate ceasefire and peace talks, for which there is no more appropriate forum than the UN,

the minister said. "Everyone is present in the UN," he said. "Every difficult issue can be discussed here, as even the leaders of countries with hostile relations are present at the same time."

He said the world should take advantage of the opportunity presented by the General Assembly session, arguing that the war could only end through negotiations.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: BRUSSELS POSITION ON UKRAINE WAR 'NOT SHARED BY MOST COUNTRIES'

"Once one leaves the European bubble" it will immediately become clear that "the position promoted by Brussels on the (Ukraine) war is not at all shared by most countries in the world", Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said on Facebook.

On the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session now underway, Szijjártó said the whole world was suffering from ramifications of the war, such as soaring energy and food prices that were causing serious problems in Africa and South America. "My colleagues from Ghana and Cuba talked about all those today, here in New York," he said. Szijjártó welcomed that Ghana was increasingly using Hungarian water purification technologies, and that he had signed an agreement with Cuba concerning scholarships and courses for diplomats.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: POLLUTERS OF TRANSBOUNDARY RIVERS MUST PAY FOR DAMAGE

The Hungarian government supports the principle that polluters of transboundary rivers should be made to pay for the damage they cause, Foreign Minister Peter Szijjártó said in New York late on Monday.

At a conference on developments in mountainous areas, the minister noted that Hungary did not have high mountains but neighbouring countries did, and "it is especially important to treat mountainous regions and neighbouring areas in an integrated way". Fully 95% of Hungary's rivers have their sources in other countries, and "it would be unbelievably important to have an integrated international plan in the interest of managing and protecting our waters". He called for cooperation to secure the quality and quantity of the water available, adding that sustainable development in the mountains was not possible without sustainable water management. Everybody should honour the principle that when a river is polluted, the polluter "should pay the bill", he said, but added that it required international coordination. "If we cannot enforce this, communities not at all responsible will pay for the damage, which is unacceptable," Szijjártó said. Issues around the development of mountainous areas should be kept high on the agenda internationally, since a quarter of the world's drylands

is in the mountains and home to 15% of the global population, mostly in developing countries, Szijjártó said. Ecosystems of the mountains are important supply systems for billions of people living in lower areas, with special regard to plants produced at higher altitudes, he added.

Hungary is an active supporter of the 2030 Water Resources Group, and has contributed three million dollars to its operations, Szijjártó said, adding that the Hungarian government had called on the United Nations to set up a special rapporteur position for water management.

GOVT SUBMITS AMENDMENTS DESIGNED TO UNDERPIN DEAL WITH EU

The government on Monday submitted to MPs its first package of amendments related to the European Union's conditionality procedure.

The legislation governs how Hungary's financial watchdog should cooperate with OLAF, the European Anti-Fraud Office, and changes rules for public interest trust foundations. Proposed new rules would make the financial watchdog of the national tax and customs office (NAV) responsible for supporting OLAF on-site inspections and allowing OLAF investigators to enter the premises under investigation and to ensure them access to the relevant documents and data. NAV would also be given the power to fine

anyone failing to comply the sum of 1 million forints (EUR 2,500). The bill also covers areas such as transparent and fair contractual procedures in public procurement and conflict of interest rules for public interest trust foundations.

JUSTICE MIN: NO DANGER OF EU CUTTING FUNDS FROM HUNGARY

The European Union has not cut any funds from Hungary up to now, and there is no such danger under the European Commission's Sunday decision, the justice minister said in Brussels on Tuesday. Judit Varga told reporters that "following a lengthy period burdened with ideological conflicts" Hungary was now conducting "intensive, constructive and progressive talks" with the commission aimed at finding a resolution, adding that the Hungarian government had tabled 17 proposals in Brussels.

The Hungarian proposals address the commission's concerns raised within the EU's conditionality mechanism against Hungary, Varga said. The proposals focus on improving anti-corruption measures, the transparency of public procurements, and on "certain regulations on conflict of interest", she said. "According to the assessment of the European Commission, each and every Hungarian legislation proposal could give satisfactory answers to all professional issues," she said.

Regarding the procedure launched against Hungary, designed to protect EU budget by linking funding to member states maintaining the rule of law, Varga said the financial interests "should be protected only in line with the laws. Currently, the European Commission and the European Council is solution-oriented, only the European Parliament is aiming to remain part of the problem," she said. Further, Hungary is working to preserve the principle that EU issues should be decided by unanimous votes, as enshrined in the EU treaties, she said. Hungary stands by solutions based on consensus among member states, she added. She praised Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki for "standing by Hungary", who said that Poland was against withdrawing any funding from Hungary. Morawiecki's words "show that the Hungarian-Polish unity perseveres," Varga said.

GOVT OFFICIAL: HUNGARY BELIEVES IN PROVIDING HELP LOCALLY IN TIMES OF CRISIS

The Hungarian government believes that crises should be addressed by providing assistance locally rather than through the imposition of sanctions, Tristan Azbej, state secretary in charge of assistance to persecuted Christians and the Hungary Helps Programme, said in Brussels on Monday.

Azbej attended an international conference on international cultural heritage protection as the head of the

Hungary Helps delegation and held talks with Olivér Várhelyi, the European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement. Azbej told MTI that both meetings had made it clear that the Hungarian government was prepared to cooperate with the European Union on showing solidarity outside the bloc, be it in the form of humanitarian support, development cooperation or cultural heritage protection. The Hungarian government has recognised that heritage protection needs to be made an integral part of aid and development policies applied in crisis zones, Azbej said, underscoring its importance in the case of persecuted Christian communities. He said the conference's participants had reviewed developments in cultural heritage protection over the past year.

Participants included EU ambassadors, representatives of French cultural heritage foundation Aliph, UNESCO and European commissioners' offices, he said. They concluded that last year's meeting initiated by Hungary has had a significant impact on the EU's contributions to cultural heritage protection, he added. EU institutions and member states should follow Hungary's example and form direct partnerships with churches, he said. Not only should "old", large member states be involved in EU international aid programmes, but the international development agencies of new member states should also play an active role, he added. Commenting on his talks

with Várhelyi, Azbej said it was clear that the EU's neighborhood policy and the Hungary Helps Programme had many commonalities, both of them aiming to stabilise Lebanon and maintain stability in the Western Balkans, for instance. Hungary Helps is also about providing aid to groups subject to religious persecution, he said, noting initiatives in many African and Middle Eastern countries where Christians were subjected to atrocities. He accused western liberal politicians of refusing to see a connection between the persecution of Christians and their religion. "It's factually clear that Christianity is the world's most persecuted religion ... with more than 300 million people discriminated against or subjected to mass violence because of their faith," he said. Wokism trivialises atrocities linked to religion for political ideological reasons, he added.

GOVT STARTS ENERGY SAVINGS AT STATE INSTITUTIONS

The government is starting to make energy savings at state institutions, while ensuring the regulated price regime for household utilities remains in force, the government's information centre KTK said in a statement late on Monday.

In recent months, the government has been working to save Hungarians from the negative impacts of the war in Ukraine and of the European Union's "ill-advised sanctions" through measures such as ensuring that each

family is provided gas and electricity at a reduced price up to average consumption, the statement said. The government has ordered all state institutions and state-owned companies to reduce their gas consumption by 25%, the statement said. As part of that measure, state institutions cannot be heated over 18 degrees Celsius, with the exception of health care facilities, homes for the elderly and children, as well as crèches. Schools will be required to be heated at least 18 degrees Celsius, but the temperature in classrooms for children until 14 will need to be at least 20 degrees, the statement said.

CULTURAL AND INNOVATION MINISTRY PREPARING ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

Hungary's cultural and innovation ministry on Monday said it is preparing an energy conservation plan with a view to protecting families and jobs.

The ministry said in a statement that Europe was facing an energy and economic crisis due to the European Union's sanctions policy against Russia. Though the energy supply problems seen across most of the continent do not yet affect Hungary, "our country, too, must confront the prospect of a drastic rise in energy prices," the ministry said. Most people are conscious of their energy consumption at home, and the same attitude is required at the workplace in order for the government to be able to



prolong the measures it has introduced to protect families, they said. The statement noted that the government has mandated public institutions and state-owned companies to cut their gas consumption by 25 percent as an energy-saving measure.

In order to ensure that this target can be reached, all budgetary entities of the cultural and innovation ministry will prepare an energy conservation action plan by Sept. 22, the statement said. Each institution will be required to appoint an officer in charge of energy conservation who will report to the ministry, it added.

MENCZER: DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER 'ATTACKED HUNGARY' IN INTERVIEW

The Dutch foreign minister has "attacked Hungary" in an interview, Tamás Menczer, the foreign ministry state secretary for bilateral relations said on Tuesday. Menczer said on Facebook that Wopke Hoekstra had relied on "the European Parliament's lies" and expressed concern about the state of the rule of law in Hungary, saying that the rule of law and Europe's shared values were in danger, and said the plight of the judiciary and the free press in Hungary were "awful". Menczer said in response that the state of the rule of law in the Netherlands itself gave cause for concern. The country has seen hundreds of anti-Semitic crimes

each year since 2019, some 80% of journalists "receive threats", and the state secretary for migration had to resign after concealing grave crimes committed by migrants, he said. It would be reasonable for the European Parliament to call a meeting immediately and have a report prepared about the state of the rule of law in the Netherlands, he said. It would also be reasonable that the Dutch foreign minister should deal with Hungary only after restoring order in his own country, he added.

GOVT OFFICIAL GREETES POLICE UNITS LEAVING TO SERVE IN N MACEDONIA

While the world is focusing on the Russia-Ukraine war, the dangers of illegal migration have strengthened rather than abated, a state secretary of the interior ministry said in Budapest on Tuesday, greeting the police unit leaving to serve in North Macedonia. In his speech to the 77th Hungarian police contingent, Bence Rétvári noted that 178,000 illegal entries had been thwarted on Hungary's southern border so far this year. Last year saw 122,000 attempts altogether, he said. Therefore, "it makes sense" to work on stopping illegal migration before it reaches Hungary, further along the Balkan route, he said. Security is important for all Hungarians, who have "clearly stated multiple times that they see illegal migration as a danger," Retvari said.

LMP: STATE-RUN SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS DISCRIMINATED

Certain state-run social institutions suffer discrimination and opposition LMP will launch a petition demanding equal per capita support to be paid to state-run social institutions as those currently paid to church-run facilities, the party's co-leader said on Tuesday.

Péter Ungár said in line with an agreement between Hungary and the Vatican, church-run social institutions get 1.8-times higher per capita payment than state-run institutions. Increased public utility fees cause great problems to the operators of social institutions and several state-run institutions have additional issues, such as allocating the required funding for food, he added. Social services are the task of state but over the past twelve years, efforts have been made to delegate them to churches. Withdrawal of the state from the field causes serious problems and the difference in per capita payments represents the most discriminative aspect, Ungár said.

PÁRBESZÉD PROPOSES SETTING UP ANTI-CORRUPTION PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

The opposition Parbeszed has submitted a draft to parliament proposing the setting up of an anti-corruption prosecutor's office, the

party's group leader said on Tuesday. Bence Tordai told an online press conference that the government had submitted on Monday its amendment proposals in an effort to receive European Union funding. A larger package is expected on Friday which will show "how far they are willing to go in order to discontinue governance based on corruption", he added.

Tordai said the cabinet's planned measures were "very weak" and "unlikely to fully satisfy the European Commission's expectations". "As a result, we have done the work that the government should have done and prepared a plan for an institutional framework that can really prevent and reveal corrupt criminal activities," he said. Párbeszéd has submitted a package of three proposals that detail the workings of an anti-corruption prosecutor's office, including an office for the protection of public interest, he said. The party proposes fighting corruption with the help of public reporting, he added.

JOBBIK DEMANDS MEASURES AGAINST IMPORTED LABOUR

The opposition Jobbik party has demanded that the government should introduce

quotas on the labour market and take measures against companies employing guest workers. Jobbik deputy leader Dániel Z. Kárpát told a press conference on Tuesday that the number of employees in Hungary "imported from outside the European Union" was now between 80,000-90,000, while the number of Hungarians with no jobs or benefits was now in the 100,000 range. Those Hungarian jobless could be offered retraining and they could fill the positions now occupied by non-Hungarians, he suggested. Z. Kárpát called on the government to stop giving grants to companies with over 10 percent of foreigners in their staff, as well as to impose a requirement of speaking at least basic Hungarian on "job seekers from far-away countries". Ruling Fidesz "systematically imports labour from the third world", the politician said, adding that the government was "keeping wages low and employees in a vulnerable position". Jobbik is planning to tender a proposal "to reduce the number of foreign job seekers in Hungary to a tolerable minimum".

UKRAINE CRISIS - SOME 10,000 REFUGEES ARRIVE FROM UKRAINE ON MONDAY

Fully 5,438 people crossed into Hungary directly from Ukraine on Monday, while another 4,787 from Ukraine crossed from Romania, the national police headquarters (ORFK) said. Police issued temporary residence permits valid for thirty days to 223 people, ORFK told MTI on Tuesday. 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.

NEXT YEAR'S HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX TO BE HELD ON JULY 23

Next year's Formula 1 Hungarian Grand Prix will take place on July 23, according to the world championship calendar released by the Federation Internationale d'Automobile (FIA), the international motorsport governing body, on Tuesday. The calendar featuring 24 events has been approved by e-vote by Members of the World Motor Sport Council (WMSC), FIA said on its website. The race will be hosted at the Hungaroring track in Mogyorod in the outskirts of Budapest. The Hungarian Grand Prix is set to remain on the Formula 1 calendar until 2027.