

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó at the inauguration of a youth counselling centre built with Hungarian support in Addis Ababa

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Events related to the war in Ukraine**

**EU environment ministers hold informal meeting in Stockholm**

**European Parliament holds plenary session**

**Regional working group of Forum of Hungarian Lawmakers from the Carpathian Basin meets**

## TOP STORY

# SZIJJÁRTÓ: WAR IN UKRAINE HAS ONLY LOSERS

The war in Ukraine has only losers because people are dying in this war, "so speaking about a winner in this context does not make sense", Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó told the BBC.

"We want this war to be finished, to be stopped as soon as possible because this war takes place in our neighbourhood", and the impacts of the war are "immediate and severe", Szijjártó said on an episode of BBC's HardTalk. A significant Hungarian community lives in the western part of Ukraine, whose members are dying in this war, he said. "They are mobilised to the Ukrainian army and many of them are being deployed to the frontlines and many of them die," he added. "What we would like to see is an immediate ceasefire, we want a peace agreement to be reached finally which would stop killing innocent people," he said. "Our position is absolutely clear since the very beginning of this war. We condemn the war in the strongest possible way. We stand up for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine without any kind of doubt," he added. If the war escalates, even more will die, he said. "It would be very bad if NATO took part in this conflict," Szijjártó said, arguing that it would mean a "third world war the next day".

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## **SZIJJÁRTÓ: SUPPORT TO AFRICA KEY TO STOPPING MIGRATION TO EUROPE**

Supporting Africa is key to improving the quality of life in countries at the root of illegal migration to Europe, and so to stopping rather than managing illegal migration, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Addis Ababa on Tuesday.

A Hungarian-Ethiopian agreement in the works on economic cooperation and the elimination of double taxation is part of that effort, Szijjártó said. The root causes of migration have become stronger in recent years, mirrored in the growing migration pressure in Europe which the European Union's measures have failed to address, Szijjártó said. Since EU policies "inspire one migration wave after the other, cooperation has become a priority with African countries willing and able to keep young citizens home, who are also of key importance for the future of their homeland," he said. Cooperation between Hungary and Ethiopia aims to help the latter country in retaining its citizens, he said. Hungary will double the number of university scholarships for Ethiopian students next year, to 100, he said. Hungarian companies are also playing an important role in the development of Ethiopian agriculture, and in digitalisation, he said.

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## **HUNGARY, SOUTH KOREA SIGN MOU**

Hungary and South Korea signed a memorandum of understanding on boosting their trade and investment

development cooperation on Tuesday. Hungary counts on South Korea as a partner in shifting its labour-intensive economy to a knowledge-intensive economy, Levente Magyar, the foreign ministry's parliamentary state secretary, said after signing the document. South Korea has become one of Hungary's most important foreign trade partners and a leading foreign investor over the past years, Magyar said. The government is working towards ensuring that South Korean companies that already have an industrial base in Hungary create high value-added production here, he said. Magyar noted that some 1,000 South Korean students study at Hungarian universities, most of them studying medicine. The two countries are working to deepen cooperation between their universities, he said.

Youngjin Jang, vice minister for trade, industry and energy, said Hungary is for South Korea of outstanding importance which is reflected by the fact that Hungary was the first country with which it established diplomatic ties. The two countries "elevated their economic ties to a strategic level in 2021", he said. The agreement signed on Tuesday is aimed at expanding the fields of cooperation to include car manufacturing, electronics, biotechnology and medicine, Jang said.

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## **SZIJJÁRTÓ: YOUTH CENTRE BUILT WITH HUNGARIAN SUPPORT INAUGURATED IN ETHIOPIA**

A youth counselling centre built in part from funds contributed by the Hungarian government has been inaugurated in

Ethiopia, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Addis Ababa on Tuesday. Hungary contributed 160 million forints (EUR 429,000) to the construction of the centre that will enable young people in Ethiopia to stay in and return to their homeland, Szijjártó told the inauguration ceremony, according to a ministry statement. The minister underscored the importance of supporting local communities so that they can remain in or return to "their homeland of hundreds of years or more". "Our basic principle is that help should be taken where it is needed rather than bringing problems where there aren't any yet," Szijjártó said. Europe has been facing strong migration pressure in the recent period, which poses serious security challenges to migrants' countries of origin, transit countries and their destination countries, he said. Migration should be prevented rather than encouraged, he said, and called for creating the circumstances that will enable people to remain in their homeland. This is what Hungary is doing in some fifty countries worldwide, most of them in Africa, Szijjártó said, adding that Hungary was prepared to keep financing such projects in the future, too.

As a country with one thousand years of Christian statehood, Hungary feels responsibility for all Christians, Szijjártó said, adding that Christianity was the most persecuted religion in the world today. He said it was frustrating that this issue was not getting the attention it needed, while Muslim countries were putting significant emphasis on fighting Islamophobia and supporting Muslim communities. This, he added, raised the question as to why the governments of Christian countries "are

not brave enough" to display a similarly firm stance, saying that many took a "hypocritical and unreasonable" position on the issue.

### **GOVT OFFICIAL: UKRAINIAN GRAIN TRANSPORTS BEING MONITORED**

Grain transports from Ukraine are being checked and sealed at the border, and only those in transit to other countries are allowed to enter Hungary, a state secretary of the agriculture ministry said at the border crossing at Záhony, in northeast Hungary, on Tuesday. After reviewing the implementation of the ban on Ukrainian grain imports, which the government announced on Saturday, Márton Nobilis said the transports were monitored throughout their journey across Hungary. "Our aim is to protect Hungarian farmers from Ukrainian grain flooding the country," he said, adding that the ministry was mulling an extension of the ban to other food products.

### **BISHOPS' CONFERENCE: POPE FRANCIS TO URGE PEACE IN UKRAINE DURING HUNGARY VISIT**

The call for peace in Ukraine will be one of the central topics of the speeches Pope Francis will deliver during his visit to Hungary next weekend, Csaba Török, governor of the Esztergom parish and press officer of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference, told reporters in Rome on Tuesday. The pontiff's speeches

and homilies will likely contain a "strong message" in connection with the war, Török said. He noted that Pope Francis had been working to mediate between the warring sides since the start of the conflict. Török said Pope Francis's visit to Hungary will have a "political message", adding, at the same time, that the moment of rapprochement between the pope and the Patriarch of Moscow would not happen in Budapest. He did not rule out, however, that representatives of the churches of Kyiv and Moscow would be present during Francis's visit.

He noted that on the occasion of the closing mass of the 52nd International Eucharistic Congress in Budapest in 2021, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán presented Francis as a gift a copy of the letter Hungarian King Béla IV wrote to Pope Innocent IV in the 13th century. The prime minister's gesture was an intention to establish a relationship with the pope to protect Christianity, he added. The Hungarian government also considers itself an ally of the Vatican when it comes to urging peace in Ukraine, Török said. Pope Francis will pay a visit to Hungary between April 28 and 30.

### **FIDESZ MEP: 'SLOW FUND DISTRIBUTION' TO COMPROMISE EUROPE'S COMPETITIVENESS**

The European Union is jeopardising its competitiveness through a "slow distribution of recovery funds", Enikő Győri, MEP of Hungary's ruling Fidesz, said on Tuesday. Speaking in a debate

of the European Parliament's budget committee, Győri raised concern that the European Commission had only distributed 20% of the funds "during one third of the time available" for the process. Citing soaring energy prices, inflation, as well as the negative impacts of a US law "luring green projects [from Europe to the US]", Győri said "Europe cannot afford to be so slow". Győri also slammed the EU for its "applying double standards against Hungary" and suggested that Hungary and Poland "could be expected to meet more criteria than other members before funds are made available".

### **GOVT OFFICIAL ATTENDS MARCH OF THE LIVING COMMEMORATION IN AUSCHWITZ**

The Holocaust was one of the greatest tragedies of Hungarian Jews and Hungarian history, a state secretary of the Prime Minister's Office said at the March of the Living commemoration at the former German concentration camp in Auschwitz, Poland. The Hungarian delegation led by Csaba Latorcai also held a commemoration in front of building I.18, the site of an exhibition dedicated to Hungarian victims. The commemoration is held at a time of unrest in the world, he said. Besides the war in Ukraine, "we see religious intolerance growing in western Europe, in the name of cancel culture," Latorcai said. Anti-Semitism is still present in the world in the 21st

century, and joint action against it is the only way to stand up against it, he said. The March of the Living commemoration was held on the 80th anniversary of the anti-Nazi uprising in the Warsaw ghetto, and drew some 10,000 young people.

### **COMPETITION WATCHDOGS SIGN COOPERATION PACT**

Competition authorities in the region have signed a cooperation agreement in Warsaw, Hungary's Competition Office (GVH) said on Tuesday. The agreement was signed by GVH's peers in Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Moldova and Ukraine. The cooperation aims to support more effective responses to economic challenges, including tools authorities may use to bring down inflation. It involves the creation of a platform for sharing experience and best practices. The authorities will set

up joint working groups and training programmes in future, while their executives will meet once a year to discuss common policy goals.

### **OVER 10,000 UKRAINE REFUGEES ENTER HUNGARY ON MONDAY**

Fully 4,326 refugees entered Hungary at the Ukraine-Hungary border on Monday, while 5,698 came to the country via Romania, according to the national police headquarters (ORFK). Police issued temporary residence permits valid for 30 days to 34 people, ORFK said on Tuesday.

### **JAZZFEST BUDAPEST TO FEATURE MUSICIANS FROM 23 COUNTRIES**

Jazzfest Budapest will feature musicians from 23 countries on five continents between April 26 and May 17, as part of the Budapest

Spring Festival. The second Jazzfest Budapest will be opened by US singer Lizz Wright with a concert at the Eiffel Art Studios which will be one of the ten venues offering events. Internationally acclaimed Hungarian jazz musicians including Tamara Mózes, Kornél Mogyoró, Miklós Lukács, Mihály Borbély and Krisztián Oláh will also perform. The list of venues will include the Music Academy, Erkel Theatre and the Italian Institute, and an open-air stage at Madách Square which will offer concerts on April 30, marking International Jazz Day. Besides the Italian Institute, the Czech Institute has also offered its support, bringing acts to the festival at their own cost, founder Attila Kleb told a press conference on Tuesday. The international jazz stars on the programme will also include Anouar Brahem, Avishai Cohen, Stacey Kent and Stanley Clarke, he said.