

PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Szilárd Koszticsák

World champion wrestler Dávid Losonczy

UPCOMING EVENTS

Events linked to wars in Ukraine, Israel

TOP STORY

SZIJJÁRTÓ: MOROCCO PARTNER AGAINST MIGRATION

Unlike the European Union with its “irresponsible policies”, Morocco is a partner Hungary can continue to rely on in the fight against illegal migration, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Rabat on Wednesday.

With the multitude of security challenges faced by Europe, Hungary greatly appreciates its partners that can contribute to improving the situation, rather than make it worse, Szijjártó told a joint press conference with his Moroccan counterpart, Nasser Bourita, according to a ministry statement. There are armed conflicts on the continent as well as in its direct neighbourhood, while migration pressure is continuously rising and becoming increasingly difficult to manage because of the EU’s “completely irresponsible” policy, Szijjártó said.

He said the EU this year saw a record number of illegal entry attempts on its external borders, adding that Hungary, too, had registered 173,000 illegal border crossing attempts since the beginning of the year. “We consider Morocco a bastion of defence of European security,” Szijjártó said. “We owe Morocco our gratitude for its efforts to keep migration at bay, the steps it has taken in the interest of the region’s stability, and ... because of its firm actions against terrorism.”

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SZIJJÁRTÓ: EUROPE, AFRICA SHOULD STEP UP ANTI-TERRORISM COOPERATION

Africa and Europe should strengthen cooperation in the fight against terrorism, as European security strongly depends on that of Africa, the foreign minister said in Rabat on Wednesday. Speaking at the local United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), Péter Szijjártó said European security was the weakest since the Cold War, having to face a war in Ukraine and one in Israel amid a growing threat of terrorism. Europe has also seen a “massive flood of immigrants” in the past eight years, he said. Hungary thwarted 230,000 illegal entry attempts last year and 173,000 so far this year, he said. He slammed the EU migration policy as “irresponsible” for “practically encouraging illegal immigration” and handling the protection of external borders as a human rights issue rather than a security one, he said. Hungarians see a robust and strict border protection as a necessity, an issue of sovereignty as well as security, Szijjártó said, adding that Hungary considered illegal migration a crime and an attack on its sovereignty.

Szijjártó said terrorism and the “massive migration waves” created a vicious circle. Terrorism is both a root cause and consequence of migration, as terrorists may hide in the masses to travel around the world, he said.

He said illegal migration had resulted in the growing threat of terrorism, creating “parallel societies” in several European countries, “no-go zones where the police can’t keep the order, and gang wars have become more frequent.”

Hungary has a vested interest in the successful fight against terrorism due to the double security challenge it is facing, one posed by the war in Ukraine and one through migration along the Western Balkan route, he said. At the same time, the fight against terrorism is a global responsibility, he said, calling it “unacceptable” that the UN covered only 3% of UNOCT’s budget, expecting member states to make up the rest. He said he supported the Secretary-General’s proposal to increase funding.

Budapest is home to the second largest UNOCT office employing 24 experts, Szijjártó said. Hungary is also part of a programme aiming to filter out potential terrorists, he added. The fight against terrorism cannot succeed without Africa, and European security starts with that of Africa, he said.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: AFRICAN SOURCES CRUCIAL FOR OVERCOMING EUROPEAN ENERGY CRISIS

Europe needs to make use of African energy sources in order to overcome its energy crisis, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Tangier on Wednesday, adding that this required infrastructure developments. Hungary is urging the

European Union to consider Africa a partner with whom cooperation is the interest of not just Africans but also Europeans, Szijjártó said at a panel discussion at the international MEDays Forum, according to a ministry statement. Hungary will be “very active” in its support for African infrastructure developments in Brussels, the minister said. Szijjártó said the construction of the planned EastMed gas pipeline would be crucial not just to Africa, but Europe as well, arguing that energy cooperation was impossible without infrastructure developments. Hungarians, he said, believed connectivity and global cooperation were the answer to the challenges faced by the world. Communication channels should be kept open, he said, underlining the importance of “leaving behind the idea of colonialism”. He said an absence of physical links could be “destructive” when it came to economic and trade ties. Szijjártó said that when the countries of the central European region had recognised that connectivity led to “success stories”, everything had become much easier, and relations among them had improved. He said infrastructure developments were the key to economic growth in Africa. Europe has a vested interest in developing Africa, the minister said, arguing that if the continent’s economic circumstances did not improve, Europe would not be able to manage the mass influx of immigrants from there. This was why, he said, it was crucial to promote

European investments in Africa. He said Hungary was prepared to contribute its advanced water management technologies which it has already provided to Ghana, Uganda, Rwanda and Kenya. Hungarian companies have also been tasked with a 600 million dollar project to develop public road links in Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he said.

GOVT SUBMITS COMPREHENSIVE LEGISLATION TIGHTENING IMMIGRATION

The government has submitted to parliament a draft law that would tighten regulation on immigration, the interior ministry said in a statement on Wednesday. The measure was prompted by mass migration, the statement said. "Hungary belongs to Hungarians and they are the ones primarily entitled to the jobs here," it said. The legislation aims to determine who is entitled to live in Hungary and the time they are allowed to spend here, the statement said. Residence in the country will not be unlimited and foreigners won't be able to prolong it automatically. The proposed legislation will also determine the legal requirements and conditions to foreigners' residence and employment in Hungary, it said. Those failing to adhere to Hungarian laws and regulations will have to leave immediately or will be expelled, the statement said. Foreigners may take on jobs only if there are no Hungarian

applicants for the position. The number of guest workers brought in may not exceed the number of vacancies. Their residence will be for a limited time only, the ministry said. Foreign citizens will be allowed in Hungary only if the requirements, legal grounds, time frame and conditions set by the Hungarian state are observed, the statement said. Third-country citizens will be allowed long-term residence and employment only with the express permission of the state, and only if their presence "serves the interests of Hungarian society and does not put even a single Hungarian citizen at a disadvantage," it said.

BÓKA CALLS FOR 'STRATEGIC DEBATE' ON EU POLICY ON UKRAINE

The European Union's Ukraine policy needs to be shaped through "a period of considering options and holding a strategic debate", Hungary's minister for EU affairs said in Brussels on Wednesday. János Bóka said ahead of a meeting of EU affairs ministers that "without a strategic debate, we are not in a position to make decisions on further steps in Ukraine's accession or the review of the multiannual financial framework."

He said the debate would need to show the results the EU's strategy of supporting Ukraine had yielded so far, including the resources provided, how those resources had been used and results achieved, and strategies of overcoming difficulties. The sustainability of the EU's strategy should

also be up for debate, he said. The EU had built its course of action on the assumption that Ukraine would win the war and prompt a political reshuffle in Moscow, he said. Should that presumption become untenable, the EU should outline an alternative strategy with the aim of creating a functional security system in Europe, he said. At the same time, the country report of the European Commission has also said that Ukraine hadn't fulfilled all requirements to acquire EU membership candidate status, let alone to start accession talks, he said. The European Council has said earlier that the accession process may advance only if those requirements had been fully met, he added.

Bóka welcomed the EC decision to offer candidate status to Georgia, and said the Georgian government had done much to fulfil all requirements. The EU's enlargement is now taking place in the Western Balkans and in the east, Bóka said, calling for speeding up the former and for "careful consideration on the eastern front".

After the meeting, Bóka said the EU should start assessing "how successful its strategy concerning Ukraine has been". He told the Hungarian press that the assessment should cover "how the aid provided so far has been used", if it was sustainable and if there were alternatives. He said the results of such an assessment would put the bloc in a position to make decisions concerning Ukraine's EU integration as well as further aid to that country.

Concerning EU enlargement, Bóka said the Hungarian government wanted

to see “an appropriate political balance between the enlargement processes of the Western Balkans and of countries in the east”. The Western Balkans region is a priority for Hungary, the minister said. He added that integrating the Western Balkans would “not involve fundamental institutional or budgetary changes, therefore it is not necessary to tie Western Balkans integration to institutional reforms”. Concerning preparations for an upcoming European Council meeting with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on its agenda, Bóka said the council “must not adopt a closing statement failing to stipulate that hostages held by the [Hamas] terrorist organisation must be released immediately and unconditionally.” “That should also be a prerequisite for the European Union to join any international declaration or initiative,” he added. Bóka said the council meeting’s agenda would also include a review of the EU’s budget. Hungary, he said, would want to see a mechanism outside the budget framework rather than one included in it to provide aid to Ukraine. “That would facilitate flexibility for member states, international financial institutions and other parties in contributing to aid for Ukraine,” the minister added.

GOVT TO TIGHTEN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION RULES FOR FACTORIES

In an effort to fulfil environmental protection targets, the energy affairs ministry will tighten emission thresholds

for factories and the plans have been published for social consultation, the ministry said on Wednesday. Coordination talks with the national Environmental Protection Council and the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry have also been initiated, the statement added. The government expects all investors to observe environmental protection, work safety and other regulations connected to their activities and the authorities regularly check that rules are obeyed, the ministry said. Based on the experiences of authorities and observations by members of the public, the ministry has reviewed the emission thresholds of factories and proposed to tighten them.

AGMIN: AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED ON TIGHTENING ARABLE LAND PROTECTION, SUPPORTING IRRIGATION

The agriculture ministry has submitted to parliament draft amendments to 24 laws regulating agriculture with the aim to tighten the protection of arable land, support farming using irrigation and reducing the administrative burdens on farmers, István Nagy, the minister, said in a statement on Wednesday. The amendments on arable land include incentives for boosting brown-field investments and increasing the land contribution as well as the land protection fine, according to the statement. The amendments also include increasing the size of land under irrigation and maintaining those

that already use the technology, the minister said, adding that selling these plots for other type of use will be banned with the exception of investments supporting irrigation. They also include upping the budget of the fund for agriculture damage compensation using prospective EU resources in response to an increasing number of applications by farmers hit by weather extremities, as well as reducing the administrative burdens of seed producers and anglers, said Nagy in the statement.

GOVT TO LAUNCH HUF 2.9 BN SUBSIDY SCHEME FOR AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS

The government will launch a 2.9 billion forint (EUR 7.7m) subsidy scheme to boost the share of local suppliers to big automotive and battery industry companies in Hungary, state secretary for industrial policy Gergely Fábián said on Wednesday. The scheme will launch as a pilot programme in 2023 and the full scale of support will be made available from 2024, Fábián said. The programme is the product of cooperation with the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MKIK), he added. The subsidies will be available to businesses with headcounts over 250.

FIDESZ MEP CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE PEACE IN UKRAINE

The war in Ukraine has strongly affected ethnic Hungarians in the country’s

Transcarpathia region, they are deeply concerned over drafting to the army and the future of education in their mother tongue, Andrea Bocskor, a Fidesz MEP for the region, said in a statement on Wednesday. Bocskor said that in her address at the 8th Transcarpathia day hosted by the Hungarian Liszt Institute in Brussels she pointed out the Hungarian community's concerns and underlined the importance of ending the war and brokering peace as soon as possible. She said that the event gave an opportunity to call attention to the situation of Transcarpathian Hungarians, "the hardship of their daily life in the shadow of the war" as well as to present "a piece" of their fine art and theatre in Brussels. "It is important that Brussels should not forget about the issue of the rights of Transcarpathian Hungarians and other national minorities in Ukraine," she said.

László Brenzovics, leader of the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Sub-Carpathia (KMKSZ), said the survival of the region's community could be owed to the work and efforts of many people. Tamás Iván Kovács, Hungary's ambassador for Belgium and Luxemburg, said that the importance of the Hungarian nation had increased since the outbreak of the Ukraine-Russia war. "Being Hungarian, belonging to the Hungarian nation is not only a matter of nationality and not even of citizenship," the ambassador said. He said that it was the language, culture and "common feeling" that created cohesion among Hungarians, calling Transcarpathian Hungarians highly important in the process.

OFFICIAL PROMISES CONTINUED SUPPORT TO ETHNIC KIN ON HUNGARIAN DIASPORA DAY

Hungarians living in diaspora will continue to get protection and support, an official at the Prime Minister's Office department for Hungarian communities abroad said on Wednesday, marking Hungarian Diaspora Day. The Hungarian parliament declared the date as Hungarian Diaspora Day in 2015, as November 15 marks the birthday and death of Gábor Bethlen, a 17th century king of Hungary and prince of Transylvania. The aim of Hungarian Diaspora Day is to draw attention to ethnic Hungarian communities that "preserve their national ties and enrich the present of Hungary", Árpád János Potápi said on Facebook. Ever since 2010, the government has been working to ensure that even the smallest ethnic Hungarian communities are "strong bastions of the nation" and has helped numerous investment and development projects over 13 years, he added.

DUIHK SURVEY SHOWS FEWER COMPANIES PLAN INVESTMENTS, NEW HIRES

The latest survey of business sentiment conducted by the German-Hungarian Chamber of Industry and Commerce (DUIHK) shows fewer companies have plans to invest or expand their payroll as outlooks sour. The survey of 209 companies conducted in October

showed that 34% expected their own business situation to worsen, while just 18% expected improvement. In the previous survey, conducted in the spring, 28% expected an improvement and 26% deterioration. Around 37% of companies said they planned to cut back on capital expenditures and just 25% signalled growing CAPEX. The ratio of companies planning to spend less on investments exceeded that of businesses boosting spending for the first time in ten years, DUIHK noted. The share of companies planning layoffs (21%) also exceeded the share that plan new hires (18%) for the first time in a decade. Companies counted weakening demand, the shortage of trained workers and higher labour costs among business risks they face.

MORE THAN 8,000 UKRAINIAN CITIZENS ENTER HUNGARY ON TUESDAY

Fully 4,308 Ukrainian citizens entered Hungary at the Ukraine-Hungary border on Tuesday, while 4,059 came to the country via Romania, according to the national police headquarters (ORFK). Police issued temporary residence permits valid for 30 days to 54 people, ORFK said on Wednesday.

INTERNATIONAL VESZPRÉM JAZZ FESTIVAL TO START ON THURSDAY

The Veszprém Jazz Festival to be held as part of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023

European Capital of Culture scheme will feature international stars, experimental performances crossing musical boundaries, as well as young Hungarian jazz musicians playing between Thursday and Sunday. The festival in the western Hungarian city will kick off with Swiss trumpet player Erik Truffaz, US guitarist Erik Truffaz and French drummer of Ivorian descent Manu Katche playing on Thursday. The programme will also include Swiss drummer Jojo Mayer, US group Scary Pockets, the international supergroup Nils Landgren 4WD, Germany's Boticelli Baby, British band The New Mastersounds, as well as Hungary's Kéknyúl and the Emma Nagy Quintet. The concerts will be held in central Veszprém, at the Hangvilla, Expresszó, and Papírkutya Kultúrbisztró.

Veszprém was awarded the UNESCO City of Music title in 2019, and a highlighted goal of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture scheme is to promote a wide

range of musical styles and present local musicians from the region in addition to international stars. As a result, the Veszprém Jazz Festival will feature several Hungarian musicians at the Hangvilla Café and students of the Snétberger Foundation will give free concerts at the Papírkutya Kultúrbisztró. Exhibitions by photographer Attila Kleb and the makers of Blasius bass guitars will also be shown during the festival.

CULTURE MINISTER COMMEMORATES ST MARGARET OF SCOTLAND

Saint Margaret of Scotland, who was born in Hungary, creates a bond between people even today, the minister of culture and innovation said in Edinburgh on Tuesday evening. Addressing a gala dinner held in honour of the 11th century queen of Scotland in the New Club, János Csák said that although Saint Margaret had died 930 years ago, "she still lives on

and is here with us". She was a healer and peacemaker, not only in times of war, but in terms of religion as well, one who offered new solutions to old problems, the minister said. "Saint Margaret of Scotland was a true Hungarian and a true Scot, and she will remain with us forever if we nurture her memory", he said. Margaret's mother, Ágota, was the daughter of Saint Stephen, Hungary's first king. Her father, Edward, was an English prince, who took refuge in Hungary. Margaret was born in Réka Castle, next to Mecseknádasd, in 1046 and studied in the Benedictine school of Pécsvárad. Later on the family returned to England but, after the Norman invasion, they had to flee again, to Scotland. Margaret married King Malcolm III Canmore of Scotland and had merits in the establishment of the Scottish Catholic church and in changing the barbarian customs of the royal court. She was canonized in 1251 on account of her benefactions to the Church.