

PHOTO OF THE DAY



PM Viktor Orbán delivers his address at the Bálványos Summer University in Băile Tușnad, Romania

UPCOMING EVENTS

Events related to Hungary's EU presidency

Events related to the war in Ukraine

TOP STORY

ORBÁN: EUROPE MUST DITCH PRO-WAR STANCE

Europe will be left on its own to handle the war in Ukraine if it does not ditch its pro-war stance, Viktor Orbán said in his address at the Bálványos Summer University in Băile Tușnad, Romania.

The prime minister said the "pro-peace position" was "fermenting". Many people in Brussels, however, had condemned Hungary's peace mission, even though the bloc's founding treaty stated that "the Union's aim is to promote peace". Orbán said: "Time is on the side of the politics of peace." Referring to the upcoming US presidential election, he declared: "Trump ante portas." If Europe did not shift to a "peace policy" by the time of the November election, it would have to do so after Trump's victory, "admitting defeat" and bearing the political consequences alone. Brussels "doesn't like it when we call what they do a pro-war policy, because they think they're supporting the war in the interest of peace." Since the start of Hungary's "peace mission", however, the US secretary of state had spoken with Russia's foreign minister, and the Swiss foreign minister had also held talks with him. Volodymyr Zelensky had called Donald Trump and the Ukrainian foreign minister had visited Beijing, he said. "We're moving away from a European pro-war policy in the direction of a pro-peace policy."

ORBÁN: PEACE MUST BE BROKERED

If it were up to Ukraine and Russia, there would never be peace, so peace can only come from the outside, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in his address at the Bálványos Summer University in Băile Tuşnad, Romania. Both sides, he added, were taking “brutal” losses, “yet neither wants to reach a settlement”. He said this was because both Ukraine and Russia believed that they could win and were fuelled by their own “perceived or real truth”. Orbán said the Ukrainians saw the war as a Russian invasion that violated international law and their territorial sovereignty, and that they were defending themselves and fighting a war of independence. The Russians, on the other hand, believed that there had been “serious NATO military developments in Ukraine”, that the country had been promised NATO membership, and they did not want to see either the alliance’s troops or weapons on the Russia-Ukraine border, he said. Russia therefore believed it had a right to self-defence and that the war had been provoked. “So everyone has some kind of perceived or real truth, and neither side will give up the war,” he said. “This is a straight path to escalation,” he said, stressing that there would be no peace if it were left up to the two warring sides. “Peace can only come from the outside,” Orbán said.

He said that while in recent years the US had declared China to be

its main challenger and opponent, “we’re still seeing that it’s fighting a proxy war against Russia and constantly accusing China of covertly supporting Russia.” “If that’s true, then it begs the question as to why it’s rational to put two such large countries in the same enemy camp,” he said. Orbán also emphasised Ukraine’s defiance of expectations in terms of its resilience, which he attributed to Ukraine getting “a flash of the perspective of belonging to the West” instead of being a buffer state. Meanwhile, the prime minister said Russia “isn’t the firm neo-Stalinist autocracy the Brussels leaders trying to bring it to its knees with sanctions are trying to make it out to be, either”. Rather, he said, it was a country that was showing technical and economic, “and eventually, perhaps, social” flexibility.

ORBÁN UNVEILS ‘HUNGARIAN GRAND STRATEGY’

Changes in the world order are under way and Asia will be at its centre, so a “Hungarian grand strategy” is both needed and in the pipeline, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in his address at the Bálványos Summer University in Băile Tuşnad, Romania. Orbán said European politics “has collapsed”, arguing that Europe had relinquished the protection of its own interests. “Europe is currently following the politics of the US Democratic Party

unconditionally, even at the cost of self-destruction,” he said, adding that sanctions imposed on Russia were hurting European interests, raising energy prices and making the European economy uncompetitive. Orbán said the European system of powers had so far been based on a “Paris-Berlin axis”, but this no longer existed, or had at least “become irrelevant and evadable” compared with the “new power centre” comprising London, Warsaw, Kyiv and the Baltic and Scandinavian states. He said the idea of replacing the Paris-Berlin axis was not a new one but rather “an old Polish plan” that involved Poland becoming the continent’s main American base. This, he added, required “calling the Americans in there, between the Germans and the Russians”. But this, he added, could only be made a reality owing to the current war. “This is an old plan: weaken Russia and surpass Germany,” Orbán said, insisting that Poland was pursuing the “most deceitful politics” in Europe, arguing that “they’re obviously doing business with the Russians while morally lecturing us for doing the same thing”. He said Poland had abandoned the Visegrad cooperation in order to pursue this strategy as the V4, besides accepting the Paris-Berlin axis, acknowledged that “Germany is strong, Russia is strong, and between the two, in cooperation with the central European states, we form a third component”.

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The prime minister said Hungary's "peace mission", besides aiming for peace, was also about urging Europe to "finally pursue a policy of its own". Orbán said the West had drifted into "intellectual loneliness", arguing that until now it had seen itself as a point of reference, or a global standard, because it had been the one to contribute the values such as liberal democracy and the green transition, which the world had to accept. "But this situation has taken a 180-degree turn over the last two years" Orbán said, arguing that although the West had once again told the world to take a more determined stance against Russia, the reality was that "slowly everyone is supporting Russia". He said it was unsurprising that countries like North Korea and China were backing Russia, but Iran, India and even NATO-member Türkiye had joined them, and the Muslim world also saw Russia as a partner.

Orbán said the biggest problem in the world was "the weakness and disintegration of the West", as well as the Western media narrative that Russia was the biggest danger for the world. "This is a mistake," he said, arguing that Russia's leadership was "hyper-rational, comprehensible and predictable", unlike the West's "irrational and unpredictable" actions. He said Hungary's task was to try to understand the West again. Central Europe's worldview lay in the idea of nation states, while the West "believes that they no longer

exist", he added. Also, the West, he said, thought differently about issues such as migration. While hundreds of thousands of Christians were killing each other in Europe's east, hundreds of thousands of people from "foreign civilisations" were being allowed into the western parts of the continent. He said the EU "not only thinks this way, but also declares it", and their objective was to "transcend nations" and transpose their sovereignty to Brussels.

A similar battle was taking place in the United States, he said, so the stakes in the US presidential election "are enormous". Orbán said Donald Trump, the Republican presidential candidate, wanted to bring the American people back from the "post-national liberal condition" to the "national condition". Opposition to this endeavour was behind moves to thwart Trump's candidacy, he said. "This is why they want to put him in prison, why they're stripping him of his wealth, and if that doesn't work, this is why they wanted to kill him," Orbán said, adding that the "dramatic, democracy-shaking" political consequence of the post-national condition was the political problem of elitism and populism. He said the elites "condemn the people for drifting towards the right" and labelled the people's feelings and thoughts "xenophobic, homophobic and nationalistic". Meanwhile, "the people", he said, suspected the elite of "sinking into some mindless globalism" instead of caring about

what mattered to them. He said this raised the problem of representative democracy: the elite, "even quite proudly", did not want to represent the people, leaving the people effectively disenfranchised. Orbán said the elites "only find the values held by degree-holders acceptable". This, he added, resulted in Brussels remaining "occupied by a liberal oligarchy". "This left-liberal elite is actually organising the Transatlantic elite, which isn't European but global, isn't made up of nation-states but is federal, and isn't democratic but political," the prime minister said.

ORBÁN: ASIA TO BE AT THE CENTRE OF THE WORLD ORDER

In the next decades Asia will be at the centre of the world order, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said in his address at the Bálványos Summer University in Băile Tușnad, Romania. "Europe can then decide whether it wants to be an open-air museum or a part of global competition," he said, adding that changes were now afoot that had not been seen in the past 500 years. Leading powers had come from the West over the past 150 years while change was now coming from Asia, he declared, citing Asia's "demographic, technological and capital" advantage in more and more areas. Orbán referred to Asia's military power and financial prowess, saying "the world's biggest companies will be Asian" and the best

universities and research institutes and largest stock exchanges would be based there. Orbán said former US president Donald Trump was seeking an American response to this state of affairs, and this represented America's "last chance" to remain as a world leader. The prime minister said that Europe had two options: to become an open-air museum in a "subordinated role to the US" or to follow French President Emmanuel Macron's proposal to achieve strategic autonomy and "enter the competition for changing the world order". Orbán insisted that it was feasible to recover Europe's ability to attract capital and implement big infrastructure developments, "especially in central Europe". "We need a European military alliance with strong European military industry," he said, adding that Europe must also be self-sufficient in terms of energy, for which nuclear power was indispensable. All this, he added, must be concluded after a post-war agreement with Russia is forged.

Orbán said changes in the current world order presented more of an opportunity than a danger, "and our room for manoeuvre is broader than at any time in the last 500 years". Orbán said that 500 years ago Europe had been a winner, while Hungary had been a loser of the previous global paradigm shift, arguing that whereas a new economic space had opened up for the western part of the continent, the Muslim conquests had turned Hungary into a war zone for a long period, which afterwards

had been forced to integrate into a German-Habsburg world. He said developments in the United States "are going favourably for us", adding, however, that he did not believe that the US could give Hungary "a better economic-political offer" than European Union membership could. "But if they can, we must take it into consideration," he said.

Orbán said China had given Hungary "the maximum it can offer" and considered Hungary's EU membership an asset, "unlike the Americans, who always imply that we should leave [the EU]." China's offer, he said, was that "we should participate in each other's modernisation", even if the differences in size should be kept in mind.

Given fundamental changes in the world order, a "Hungarian grand strategy" is needed, Orbán said. Policies for the period between 2010 and 2030 "will be carried out and completed", he said. "But given [epochal] changes in the world order, these won't be enough," he said, explaining that connectivity was key to Hungary's "grand strategy". He said Hungary must not find itself locked into either of the emerging Western or Eastern economies. "We must be present in both," he said. "We won't enter into a war against the East or into technical and commercial blockades," he added. Also, the strategy encompassed sovereignty rooted in economic foundations, he said, adding that this meant fostering domestic national champions, competitive medium-sized firms,

companies producing for the domestic market, and small and medium-sized enterprises. Orbán said several Hungarian national champions were competitive abroad in the banking sector, the energy sector, the food industry, the production of agricultural raw materials, IT, telecommunications, the media, the construction industry, real estate development, the pharmaceutical industry, military industry, logistics, and also "somewhat" in the knowledge industry via universities. He said the medium-sized enterprise sector was also competitive, and the Hungarian government will launch a large programme for SMEs in the 2025 "peace budget".

Orbán said bolstering Hungary's financial independence, reducing the debt stock to 30%, and turning the country into a regional creditor were key goals. This meant retaining the country's production capacities rather than turning into a service-centred economy, Orbán said. "We mustn't make the same mistake as the West of outsourcing manufacturing jobs to guest workers ... as this would lead to a barely stoppable social breakdown," he said. He emphasised the importance of Hungarian society's "solid and flexible social structure", and halting demographic decline. "We got off to a good start, but now we're stuck," he said. New momentum was needed, he said, and by 2035 "Hungary has to be demographically self-sustaining so that any idea of the population being replaced by migrants would



be out of the question". He said it was likely that tax discounts for children in 2025 would have to be doubled in a single year so as to regain demographic momentum. Orbán highlighted the importance of creating wealth and the financial independence of the middle class and preserving full employment, "and the key to this is maintaining the current relationship between work and Gypsies". "Work is available, but to live you need to work," he said.

Orbán said the Hungarian grand strategy would take another six months to ripen and evolve. The strategy "must be based on national foundations" and should include all Hungarians around the world, Orbán said. Support systems which underpin the stability and flexibility of Hungarian society, such as family support, must be spread out to all areas inhabited by Hungarians beyond the borders within the foreseeable future. He said Hungarian villages must be maintained. "The village is not a symbol of backwardness; city-level services must also be provided in villages, and cities must bear the financial burden of this," he said.

On the topic of protecting sovereignty, Orbán said it was important to protect national diversity, and as well as preserving the language it was vital to preserve religion, too, as without Christianity there would be no moral compass or guidance. Politics, he said, must be adapted to "our national character".

Freedom, he added, must be built internally. The personal freedom of Hungarians must be built as well as the freedom of the nation, he said. Order, he added, was not an intrinsic value but a condition for freedom. "Our opponents will say that instead of an independent national grand strategy, integration is needed. So they'll attack constantly... They'll question not only the grand strategy's content but its necessity, too. This fight must be taken up." Orbán said the strategy's success also depended on people in their twenties and thirties. "[We] must find brave, young fighters with the sentiment of the nation," he said.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: POLISH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL ISSUES SHARP RESPONSE TO PM'S TUSVÁNYOS SPEECH

Poland's foreign ministry state secretary has issued a "sharp response" to the Hungarian prime minister's speech at the Bálványos Summer University, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said on Sunday, adding that the Polish official's reaction proved the adage that "the truth hurts". "We have tolerated the provocations and hypocrisy of the incumbent Polish government for a long time for the sake of preserving 'Polish-Hungarian brotherhood', but we've had enough," Szijjártó said on Facebook. "While the current Polish government criticises and accuses

us of importing oil from Russia that is critical to keep the country running, if we take a good look at one of the biggest Russian oil company's list of buyers, we'll find the Poles on it," Szijjártó said. "And there wouldn't even be any problem with that because ultimately energy supply has a physical basis, but if this is how it has turned out, then they shouldn't be hypocritical and accuse others."

MENCZER: MANY YOUNG PEOPLE EXPECTED TO JOIN FIDESZ

Fidesz anticipates that lots of young people will join the ruling party having witnessed Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Tusványos speech, Tamás Menczer, the Fidesz head of communications, told public radio. He said 20-30 year-olds liked to rebel, "and the biggest way to rebel today is to be a patriot". Also, the left wing was bereft of political skills, he added. It was easy to see why the left-wing politicians were "screaming" after Orbán's speech on Saturday "as it is obvious they don't know how make such a speech", he said. "We have Viktor Orbán and an exceptionally strong political community. Young people tend to join whoever it is worthwhile joining," Menczer said.

Regarding heavy restrictions on the flow of Russian crude via Ukraine, he said that Kyiv's move undoubtedly amounted to blackmail, and a Ukrainian representative



had gone so far as to admit it. He called Ukraine's move "illegitimate and illegal", adding that Hungary expects Ukraine to comply with the EU association agreement which states that the energy supply of an EU member state must not be imperilled. The European Commission is expected to side with Slovakia and Hungary against a non-EU country, he said, and it would be acting in collaboration with Ukraine if it failed to do so. Menczer alluded to "pro-war collusion", saying that it was possible that the restrictions may have been suggested to Ukraine by "pro-war Westerners". Asked about the government's plans in response, he said Hungary did not want to "blackmail" Ukraine, "though facts are still facts".

Meanwhile, regarding the 200 million euro fine the European Court of Justice instructed Hungary to pay for refusing to implement several EU migration rules, he said the authorities had responded by shuttering the transit zones before disallowing asylum applications to be submitted at the embassy in Belgrade. He said there was a "political motivation in the background" and "Brussels wants to flood Hungary with immigrants." "We will protect Hungary and the Hungarian people from immigration, and the fine will not be paid by the Hungarian people," he declared. Menczer said the prime minister had clearly told the Austrian and German leaders in 2015 that Hungary could

either stop migrants or let them through. "We will protect Hungary, but if they now want these people to appear in Austria and Germany, we can be partners in that, too. Everyone should take what I say as I say it," he said.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARY RESOLUTELY CONDEMNS HEZBOLLAH ROCKET ATTACK AGAINST ISRAEL

Hungary resolutely condemns the latest Hezbollah rocket attack against Israel that has claimed the lives of children in an especially painful way, Péter Szijjártó, the foreign minister, said on Sunday. Such attacks markedly escalate the risk of a cross-border war and of "engulfing the entire Middle East in flames", the minister said in a Facebook post. A new war breaking out in the Middle East would have dramatic repercussions amid the current global security environment, he said, adding that the international community must reinforce efforts to avoid escalation of the crisis in the region.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: EU'S WEAK INTEREST REPRESENTATION 'HISTORIC SIN OF BRUSSELS BUREAUCRATS'

"The EU's ability to enforce its interests is weaker than ever before, a historic sin of the bureaucrats of

Brussels," Péter Szijjártó, the foreign minister, said on Friday. "The EU today is incapable of defending its own member states, namely Slovakia and Hungary, against Ukraine's blackmail; which can be owed to the EC president (Ursula von der Leyen) and the EU foreign and security policy chief (Josep Borrell)," Szijjártó said on Facebook, adding that "Ukraine has put at risk some 33% of Hungary's and 45% of Slovakia's crude oil imports by banning the transit of oil supplies by Russia's Lukoil." "And instead of defending the two member states, the European Commission is coming up with excuses to defend Ukraine's steps," Szijjártó said, adding that "this is unacceptable and outrageous behaviour on the part of Brussels bureaucrats". The foreign minister said he had spoken by phone with Juraj Blanar, his Slovak counterpart, earlier in the day, and they had agreed to continue their coordinated action on the matter. He said they agreed that the EC's and Ukraine's action were "unacceptable," adding that "we will not yield to blackmail, should it be directed at us either from Kyiv or from Brussels."

OPPOSITION PARTIES SLAM ORBÁN'S SPEECH

Opposition parties have criticised Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's speech at the Bálványos Summer University in Băile Tuşnad, Romania, saying it

had failed to address the problems of Hungarians. The Respect and Freedom (Tisza) party said the prime minister's speech had been about "Budapest-centric global politics" rather than the problems of the Hungarian people. The party criticised Orbán for failing to mention the state of the health-care and education sectors, "the three million people living below the subsistence level and the hundreds of thousands who have fled abroad".

The Democratic Coalition (DK) said Orbán's politics wasn't "building, but losing Hungary" and endangered the Hungarian people. "The blabber about a national strategy doesn't obscure the strategic weakening of Hungary that is a consequence of Orbán's running amok historically and politically," DK said in a statement.

The Socialist Party criticised the speech for not mentioning "the government's misguided economic

policy, the one billion euro loan taken from China, high inflation and the high public debt". The party said it hoped Orbán "was not laying the groundwork for pulling Hungary out of the European Union".

Jobbik-Conservatives welcomed the prime minister's announcement on doubling family tax breaks for children, but said their solution would be to increase the tax break each year by at least the previous year's inflation rate.