1•2012

REPORT

DEMOCRACY AT STAKE IN HUNGARY
The Orbán government's Constitutional revolution

NORWEGIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE

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Preface

The Norwegian Helsinki Committee (NHC) is a non-governmental organisation working to ensure that human rights are respected in practice. NHC do this through monitoring, reporting, teaching and democracy support.

Due to recent concerns on threats to democratic rule in Hungary, expressed both by Hungarian and international observers, the NHC wanted to get a better understanding of current legal and political developments in the country. From 30 January to 3 February 2012 a delegation travelled to Budapest consisting of Bjørn Engesland, Secretary General; Anne Marit Austbø, Advisor; Csilla Czimbalmos, Project Manager; and Lillian Solheim, Project Manager. The delegation met with representatives from the ruling party; opposition parties; non-governmental organisations (NGOs); academics; diplomats; and media representatives in order to assess if the concerns were just, and if Hungary is indeed moving away from democracy.[1]

The NHC has a coordinating role of promoting bilateral contacts and cooperation between NGOs in the beneficiary countries and in Norway under the NGO funds of the EEA and Norway Grants. With this in mind, the NHC also wanted to get a better understanding of Hungarian civil society and how recent developments might affect the role of civil society as well as to explore potential for partnerships and strengthening contacts between Norwegian and Hungarian civil society.

NHC would like to acknowledge the support of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Norway in Hungary in identifying relevant actors as well as the willingness of the various stakeholders to meet with the NHC delegation.

The NHC would also like to acknowledge International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR) that provided valuable information on EU reactions to current developments in Hungary. IPHR is a Brussels-based non-profit non-governmental organisation that cooperates with NHC on EU matters.

All rendering of viewpoints of named persons in the report is based on the meetings that the NHC delegation conducted during its visit to Budapest.

The report was drafted by Lillian Solheim, Csilla Czimbalmos and Anne Marit Austbø and edited by Bjørn Engesland, Secretary General and Gunnar M. Ekeløve-Slydal, Deputy Secretary General.

1 Please see Annex 1 for a full list of meetings held.

Background

Hungary was seen as one of Central Europe's most successful and promising countries until the financial crisis hit the country in 2008. Since then, the economy has been stagnating due to heavy public debt and social tensions have been growing. In 2010, after a number of corruption scandals and growing economic problems, more than half of the electorate, deeply disappointed with the ruling socialist government, voted for the opposition party Fidesz. Also the far-right, euro-sceptic Jobbik party gained increased support.

Fidesz, led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, defines itself as a Christian, conservative, and nationalist party. Due to the Hungarian electoral system, which combines single-seat constituencies and seats by proportional representation, Fidesz obtained a two thirds majority in the Parliament.[2]

The qualified majority enabled the government to push through a wide range of legal reforms in the course of 2010 and 2011. These included a new Constitution, a new media law, as well as reform of the justice sector and the electoral system.

Increasingly the international community got concerned with the speed and the scope of the legislative changes. Critics argued that the new laws are moving Hungary away from the principles and practice of liberal democracy. The government, on the other hand, claimed that they have been given a popular mandate to finally get rid of the communist legacy and complete the regime change of 1989.

2 Fidesz got 53 % of the vote, and that gave the party 68 % of the seats in the Parliament.

Democracy at stake

It is generally agreed that a few key requirements are essential for a liberal democracy to thrive. Some of these requirements do follow directly from international human rights principles. Governments must be regulated by law and Constitutional provisions should limit their powers. Powers must be separated, and divided between independent bodies, like the executive branch, the legislative, and the judiciary. However, independent institutions may not be enough. A political culture that supports the principles of democracy is also needed. This includes respect of basic values and human rights, tolerance, peaceful and regulated transfer of power and legitimacy of the state. In addition, independent and professional media, able to criticise the government and disclose abuse of power is a necessary ingredient of a democratic political system.

In the course of 2010 and 2011, increasing criticism was directed towards the Hungarian government from various governments and international organisations, stating that the newly amended Hungarian laws are in breach of EU rules requiring institutional checks and balances and individual freedoms – in themselves key elements of a liberal democracy.

The Council of Europe and the Venice Commission have issued critical views and opinions, based on Hungary's obligations to uphold human rights as party to European and International human rights treaties.[3]

This report presents a short overview of some of the main issues and outlines some conclusions and recommendations. The aim of the report is neither to exhaustively discuss each of the issues nor to provide a comprehensive overview of all the changes that have taken place. The main issues to be presented and discussed are related to the recent Constitutional and legal reforms; the independence of various institutions; the election law; the media law and its effects; as well as the role of international organisations related to these changes.[4]

In addition to the political and legal measures, the report also includes a few comments on the situation of minorities and the growth of the extreme political right.

3 "The European Commission for Democracy through Law, better known as the Venice Commission, is the Council of Europe's advisory body on constitutional matters. Established in 1990, the commission has played a leading role in the adoption of constitutions that conform to the standards of Europe's constitutional heritage." http://www.venice.coe.int/site/main/Presentation_E.asp

4 In addition to the above mentioned issues, others issues include the nationalization of the private pension funds, taxes on banks, telecommunications, supermarkets and energy as well as retroactive taxes on pensions.

1. Constitutional and legal reform

With a qualified majority, the government has been able to push through a wide range of new laws, with the potential for wide implications on society and institutions. Hungary's new Constitution came into force on 1 January 2012 to much concern both nationally and internationally over the speed at which it was introduced, as well as its contents. The opposition parties were frustrated by the ad hoc and speedy manner in which both the Constitution and other laws were introduced as well as limited government consultations with the opposition.

Katalin Ertsey from *Politics Can Be Different* (LMP) explained that although all the ingredients (i.e. new laws) can be found in various Western democracies, "the soup created by Fidesz is not edible for human consumption".[5]

The rapid way of introducing changes were described to NHC by former President László Sólyom as dangerous and with a potential to lead to negative developments in the future. According to Sólyom this legislative hurry represents a change in the style of governing the country that shows bad political taste and lack of political culture. Even the Hungarian Ombudsperson, who is not allowed to make any political statements according to his mandate, expressed concern to NHC with the speed in which new legislation was introduced. He also underlined that the intensive legislative period has to be supervised, and expressed a hope that the pace of changes will slow down. Furthermore, he underlined that significant law proposals were not referred to his office for comments, neither by the current nor the previous government.

The Venice Commission has issued two opinions related to the constitutional process and the new Constitution of Hungary. The new Constitution was adopted by the Parliament on 18 April 2011 and signed by the President on 25 April 2011. It came into effect 1 January 2012.

Both opinions describe several problematic aspects of the new Constitution. The first opinion, adopted in March 2011, criticise the procedure of drafting, deliberating and adopting the Constitution for its tight time-limits and restricted possibilities of debate of the draft by the political forces, and within media and civil society. It also expresses regret with the lack of consensus on its contents.[6]

The second opinion, adopted in June 2011, "welcomes the fact that this new Constitution establishes a constitutional order based on democracy, the rule of law

5 Politics Can Be Different (*Lehet Más a Politika*), abbreviated to LMP, is a green liberal political party, founded in 2009. It was one of four parties to win seats in the National Assembly in the 2010 Parliamentary election.

6 Opinion on three legal questions arising in the process of drafting the new Constitution of Hungary, § 16-19, adopted by the Venice commission at its 86th Plenary Session (Venice, 25-26 March 2011) http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2011/CDL-AD(2011)001-e.pdf

and the protection of fundamental rights as underlying principles" (§ 18).[7] It criticises, however, that too many "detailed rules" on certain issues is to be regulated by so-called "cardinal laws", putting "the principle of democracy itself ... at risk." (§ 24).[8] According to the opinion, "the subjects of cardinal laws, as prescribed by the new Hungarian Constitution, are far too many" (§ 25). This may lead to *cementing* the political preferences of the current government, making future reforms difficult.

The Venice Commission's second opinion points to a number of provisions that cause concern, including:

- The preamble containing a number of potentially controversial statements. The fact that Article R § 3, states that the preamble shall have a substantial influence on the interpretation of the entire Constitution makes this even more problematic. Among its most problematic statements is those giving Hungarian's a privileged status, indicating that ""nationalities living with us" are not part of the people behind the enactment of the Constitution" (§ 40 of the opinion.);
- Article D stating that "Hungary shall bear responsibility for the fate of Hungarians living beyond its borders". This formulation, in particular the use of the word "responsibility", gives reason to concerns that Hungary will not fully respect the sovereignty of other states (§ 41-44);
- The Chapter "Freedom and Responsibility" shift "emphasis from the obligations of the state toward the individual citizens to the obligations of the citizens toward the community", and is therefore not in compliance with international human rights and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (§ 57);
- There is no mention of complete abolition of the death penalty (§ 68);
- "By admitting life imprisonment without parole, ..., Article IV of the ... Constitution fails to comply with the European human rights standards if it is understood as excluding the possibility to reduce, *de facto* and *de jure*, a life sentence" (§ 69);
- "... [T]hat freedom of the press is not formulated as an individual's right, but as an obligation of the state. This freedom appears to be dependent on the will of the state and its willingness to deal with its obligation in the spirit of freedom". In particular, the Venice Commission is concerned with Article IX "since its paragraph 3 leaves the detailed rules for this freedom and its supervision to a cardinal Act – even without outlining the purposes, contents and restrictions of such a law. Once enacted, there will be no practical way for any further (simple) majority to change the act." (§ 74);
- rovisions that are "weakening ... the parliamentary majority's powers and ... the position of the Constitutional Court" and thereby undermining the "Hungarian system of checks and balances" (§ 89).

7 Opinion on the New Constitution of Hungary, adopted by the Venice commission at its 87th Plenary Session (Venice, 17-18 June 2011) http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2011/CDL-AD(2011)016-e

8 Cardinal laws, also known as "organic laws" in some legal systems, are semi-constitutional laws requiring a qualified majority of two thirds of the members of parliament present for their adoption and amendment.

The new Constitution increases the number of members of the Constitutional Court from 11 to 15 and prolongs their term of office from nine to 12 years. The President of the Court will be elected by a two-thirds majority by the Parliament. Criticism has been raised that the government is filling the new positions with their own political allies.[9] According to László Majtényi, in Hungary the tendencies are not towards a monopoly of power, but rather towards hegemony of power.

Both the Venice Commission and other observers have pointed to another serious problem. Several provisions of the new Constitution undermine the authority of the Court. Already in 2010, the government introduced curtailment of the Court's powers. The new Constitution "imposes specific criteria for the management of the state budget as well as strict limitations to the State debt. Nevertheless, instead of giving the Constitutional Court full scope of control over the constitutionally of the budget and taxes legislation, it gives a special power to the new Budget Council".[10]

Also in some other aspects, the role of the Constitutional Court will be restricted. It will no longer be "easily able to review laws in the abstract for their compliance with the constitution."[11]

Related to the ordinary judiciary, the Constitution lacks "a clear statement that courts constitute a separate power and shall be independent".[12] A new law on the judiciary created a new National Judicial Office with a single person that can choose a judge to rule in a specific case. The person also has the mandate to move any sitting judge to a different court. This is regarded by the EU Commission as a possible treaty breach.

The retirement age of judges, prosecutors and public notaries has been lowered from 72 to 60, forcing around 200 judges to retire as of 1 January 2012. Most of the court presidents who assign cases have to resign.

The law on the central bank has been criticised for limiting the independence of the bank and potentially giving the government influence over monetary policy, including interest rates. International Monetary Fund (IMF) and EU delegations left preparatory negotiations on providing new loans to Hungary due to controversy surrounding this new law. After international pressure, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán promised to amend this law.

The election law has been changed, and the shape and size of electoral districts have been altered. The number of individual endorsements required by candidates to run

9 Cf. Kim Lane Scheppele, "Hungary's Constitutional Revolution", http://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/12/19/hungarys-constitutional-revolution/

10 § 98 of the Venice Commission's second opinion.

11 Scheppele, op. cit.

12 § 102 of the Venice Commission's second opinion.

for elections has been increased and the time frame for securing these limited. The number of parliamentarians has been reduced from 386 to 200.

All in all, the new law is making it more difficult for new parties to gain influence. The electoral reform also gives the right to vote to ethnic Hungarians living outside of Hungary.[13] This may on the one hand secure votes for Fidesz in the next election, as well as escalate regional tensions.

2. The Media

The media, often referred to as the fourth branch of government, has also come under scrutiny. With the introduction of a new media law, the Government created a new Media Council with the mandate to monitor and fine the media for not complying with standards of political "balance". The Media Council is led by a person appointed by the government for a period of nine years.

According to Balázs Dénes from the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, even if it remains to be seen to what extent and how the Council will use its powers, its mandate has caused concern that it may be used to silence opponents of the government.

The decision by the Media Council not to renew the license of the radio station Klubrádio attracted serious criticism. Klubrádio is well known to be critical of the regime. According to Professor Bozóki and former TV journalist and union leader Balázs Nagy-Navarro there is an atmosphere of fear and self-censorship amongst journalists and television reporters. Journalists have been fired for staging protest against the media law.

The journalists that NHC met with said that although security police were present at the site of the demonstrations, they did not fear for their own safety. Nagy-Navarro told NHC that fired journalists received sympathy from colleagues, but little support and solidarity due to fear among journalists of losing their jobs.

3. Growth of extreme right

One of the concerns of the international community is increased popular support of Jobbik, a right-wing party which got 16 % of the votes in the last election. Jobbik uses unconventional tools, attracting young people on the internet and defines itself as a movement rather than a party. The party is known for its controversial statements as well as its links with the *Hungarian Guard Movement*, often described as a neo-Nazi, neo-fascist and/or paramilitary movement. When banned, it often re-appears under a new name.

13 See for instance Viktor Szigetvári (2012) for an overview of the electoral reform.

Jobbik is blaming globalized, liberal economies and the EU for the financial crisis of the country. A representative from Jobbik confirmed in a meeting with NHC that the party members are disillusioned with the way liberal democracy works. Jobbik is favouring a more East-ward orientation as opposed to the EU and Transatlantic cooperation.[14]

Fidesz has denounced cooperation with Jobbik, but some argue that there is a fine line between the more extreme parts of Fidesz and the moderate parts of Jobbik. Others also felt that Fidesz was using the growth of extreme right in a tactical way, as leverage in negotiations with EU.

There seems to be a general consensus amongst many analysts that Jobbik has an upper-ceiling of 20-30%. In recent opinion polls, Jobbik has lost some of its support.

4. Minority issues

Issues pertaining to the situation of the Roma population in Hungary are not new. Yet, many fear that the government is not doing enough to tackle the issue. Also, the nationalist rhetoric of Fidesz may have made it more acceptable to express negative views on the country's minorities, possibly paving the way for more hate speech and anti-Roma and anti-Semitic language.

Especially outside Budapest, the situation of Roma is precarious. According to the Romani program coordinator of Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, Péter Juhász, many new laws are not openly directed against certain ethnic minorities, but their interpretation leaves much room for use against the most vulnerable ethnic group; the Roma minority. The issue is complex and, from what NHC was told, many actors have a political and economic interest in maintaining the status quo.

More state involvement is needed, including from the local government. Some key factors include creation of jobs, ending segregated education and retraining of workers.

Certain religious societies are also affected by the new laws, making registering harder. The number of deregistered churches is 348, while only 14 churches have retained a state-recognised status. This was recently also critised by the European Parliament, which mentioned that the law "contains unusually restrictive rules on the registration of churches."[15]

The Constitution now also makes it illegal to be homeless.

14 An English summary of their party programme is available online: http://jobbik.com/temp/Jobbik-RADICALCHANGE2010.pdf

15 European Parliament, February 2012.

5. Role of International Organisations

As it became clear that Prime Minister Orbán was cementing power, international organisations and governments increasingly started voicing concern about the Hungarian government's policies.[16] The European Parliament expressed "serious concern at the situation in Hungary in relation to the exercise of democracy, the rule of law, the respect and protection of human and social rights, the system of checks and balances, equality and non-discrimination."[17]

The EU has been underlining Hungary's obligations to respect all provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, as well as the values that the EU is founded on. Despite anti-EU rhetoric, it seems that Orbán gradually has had to take into account some of the criticism from the EU, the Council of Europe and the IMF. In January 2012, the EU started accelerated infringement procedures.[18] After meetings with José Manuel Barroso, the President of the European Commission, in beginning of 2012, the style and tone of communication was less aggressive and both parties expressed willingness to work together.

Many of the persons the NHC delegation spoke with from opposition parties and civil society thought that the retreat on certain laws would have been unlikely without the pressure of international organisations. Many referred to the reports of the Venice Commission and the need to adhere to its recommendations.

It was also pointed out that even though the pressure and recommendations from the EU, the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission are of fundamental importance for upholding democracy in Hungary, the problems primarily needs to be solved by the Hungarian people.[19] Others claimed that generally, there is overall support for the EU in the population and the criticism will not be disregarded.

While in Hungary, the NHC delegation was informed that many Hungarians feel that international media does not report correctly on the developments; others felt that Hungary is being singled out as a scapegoat. A representative of Fidesz argued that the controversy was to a large extent due to communication issues and that more efforts should be put into explaining the measures to other countries. The representative also pointed to the fact that there are thousands of infringement procedures currently going on with the EU, and that the procedures against Hungary are only normal, especially taking into account the large number of new laws.

Professor Nick Sitter however argued that in other EU member states these issues are often solved before EU has to initiate formal procedures, and that these issues are

16 Cf. Kantner, 2011, Reading 2011, Traynor 2012, Economist 2012.
17 European Parliament, February 2012.
18 European Commission, January 2012.
19 Expressed i.a.by László Majtényi, Eötvös Károly Institute.

more of minor concerns and not fundamental breaches on rule of law. Hungary is a much more serious case.

Several of the people NHC met, expressed the view that the EU response was just, including former Prime Minister, Gordon Bajnai and former President László Sólyom. The former President was not so concerned about the current state of respect of human rights, like the right to vote, to demonstrate and to assemble, but expressed worry about the institutional changes taking place. "The wording of the Constitution may not be the real problem, but it will depend on how the Constitution will be implemented and how institutions act on it", he underlined. He expressed concern about weakening of Constitutional culture that had been built up in the last few decades as a result of the recent dramatic measures by Fidesz.

Conclusions

In his relatively short time in power, Prime Minister Orbán has been in charge of a country with an economy that is on the verge of defaulting, a politically polarised society, and international diplomatic and political fights.

Orbán has during the last two years weakened institutional checks and balances and compromised the independence of central institutions. The new laws allow the government to expand the number of judges in the Constitutional Court, to appoint people with Fidesz affiliation in central positions, to appoint new officials in various institutions and agencies, and to reduce the independence of institutions. Through his measures, he has effectively been undermining democratic principles, hollowed out the democratic framework and weakened the balance of power.

Changes in laws have at times been introduced without proper public and political debate and consultations that a well-functioning democracy requires. There is now less room and voice for the opposition and independent institutions. Fidesz has shown little willingness to share power or to create a consensual democracy. Orbán's government is stretching the limits for what is regarded as acceptable in a liberal democracy, including the responsibilities a party with a supermajority has towards opposition parties as well as the responsibilities of the majority populations towards minority groups.

Although abuse of power and violations of individual rights are not reported to take place systematically, the government has created structures and systems of influence and an environment where some people seem to fear for their jobs if they are too critical of the government. The legislative changes, although each one of them to a large extent can be given a rational explanation, constitute part of a trend where power is being centralised and Fidesz gains hegemonic power. Some of the new laws leave room for interpretation, opening up for rule by man rather than rule by law in the future. Time will show how the institutions adapt to the new laws and how they interpret them.

The government may be willing to change or modify certain laws due to international pressure, yet it is clear that Fidesz will leave its mark on Hungarian society for years to come regardless of the outcome of future elections. The new Constitution has not only rid Hungary of its "Communist past"; it has also ensured a future for Fidesz. For a wide range of central positions, Fidesz has appointed persons loyal to the party with mandates that stretch beyond the next election periods. If Fidesz will lose the next elections due to take place in 2014, the party will continue to have strong

influence. Political appointments as well as the need for supermajorities to change the Constitution and Cardinal Laws will ensure this.

Recent polls indicate that support for Fidesz and Jobbik is declining but there are at the moment no clear alternative solutions to the current problems of the country from a fragmented opposition. Yet, there are movements in civil society and a number of protest groups are mobilizing. Civil society and the opposition should both promote a strong, viable and sustainable alternative to undermining democratic rule and centralising power. Many of the persons that the NHC delegation met with expressed hope in the coming generation, the youth of the country that so far has not been given alternatives and have been absent from the public debate. The role of the civil society in creating opportunities and alternatives to extreme right movements will be crucial in the time to come.

The current developments in Hungary are of great concern. Measures initiated by the government are part of a pattern where Hungary is slowly moving away from a liberal democracy. Some of the recent developments are of autocratic or even undemocratic nature. Yet, it is unlikely that Hungary will join the club of autocratic regimes due to pressure from civil society, the opposition and the international community. According to the former president László Sólyom, Hungary should not be seen as a semi-dictatorship or as an authoritarian country because Hungary still has a certain constitutional culture and a tradition for freedom. The growth of extreme right is a real problem, especially if the economic situation gets worse. Hungary serves as a confirmation that democracies depend not only on the institutions that constitute it but also how the system is (ab)used.

Recommendations

The Norwegian Helsinki Committee (NHC) recommends the Government of Hungary to:

- Comply with the recommendations of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission in order to ensure a democratic implementation of laws and regulations in the country as well as respect for human rights and Hungary's treaty obligations;
- Initiate comprehensive consultations with the democratic opposition and civil society in the drafting of new laws;
- Respect the founding principles of liberal democracy, ensuring rule of law and protection of independence of institutions.

The NHC recommends the European Union to:

- Continue to raise concerns with Hungarian authorities about legal and political developments that undermine democracy and rule of law;
- Support criticism raised by the Council of Europe, the Venice Commission, the OSCE and other esteemed international organisations of legal provisions that are in breach of international human rights norms and European Constitutional principles;
- Keep up pressure on the Hungarian government to rectify legislation that are not in line with international law and EU treaties, maintaining a strict and principled approach;
- Investigate whether recently adopted laws are in breach of EU treaties;
- Pay attention to similar trends in other European countries, especially the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, to limit freedom of the media, centralise power, and weakening checks and balances on the executive.

The NHC recommends the Government of Norway to:

- Raise concerns with Hungarian authorities about legal and political developments in the country that undermine democracy and rule of law;
- Support criticism raised by the Council of Europe, the Venice Commission, the OSCE and other esteemed international organisations of legal provisions that are in breach of international human rights norms and European Constitutional principles;
- Pay attention to similar trends in other European countries, especially the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, to limit freedom of the media, centralise power, and weakening checks and balances on the executive;
- Target EEA and Norway grants to supporting projects of independent institutions and organisations that strengthens respect for human rights, minority rights, and democratic principles. Programme operators should be chosen that is not controlled by the government;
- Give attention to minority issues, in particular the situation of the Roma population.

The NHC will explore follow-up projects and cooperation with relevant Hungarian counterparts in order to follow-up on some of the issues presented in this report. Follow-up projects will inter alia be initiated with the Hungarian Helsinki Committee and the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights.

Annex 1: List of Meetings

30/01/12 – 02/02/12

Parliamentarians

Márton Gyöngyösi	Member of Parliament, Jobbik
Katalin Ertsey	Member of Parliament, LMP
Gergely Gulyas	Member of Parliament, Fidesz

Former dignitaries

Gordon Bajnai	Former Prime Minister of Hungary
László Sólyom	Former President of Hungary
Balázs Landi	Secretariat of the Former President of Hungary

Public institutions

Máté Szabó	Commissioner for Fundamental Rights
Ferenc Zombor	Secretary General, Office for the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights
Barnabas Hajas	
Zsolt Belanszky-Demko	Head of the Department for Civil Relations at the Ministry for Public Administration and Justice

Academia

András Bozóki	Professor at Central European University, Former Minister of Culture
Nick Sitter	Professor at Central European University and BI Norwegian Business School

Representatives from NGOs and international organisations

Márta Pardavi	Co-chair, Hungarian Helsinki Committee
László Majtényi	Chairman, Eőtvös Károly Institute
Máté Szabó	Eőtvös Károly Institute
Menno Ettema	Educational Advisor, Council of Europe
Anca Sandescu	Human Rights Trainer, European Roma Rights Centre
Balázs Dénes	Executive Director, Hungarian Civil Liberties Union
Péter Juhász	Spokesperson One Million Voices for the Freedom of Press and Romani Program Fieldwork Coordinator, Hungarian Civil Liberties Union

Media

Balázs Nagy-Navarro	Former TV journalist and President of the Council of Public Media Trade Unions

Embassy

Siri Ellen Sletner	Ambassador, Royal Norwegian Embassy
Tamás Polgár	Advisor, Royal Norwegian Embassy
Marte Tretvoll	Trainee, Royal Norwegian Embassy

Additionally, the delegation oversaw a demonstration in front of the New Theatre against the new director György Dörner on February 1st 2012[20].

In Oslo, a meeting with Secretary General of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bente Angell-Hansen, Vibeke Rysst-Jensen (Assistant Director General) and Atle Midttun (Assistant Director General) took place on 16 January 2012. A meeting with the Ambassador of Hungary to Norway Géza Jeszenszky was also held on February 7 2012.

NHC also attended the following lectures and debates:

"Whither Hungary? Economic and political developments" with Professor Csaba László from the Hungarian Academy of Science and Central European University – Lecture at NUPI 27 January 2012

"Blir Ungarn det første landet som sparkes ut av EU?" Lecture by Nick Sitter at the University of Oslo, 9 February 2012

20 See Thorpe (2012) and Paterson (2012) for news coverage on the event.

Annex 2: List of resources and news articles

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