



National Press Building #809
Washington D.C. 20045
(202) 737-0127
www.americanhungarianfederation.org / www.hungary1956.com

January 25, 2007

The Honorable Olli Rehn
Commissioner for Enlargement
European Commission

Dear Mr. Rehn:

The American Hungarian Federation is an umbrella organization that has supported democracy, human and minority rights and the rule of law in Central and Eastern Europe. The situation of the Hungarians in Romania has been and is of concern to the Federation.

We write concerning the accession of Romania to the European Union. It appears that the EU is playing down a vital criterion of the Copenhagen criteria for membership, namely, the respect for the rights of minorities. In a December 5, 2006 letter to Bela Liptak, Wenceslas de Lobkowicz from the office of the Directorate General of the European Commission stated: “[o]ur conclusion is that Romania respects the rights of its Hungarian minority and fulfills the political criterion for membership of the EU.” Mr. de Lobkowicz referred to the “tri-lingual (Romanian / German / Hungarian) Babes-Bolyai state university in Cluj” as an example of the so-called respect for the rights of the Hungarian minority. Considering the dismissal of Professors Peter Hantz and Lehel Kovacs from Babes-Bolyai in November for promoting bilingualism, Mr. de Lobkowicz’s statement is incredible. A copy of our statement relating to these dismissals is on http://www.americanhungarianfederation.org/news_babes-bolyai.htm.

We understand that the EU is requiring Romania to submit reports every six months on the progress it is making in implementing much-needed reforms. Romania should also be required to report on the progress it is making in the area of minority rights.

This step would strengthen democracy in Romania. Failure by the EU to insist that its new members comply with the Copenhagen criteria, on the other hand, would undermine the values that have enabled the EU to succeed in promoting stability, security and the economic welfare of Europe.

Sincerely yours,

Frank Koszorus, Jr.
Co-President