

Resolution adopted by XVth EPP CONGRESS ON HUNGARY

Estoril ,October 17, 2002

The European Peoples Party,

- Regarding that Hungary is an EU Candidate State and has to fulfil its directives,
- having regard to the fact, that the independence of central banks from national governments is a crucial order of EU directives,
- considering, that in 2001 the then Hungarian government created the new Central Bank Act (Act LVIII of 2001 on National Bank of Hungary) in accordance with EU Directives on independence and with the primary objective of price stability,
- pointing out that, the new socialist-liberal government has taken retrograde steps violating the principle of independence of the Hungarian Central Bank,
- concluding that the government once again controls the Board of Supervision and the opportunity for government intervention in decision-making is unnecessary and very dangerous considering Hungary's EU integration process.
- having regard to the old democracies of Europe, where the values of the centre right, just as the values of the left, are expressed irrespective of the current government,
- having regard to the new democracies, where certain values are simply and easily excluded, marginalised or ridiculed in the public discourse,
- considering that the 1999 UN Report on Hungary concluded that four out of five journalists started their careers during the dictatorship which fact has an unquestionable impact on both the mentality and the quality of the press in Hungary,
- pointing out that, since the Hungarian parliamentary elections of April 2002, the new socialist-liberal government, after coming to office fired the editors of the political news magazine programmes on Hungarian Television, though they had ensured in their election manifesto the assurance and continuity of freedom of press,
- having regard to the current enormous attack against the only centre right newspaper, launched by the new government since the April 2002 elections, including the denouncement of its contract with the publisher and at the same time, forcing influential state owned companies to refrain from advertising in this newspaper,
- regarding that Hungary is an EU Candidate State and has to fulfil the Copenhagen criteria, of which freedom of press is a crucial political component.

The EPP

1. expresses its concern with the violation of the independence of National Bank of Hungary,
2. calls upon the Hungarian Government to reestablish the independence of the National Bank of Hungary,
3. expresses its concern with the independence of the Hungarian media by condemning the current situation,
4. calls upon the Hungarian Government to undertake efforts to ensure that an independent and balanced media is re-established, and
5. calls upon the Hungarian Government to take the necessary measures to fulfil European Union accession criteria.