

Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies

23 February 2011

Georgy Szapary, Ambassador
Embassy of Hungary
Washington, DC

Dear Ambassador Szapary:

I write on behalf of ASEEEES, the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. We are the largest international professional association of scholars of the formerly socialist bloc, with just under three thousand members.

I joined with many of my colleagues in being startled by pending legislation before the Hungarian parliament that would withdraw the assurance of preservation of archives from, and relating to, the socialist period. However dim a view one might take of socialist rule in eastern Europe, I know of no one who would not insist on the careful preservation of its archival legacy, as required for best understanding this influential historical epoch.

Such legislation also challenges what has been the remarkable, tireless work of Hungarian archivists over the past twenty years. They have earned the extraordinary admiration of Hungarian and foreign scholars alike for their scrupulous cataloguing of papers from the socialist period, thanks to the country's new intellectual freedoms. They managed to do this in periods of relative privation, for the good of the country, and for the good of scholarship more broadly.

The association very much urges Hungarian legislators to support this crucial historical database.

With kind regards,



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