

To The Government and Parliament of Romania

For his information: to Mr. President Klaus Johannis

Today, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2018 we Szeklers, gathered in Marosvásárhely, following the way of law and democracy, affirm unanimously once again: we demand territorial autonomy for Szeklerland! The message of The Day of the Szekler Freedom is that this day is not only for commemoration, but also for demanding the respect of our rights.

A centennial year has been declared in Romania, and the Szeklers' struggle for self determination began a hundred years ago as well. It's only natural, that as we gather at the memorial of the Szekler Martyrs, in the spirit of our "independent national status" as Jókai Mór would say, we call out those who seek to trample on our right to self determination – a right of our ancestors, which in the institutional framework of territorial autonomy could once again become a reality. This year, the draft law on the institutional framework that would ensure autonomy, is once again on the Parliament's desk, so it's not a secret to anyone what the Szekler people demand. The country's continuously delayed administrative reform could provide a democratic framework for the reform that would ensure Szeklerland's self determination within Romania.

We insistently affirm: the autonomy of Szeklerland does not violate the territorial unity and sovereignty of Romania, it does not violate the interests of the Romanian people living in Szeklerland, and it does not contradict the constitution of the country! The autonomy of the Szeklerland - as per the European practice - means that the Szekler-Hungarian community, who make up the majority population in their homeland, would have the right and the actual capacity to manage, on their own responsibility and in the interests of the region, a substantial share of public affairs, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, and in the interest of all national communities living on its territory. This also serves the interests of Romania. The

autonomous region has a democratically elected body between the state and the collectivity, exercises the powers of self-administration, and has the corresponding public status and competence.

Upon joining the Council of Europe, Romania has agreed to a unilateral commitment to comply with Council Recommendation 1201/1993, and as such, this has become mandatory for them. Article 11 of the document states, that *“in the regions where they are in a majority the persons belonging to a national minority shall have the right to have at their disposal appropriate local or autonomous authorities or to have a special status, matching the specific historical and territorial situation and in accordance with the domestic legislation of the state”*

.

Having these in mind:

- We demand that Szeklerland becomes its own independent administrative and development region with its own autonomous administrative competence, based on the draft law drafted by the Szekler National Council and submitted to parliament!

- We demand that in the process of the administrative reorganization the Government and the Parliament respect the will of the Szekler people and their international obligations.

- We demand for the government to start a dialogue with the legitimate representatives of the Szekler people, the Szekler National Council and the Szekler municipalities, in tandem with the ongoing parliamentary debate.

- We protest against the use of the institutions of the rule of law as a means for intimidating and oppressing the Romanian citizens of Hungarian nationality.

We demand full and effective equality for all the inhabitants of Szeklerland!

Autonomy for Szeklerland, freedom for the Szekler people!

Marosvásárhely

10 March 2018