

Mr, Chairman, Miniszter úr, Ladies and gentleman, to summarize the current Hungarian democracy and rule of law related problems in ten minutes is like to present the complete works of William Shakespeare in one play. It is possible, but a rather challenging task, but we are all in Europe, and especially in Hungary are going through challenging times these days.

I don't know which is more sad: the fact that a Hungarian parliamentary party, and the militant and racist organizations related to it systematically are talking about the whole Hungarian Romani community as criminals, or the fact that we don't see any legal, moral or political actions against this phenomena neither from the Hungarian government, neither from the President of the Republic.

I don't know which is more sad, the fact after 22 years of the end of the communism, large proportion of the Hungarian Romani children is still educated segregated in the Hungarian schools, or the fact, that despite the government rethorics about the importance of integration, the new rules on public education in practice only will make the situation worse on this field: Hungarian government officials and school administrators still think that separate but equal education is an option – no, it isn't, and reducing the mandatory upper age of education, allowing the concept of preparation classes only will keep existing segregation alive in Hungary.

I seriously can not decide which one is the more serious problem, the fact that huge proportions of the Hungarian society is scarily racist and xenophobic, to the extent that expressions such "gypsy crime" became PC language, or the fact that anyone who dares to talk or act against this is considered anti-Hungarian these days.

If I sound frustrated on the issue of the Hungarian Roma, it's because I am frustrated: common sense and all the evidences shows that the country's most serious human rights problem is the desperate situation of the Hungarian Roma, and despite this fact, we don't see anyone from the Roma community here today, who would talk honestly about this issue, and the Hungarian government's new Roma strategy completely lacks the human rights approach and tools.

I don't know which is more alarming, the fact that the government with the help of the parliament in the last 20 months systematically has attacked and in some cases destroyed the checks and balances systems of the country and

has appointed its own people as the heads of independent institutions, or the fact that all this was done in the name and under the flag of anti-corruption in politics.

If we talk about legislation, I don't know which is more frustrating, the fact that the parliament and the government emptied the frames of legislation, the parliamentary debate or consultation procedures, or the fact that they are even proud of the record braking speed with which they create 2nd and 3rd class laws – hundreds of them, in the past two years. The speed of the legislation is a very serious problem in itself. The parliament has spent no more than 9 days with the debate on the new Constitution, and the propaganda-taste decisions of the government, which brings us back memories from the 1950ies, won't be able to provide the needed moral legitimation to that document. Seriously, in 2011 the reality wasn't the problem of the lack of consultation, but it has become simply follow what is happening in the Hungarian Parliament.

You will have to decide, which is, of the following facts are more symbolic, the fact that the chair of the Hungarian Parliament last autumn has called the ECHR judges “a few idiots in Strasbourg” (pardon me, I only quoted him) or the fact the country repeatedly fails to execute legislative changes after ECHR judgments. Speed and lack of time cannot be a reason, because when it is important for the administration, they can modify the constitution several times in few weeks.

You will have to decide, which one is more worrisome, the fact that the government refuses to speak openly about the possible legal consequences of the protection of fetal life provision in the new constitution, or the fact that it does very little to help teenagers and families in unwanted pregnancies?

I am afraid, the list could go on and on. Some 15 thousand people with intellectual disabilities still live in large-scale institution despite of the 14-year old commitment to the deinstitutionalization and the closure of the total institutions, tens of thousands of people with intellectual disability are denied to make even the most personal decisions on their own guardianship, and the country criminalized homelessness.

Despite being able to produce some 150 new laws, and modified another 200, the government shows no intention to regulate the activity of lobbying:

lobbyists today operates in the grey and the dark zones in Hungary: in fact, the formerly existing Act on lobbying was one of the first laws which was deleted from the Hungarian system.

Talking about the role of Europe, as a Hungarian and European citizen, I don't know which is more problematic, the fact that the government still thinks that the double talk is possible in the 21st century, or the fact that the anti-EU and nationalistic arguments of the current administration resonates really well with large proportions of Hungarian voters. Double talk does exist: here we just learned from the Hungarian Deputy Prime Minister that the country will comply with the critiques from the EU, at home yesterday our Prime Minister, when talked about the critiques, mentioned a large international conspiracy against him, which involved international diplomacy, used diplomatic connections and even involved the international media, namely the CNN. To me, this is double talk.

I am happy to see the increased European attention, especially after the frustrating first half of 2011, when human rights and media freedom defenders succeeded to turn the attention of the UN, Council of Europe and OSCE representatives to the infamous media laws of the country, but practically failed in the attempt to mobilize the EU Commission. The situation is different now, the attention is important, the pressure is needed – after all, if Hungary would be outside of the EU now, its candidacy most probably would be seriously questioned or even suspended - but two things are important to realize: 1st, without our economic problems, and the desperate need of the IMF-aid, no way the government would listen to the critiques, and 2nd, the country needs to solve its political problems first at all back home. The Hungarian society needs voters, who can remember, it needs parties, who aren't corrupt, needs independent media, and it needs to reorganize itself based on the principles of the open society.

The Hungarian Prime Minister few days ago in Budapest made a comparison in which he stated that the EU is like alcohol. I don't think he was right. To me, the Government and the Parliament of Hungary seems to be seriously drunk, but it's the country who will feel the terrible aftereffects and the hangover. I actually think the EU Commission and the European Parliament are the sober voice in this story. And if we remain with this metaphore, I am afraid that at this point in Hungary it looks like political power in some cases is similar to mind altering drugs, and political superpower, when supported by the two thirds of the parliamentary votes, is like hard drugs. And hard

drugs, ladies and gentlemen, are easy to abuse, and very easy to get addicted of - so your sober voice is rather needed these days.

Thank you for your attention.