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DANUBE INSTITUTE

ANTALL JÓZSEF
KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

Towards European Parliamentary Elections 2019:
Anticipating threats, discussing challenges and building resilience

19-20 October; Budapest, Hungary

BACKGROUND NOTE:

Thanks to the support provided by the National Endowment for Democracy, the Beacon Project supports a stronger and broader transatlantic dialogue on how to close the democracy gaps in our societies and counter the disinformation that exploits them. In order to support this dialogue and counter strategy, the Beacon Project has created two standing round tables; one, comprised of representatives from political parties, party foundations, governments and institutes; and a second, of independent think tanks, NGOs, media outlets, and other civil society actors from the EU and its immediate neighborhood. This network is supported by two main features of the project:

The Beacon Project's >versus< monitor is an ICT tool developed to aid local media monitors and researchers to obtain qualitative and quantitative data from a wider range of sources. This database is being built by a collaborative standardized methodology to provide quality data on the scale and effectiveness of disinformation for the first time. In addition, this data is further supported by national polling initiatives.

Through the discussions of the two standing round tables including political leaders, civil society representatives and academia, and data provided by the >versus< monitor, the project works toward drafting specific policy suggestions to close the democracy gaps currently present in our societies by addressing one of the main undermining elements – disinformation.

EVENT DETAILS:

Location:	Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Szechenyi Istvan Square 9, Budapest		
Dates and Times:	18 October *Public Event (optional)*	19 October Closed Session 20:00	20 October Round Table 09:00 – 17:00

One year since the European Parliament's resolution on the *EU Strategic Communication to Counteract anti-EU propaganda by third parties* and two years since establishment of the EEAS East StratCom Task Force, *fake news, disinformation and election hacking* remain at the heart of political debate in Brussels and in European capitals. In the context of the upcoming 2019 European Elections and broader discussions about the future of the European project, the International Republican Institute (IRI), in collaboration with the Antall Jozsef Knowledge Centre (AJTK) and the Danube Institute, will be holding a political round table in Budapest, Hungary. Its aim is to take stock of what has been accomplished, shortcomings, and what has yet to be addressed. With the European Elections approaching, it is vital that we ensure they are conducted in a free and secure manner and, as we continue to rethink the structure and functioning of the EU, in the spirit of open discourse.

This Round Table is designed to bring Members of the European Parliament, national parliaments, advisors, and experts together to identify key threats, discuss challenges and identify ways to build institutional and societal resilience in preparation of the 2019 elections, but also upcoming national elections.

The event is part of the IRI Beacon Project's regular series of round tables, bringing together political leaders, members of the civil society and academia to identify key vulnerabilities, and build resilience against disinformation and foreign hostile influence through national and European-level responses.

Agenda

THURSDAY **19** October	*PARTICIPANTS ARRIVE*
	HOTEL PRESIDENT - HOLD U. 3, 1054 BUDAPEST

	CLOSED ENERGY SECURITY BRIEFING
	Time: 20:00 (departs at 20:30) — *MILLENNIUM I (BOAT) - JÁSZAI MARI SQUARE, DOCK 1*

Welcome by:	**Zsolt Németh, MP**; *Hungarian Parliament (Hungary)*
Moderated by:	**John O'Sullivan**; *The Danube Institute (UK)*
Briefing by:	**Ilya Zaslavsky**; *Free Russia Foundation (Russia/USA)*
	Mira Boneva; *NATO STRATCOM CoE (Latvia)*
	Daniel Mitov; *Former Foreign Minister (Bulgaria)*

Official Opening of Round Table

FRIDAY **20** October	*REGISTRATION & COFFEE*
	Time: 08:45 – 09:15 — *Hungarian Academy of Sciences - Szechenyi Istvan Square 9*

Opening Remarks by:	**Zsolt Németh, MP**; *Hungarian Parliament (Hungary)*
	Rodger Potocki; *National Endowment for Democracy (USA)*
	Péter Antall; *Antall József Knowledge Centre (Hungary)*

Session 1

The 'FOTYGA RESOLUTION': ONE YEAR ON
One year on, what are the successes and shortfalls of the resolution's recommendations? What can be built upon at the national and European levels? What are some areas which were overlooked for practical and/or political reasons, and what can be done to fill these gaps?
Time: 09:30 – 11:00

Moderated by:	**Miriam Lexmann**; *International Republican Institute (Slovakia)*

Speakers:	**Anna Fotyga, MEP**; *European Parliament (Poland)*	
	Naja Bentzen; *European Parliament Research Service*	
	Adam Lelonek, *Centre for Propaganda and Disinformation Analysis (Poland)*	
	Anneli Ahonen; *STRATCOM East Task Force, EEAS (Finland)*	
Key Discussants:		
	Radan Kanev; *Democrats for strong Bulgaria (Bulgaria)*	
	Martin Fedor, MP; *National Council of the Slovak Republic (Slovakia)*	
	Karolina Stach; *European Parliament (Slovakia)*	
	Lóránt Győri; *Political Capital Institute (Hungary)*	
	Botond Feledy; *Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy (Hungary)*	

COFFEE BREAK
Time: 11:00 – 11:30

Session 2

ENSURING FREE, FAIR AND SECURE ELECTIONS IN THE FACE OF HYBRID THREATS

In light of the attacks on the US Elections, the Department for Homeland Security categorised elections as critical infrastructure. Cyber-attacks and political leaks are just two ways our elections are susceptible to hybrid threats; however, the possible points of leverage are vast and varied. This discussion will examine the means through which our Elections, election campaigns, and political discourse more generally, can be secured against potential threats, including the extent to which cyber protection requires either private or public sector response, or how the two can complement one another.

Time: 11:30 – 13:00

Moderated by:	**Ildiko Voller-Szenci**, Antall József Knowledge Centre	
Speakers:	**Miroslav Wlachovsky**; STRATCOM Unit, MFA (Slovakia)	
	Gabriella Cseh; Facebook (Hungary)	
	Arjen Kamphuis; *Technical & Security Director, PGK (Netherlands)*	
	Andrzej Grzyb, MEP; European Parliament (Poland)	
Key Discussants:		
	Veiko Spolītis, MP; Saeima (Latvia)	
	Carl Henrik Agardh-Tvetman; Civil Contingencies Agency (Sweden)	
	Márton Ugrósdy; Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Hungary)	
	Maurice Verheesen; Pretty Good Knowledge (Netherlands)	
	Balázs Jarabík; Carnegie Endowment (Slovakia)	
	Nathan Shepura, European People's Party (Belgium)	

Lunch
Time: 13:00

Session 3

LESSON-LEARNING FROM RECENT NATIONAL ELECTIONS

The final round table will be an opportunity to gain an insight into on-going and past interferences in national elections, as well ways to identify, understand and tackle such threats. This will take place in the form of a briefing from relevant state and private institutions, analysts and academics.

Time: 14:30 – 16:00

Moderated by:	**Daniel Mitov**; *Former Foreign Minister (Bulgaria)*	
Speakers:	**Balázs Molnár**; Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Hungary)	
	Sebastian Bay; *Civil Contingencies Agency (Sweden)*	
	Jeffrey Gedmin; Georgetown University (USA)	
	Alanna Putze; Institute for Strategic Dialogue (UK)	
Key Discussants:		
	Urszula Gacek; Institute of Strategic Studies (Poland)	
	Csaba Faragó; FIDESZ (Hungary)	

János Tibor Barabás; Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Hungary)

Ernő Schaller-Baross; SZPMA, Fidesz party foundation (Hungary)

Zsolt Szolnoki; Association of European Election Officials (Hungary)

Stock-taking & Final Remarks

This will be used to summarise the key points from each session of the round table to suggest concrete steps that can be taken by EU institutions, political parties, governments, and civil society at all levels in order to secure a genuine, inclusive, and participatory political discussion on the future of the EU and secure and transparent European Elections in 2019.

Time: 16:15 – 17:00

Remarks by: **Jeffrey Gedmin**; Georgetown University/Beacon Project Steering Committee (USA)

Miriam Lexmann, International Republican Institute

György Schöpflin, MEP; European Parliament (Hungary)

Participants

Name	Title	Organisation/Institution	Country
Adam Lelonek	President	Centre for Propaganda and Disinformation Analysis	Poland
Alanna Putze	Project Manager	Institute for Strategic Dialogue	UK
András Rácz, Dr.	Associate Professor	Pázmány Péter Catholic University	Hungary
Andrzej Grzyb	MEP	European Parliament	Poland
Anna Fotyga	MEP	European Parliament	Poland
Anna Löffler	Political Adviser	Fidesz, Parliamentary Group, Foreign Affairs Cabinet	Hungary
Anneli Ahonen	Analyst	EEAS East Stratcom Task Force	Finland
Arjen Kamphuis	Technical & Security Director	Pretty Good Knowledge	Netherlands
Balazs Jarabik	Non-Resident Fellow	Carnegie Endowment	Slovakia
Balázs Molnár	Deputy State Secretary for European Union Affairs	Prime Minister's Office	Hungary
Bengt Sebastian Bay	Senior analyst	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency	Sweden
Borys Brzezinski	MEP assistant	European Parliament	Poland
Botond Feledy, Dr.	Senior Fellow	Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy	Hungary
Brady Hills	Programme Officer	International Republican Institute	Belgium
Carl Henrik Agardh-Tvetman	Project manager	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency	Sweden
Csaba Faragó	Campaign Manager	FIDESZ	Hungary
Daniel Mitov	Former Foreign Minister of Bulgaria		Bulgaria
Ernő Schaller-Baross	Directror	SZPMA, Fidesz party foundation	Hungary
Gabriella Cseh	Director, Central Europe Public Policy	Facebook	Hungary
György Schöpflin	MEP	European Parliament	Hungary
Hana Horvátová	Programme Assistant	International Republican Institute	Slovakia
Igor Merheim Eyre	Analyst	International Republican Institute	United Kingdom
Ildiko Voller-Szenci	Head of Office, Brussels	Antall József Knowledge Centre	Hungary
Ilya Zaslavskiy	Research Expert	Free Russia Foundation	Russia/USA
János Tibor Barabás	Senior Analyst	Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade	Hungary