



PERMANENT MISSION OF HUNGARY
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK

7 May 2015

Keynote speech by

H.E. Ambassador Katalin Bogyay

Permanent Representative of Hungary to the UN, New York

Budapest , Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Conference on 60 and 70 years of the UN

“Dialogos” is a Greek compound-word widely mistranslated and wrongly understood because of confusion between “duo” and “dia”. It does not mean a conversation between two people or two groups, but an acceptance, by two participants or more, that they will compare and contrast their respective arguments to the very end. Dialogue is accordingly a perilous enterprise, for it implies a risk that either participant may find his or her argument transformed, and thus their very identity put to the test.

To me, the UN has been created for dialogue. To me, the UN has to act on the highest possible level of dialogue.

You will agree with me that we have to renew our commitment to understanding and respecting each other’s cultural background and identity, keeping in our hearts and minds the verses of Jalal al-Din Rumi, the great 13th century Islamic scholar, poet and philosopher:

“Half of me comes from here, half from everywhere.
Half of me comes from the pearls of the sea, half from distant shores.”

We, people of the world, are connected to each other globally, and today our interdependence is greater than ever. So we have to consciously protect our sensitive peace together and we have to act against the evil together for the betterment of the future of our children.

Excellencies, Dear Guests, Dear Friends,

The founding mothers and fathers of the UN and its organs, including the Security Council, wanted to “save succeeding generations from the

scourge of war” but also wanted to achieve more: human rights, rule of law, development. And as Nelson Mandela said, there is no peace without development and no development without peace.

We have seen an amazing evolution of humanity since the end of the Second World War. We should never forget the immense development in the political arena. And we should be proud of that. The UN has undeniably had its success stories. It stabilized the security situation during a bipolar world and in many cases served as the most important, sometimes last hope in the international platform of Member States to overcome their differences.

Only, people do not seem to remember why UN had to be set up 70 years ago!

Only, conflicts, bloodshed and human suffering are ongoing. Religious and ethnic minorities are again threatened, people are beheaded because of their religion, nationality and beliefs.

Excellencies,

The UN is always like we – the Member States- are . It mirrors the world we create.

There is clearly room for improvements. But we should not forget that the UN still offers us a forum where we can meet and interact with each other, where we can work for bettering the world, while also promoting our respective national priorities.

Hungary celebrates its 60 years in the UN.

- The Treaty of Peace signed in Paris, on 10 February **1947**, between the Allied powers and Hungary already referred to Hungary's eventual membership in the United Nations. Although the initial application for membership stating Hungary's readiness to accept the obligations contained in the Charter was made by the Hungarian Government on 22 April 1947, a number of applications for UN membership, including that of Hungary, were blocked for several years.
- Following a “package deal” made between the two Blocs (only a few months after the admission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the NATO and the creation of the Warsaw Pact), the Security Council and the General Assembly decided to allow 16 countries, including my own, to be admitted as members of the UN on **14 December 1955**.
- A few months after Hungary joined the UN, the **1956 Revolution** took place and gave loads of work to the UN, too. The “Hungarian problem” was on the agenda of the Security Council and the General Assembly for many years.

Hungary has always been an active actor of the UN family. We gave a President of the General Assembly, sit in the Security Council twice, played an active role in different committees and working groups. And proposed talented candidates for high offices.

Today the Permanent Mission of Hungary aims to act in a spirit of openness, inclusivity and bridge-building, with due respect for others' positions, in search of long term, principled win-win solutions for the universal issues related to peace, security, social and economic development and human rights.

We support the **Security Council reform and revitalization of the work of the General Assembly** resulting an organisation that reflects the realities of the 21st century.

We are also an active member of the so-called **Accountability, Coherence, Transparency** (i.e. ACT) cross-regional group and we believe in the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) concept.

Hungary supports ensuring **criminal justice for atrocity crimes** committed in Syria, Iraq, Libya and elsewhere. We are particularly concerned by the crimes committed against religious and ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups.

After co-chairing the Open Working Group on **Sustainable Development** Goals for more 1,5 years, Hungary maintains its active engagement in the recent intergovernmental negotiations aimed at defining a universal and transformative development agenda and creating a supportive international framework, while respecting Member States' sovereignty in the implementation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I had the privilege in 2011 in Paris- UNESCO after a year long election campaign being elected by 193 member states unanimously as the President of the General Conference for 2 years.

I envisaged my Presidency to be truly representative of all Member States. In my acceptance speech I outlined my vision and aspirations ,and highlighted the three major themes of my future work:

- Celebrating cultural diversity through intercultural and inter-faith dialogue;

- Promoting gender equality and raising awareness of the role of women in conflict resolution; and
- Exercising soft power for advancing peace – cultural, scientific, sports diplomacy.

The choice of these three topics has been neither accidental nor new. They have defined my past life as a musician, writer, television broadcaster, film maker, cultural diplomat or high official in the state administration. These three of my long term commitments have been now included into the everyday directions of the Hungarian UN mission in New York, too.

Why? Because the loss and confusion of identities led young boys and girls to terrorist groups. Because the crime perpetrated in the name of religion is the greatest crime against religion!

Because we have to build and rebuild trust between people. For that we need to invest more into the art of cultural diplomacy.

Because we are determined to work for women protection, for example fight against modern slavery . You may not have known it, but – according to the global slavery index – an estimated 35.8 million people live in a state of modern slavery today and majority of them are women and girls.

Almost in all of my statements, I underscore the importance of education , the fight against discrimination, inequality and violent extremist ideologies, to assist post-conflict reconstruction, or to facilitate the healing process in a traumatized society.

Hungary in the UN is a strong advocate for human rights, the fight against racism, discrimination, antisemitism. Our peacekeeping troops are protecting the most vulnerable , fighting against terrorists.

Your Excellencies,

In the practice of international relations, it is common to look at the world as divided into the developed and developing, democratic and democratizing, rich and poor, North and South. Putting countries into distinct and simple categories serves as a conceptual tool for academicians and politicians alike. But it also obstructs our vision of the true diversity of humanity, and prevents us from understanding the shared values that make us one human family.

UN after 70 years is still the responsible platform for that.

Thank you for your attention!