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**PRESS RELEASE**

**CEU CONDEMNS PASSAGE OF AMENDMENTS TO HUNGARY’S HIGHER EDUCATION LAW RESTRICTING ACADEMIC FREEDOM, PLANS LEGAL ACTION**

Budapest, April 4, 2017 – Central European University (CEU) condemns the Hungarian Parliament’s passage of amendments to the Hungarian national law on higher education today. The new law puts at risk the academic freedom not only of CEU but of other Hungarian research and academic institutions.

The deadlines imposed in the final form of the legislation are even more punitive than earlier versions and the requirement that foreign institutions like CEU receive authorization from US federal authorities appears not to understand the US Constitution. US law clearly gives authority for higher education to the states. We have operated since 2004 on just such an agreement between the Governor of the State of New York and the then Prime Minister of Hungary.

CEU also regards the new legislation as a violation of the clear constitutional provisions in Hungary’s basic law that protect the freedom of scientific research. “We will contest the constitutionality of this legislation,” said CEU President and Rector Michael Ignatieff. “In the meantime, we call on the government to enter into dialogue to see whether an agreement can be reached to resolve the issue. Such an international binding agreement must allow CEU to continue its operations in Budapest and safeguard its academic freedom.”

In reacting to the new law, Rector Ignatieff said, “This legislation has been rammed through Parliament in a single week following a tide of defamatory attacks on the university and its degrees. These attacks have not succeeded. We are deeply grateful for the support we have received from Hungarian faculty, students and institutions of learning. “

CEU also calls the government’s attention to the wave of support for CEU and for academic freedom received from noted academics in Hungary, Nobel laureates, university presidents, the U.S. Department of State, academic organizations, student groups, and ordinary citizens in Hungary and around the world.

CEU will continue to maintain the integrity and continuity of its academic programs throughout this period and assures all current and prospective students that CEU will remain in continuous operation whatever the circumstances.

Expressions of support for CEU and condemnation of the legislation include:

- 17 Nobel Prize winners and more than 500 European and American academics
- Over 1,000 cognitive scientists including 2 Nobel Laureates
- Princeton University President Christopher L. Eisgruber
- The United States Department of State
- Laszlo Lovasz, President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- Hungarian National Conference of Student Unions
- Eötvös Loránd University
- University of Szeged
- University of Pecs, Faculty of Business and Economics
- Andrassy University Budapest
- Academia Europaea
- 18 Hungarian Colleges of Excellence
- The British Academy of Social Sciences and Humanities
- The Regius Professors of Oxford and Cambridge Universities
- Oxford University Vice-Chancellor Louise Richardson, recently elected to CEU's Board of Trustees
- The European Society of Cambridge University
- The Canadian University Teachers Association
- European University Association
- Indian Academy of Sciences
- Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
- Others to be found on <https://www.ceu.edu/category/istandwithceu> (as news stories) and here <https://www.ceu.edu/istandwithCEU/support-statements> (listing)