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Mr. Zoltán Balog
Minister of Human Capacities
1054 Budapest, Akadémia utca 3.
Hungary

March 03, 2017

Dear Minister Balog,

let me address you on behalf of Vilnius Institute for Advanced Studies (VILIAS) to register our protest at the modifications of the Higher Education Law being considered by the Hungarian Parliament, which are likely to result in the closure of the Central European University in Budapest.

The CEU is a valued member of the international academic community and an important center of excellence that forms a particularly significant part of the Central and Eastern European landscape of higher education in humanities and social sciences. Not only CEU's current Hungarian and foreign lecturers, researchers and students are active members of the national and international professional scene, but also many of the presently active Lithuanian academics and institutions in the social sciences and humanities have studied or cooperated with or otherwise benefited from the activities of the CEU in the recent past and continue to do so.

Restricting the operating conditions of the institution or its possible closing would be a loss not only for lecturers, researchers and students of CEU, but for all of us, the professional scientific community in the region. The government's proposed legislation to alter its statute of operation in Hungary would compromise its academic freedom and set a dangerous precedent for academic life in other countries.

We respectfully urge the Hungarian government to critically reconsider the proposed legislation and enter consultation with CEU, bearing in mind the damage such legislation might do to Hungary's well-founded international academic reputation, to its relationships with its European and other international partners.

Yours sincerely,

Sincerely yours,
dr. Algimantas Čepas
Director
Vilnius Institute for Advanced Studies (VILIAS)