

To:

Anneliese Dodds MEP  
Nigel Farage MEP  
Daniel Hannan MEP  
Janice Atkinson MEP  
Dianne James MEP

Keith Taylor MEP  
Catherine Bearder MEP  
Raymond Finch MEP  
Nirj Deva MEP  
Richard Ashworth MEP

CC: Support\_for\_CEU@ceu.edu

14<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

### **RE Hungarian Government Attack on CEU**

We, the members of the department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Southampton (including two graduates of CEU), are writing to express our dismay at the actions of the Hungarian government in targeting the operation of CEU.

The recent modifications to the National Higher Education Act passed by the Hungarian Parliament on April 4, 2017 and signed into law by the President of Hungary on April 10, 2017 makes the continued operation of Central European University (CEU) in Budapest effectively impossible and is an extraordinary violation of the integrity and freedom of an institution of higher education. These modifications are discriminatory, as several of its passages target only CEU, and it was passed without regard to due procedure thereby threatening not only academic freedom but also the rule of law in Hungary and the European Union.

CEU was founded in 1991 by a distinguished group of Europeans – including then President of Hungary Arpad Goncz; then President of Czechoslovakia Vaclav Havel; Polish historian Bronislaw Geremek, who later became Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Hungarian-American philanthropist George Soros – to support the transition from Communism to freedom through education. In the past 25 years CEU has become a globally renowned private university, whose reputation in teaching and research in the social sciences and humanities is considerable. With students from 117 countries and faculty from 40 – the largest portion of whom are from European Union member states – CEU is both a European and an American institution with a truly global reach.

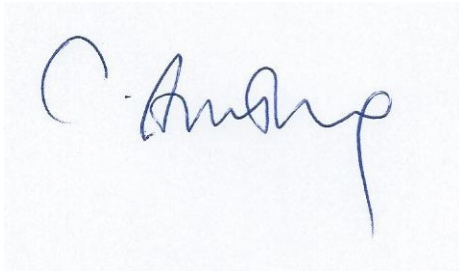
As CEU seek all available legal remedies so that it may remain in Budapest, it continues to have the full support of the U.S. government, most recently reiterated by the [US State Department](#) calling on Hungary to suspend the law. The [European Commission](#) said it will conduct a thorough legal assessment and consider infringement proceedings; and the European Parliament will debate the situation in Hungary on April 26<sup>th</sup> and we urge you to participate strongly in this debate to defend CEU. While CEU is seeking all possible legal remedies, the appeals process will take time, and this legislation must be stopped immediately for CEU to continue operating in Budapest. Leaders of European countries, the European Commission, and the European Parliament can and must defend academic freedom and the integrity of universities operating within the

### **Politics and International Relations**

Faculty of Social, Human and Mathematical Sciences, Building 58, Highfield Campus, University of Southampton,  
Southampton SO17 1BJ United Kingdom

European Union. I ask you to act now to do everything in your power to stop this legislation and defend the academic freedom of EU citizens.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Armstrong', on a light blue background.

Professor Chris Armstrong  
Head of Department  
Politics and International Relations  
email: [C.Armstrong@soton.ac.uk](mailto:C.Armstrong@soton.ac.uk)