



His Excellency,  
Dr. Janos Ader President of the Republic of Hungary  
Office of the President of the Republic of Hungary  
1536 Budapest, Pf. 227  
Hungary

Amsterdam, 10 April 2017

**Subject:** Letter of support for the Central European University

Dear HE President Ader,

*AFEW International* is writing to express solidarity with the Central European University (CEU). We are an international network of civil society organisations that is dedicated to improving the health of key populations. With a focus on Eastern Europe and Central Asia, *AFEW International* strives to promote health and increase access to prevention, treatment and care for public health concerns such as HIV, TB, viral hepatitis, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. *AFEW International* promotes open and objective debate on drug policy. We are concerned about Bill T/14686 amending Act CCIV of 2011 on national higher education, accepted by the Hungarian Parliament on April 4, 2017. The Bill renders CEU's continued operations in Budapest virtually impossible and strikes a severe blow against the academic freedom that enables all universities, including those in Hungary, to flourish.

Furthermore, the Bill raises significant legal and constitutional concerns. As a result, we respectfully urge you to refrain from signing the Bill and to refer it to the Constitutional Court of Hungary on the following grounds, among others:

- The law limits academic freedom, the right to education and cultural rights by requiring foreign higher education institutions to operate in Hungary based on a binding international agreement, and
- The law further limits rights and freedoms when it requires foreign higher education institutions with a campus in Hungary to provide higher education programs in their country of origin as well.

In the 25 years since it was founded by a group that included then President of Hungary Arpad Goncz and then President of Czechoslovakia Vaclav Havel, Central European University has established itself as a private international university with a global reputation for teaching and research in the social sciences and humanities.

The cause of protecting academic freedom in Hungary has strong support from citizens and institutions around the world including 19 Nobel Prize laureates, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Corvinus University, Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and many others. We urge you to act on your Presidential prerogative and send the Bill to the Constitutional Court of Hungary where the above concerns regarding its legality and constitutionality can be appropriately reviewed to protect the proud tradition of Hungarian academic life and preserve its autonomy and freedom.



Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Anke van Dam

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