

# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

INSTITUTE OF SLAVIC, EAST EUROPEAN,  
AND EURASIAN STUDIES

260 STEPHENS HALL # 2304  
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April 2, 2017

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

Dear Minister Balog,

In the name of the Institute for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, I respectfully urge the government to withdraw the proposed legislation directed at the Central European University and enter consultation with the university's administration. Its freedom must be maintained. We, like academics throughout the United States, have close and productive relations with CEU, and are gravely concerned at the damage that will be done to scholarship -- in Hungary and internationally -- if this legislation is passed.

Over its relatively short existence, CEU has become synonymous for serious, fearless, path-breaking scholarship, concerned only with the search for truth. *We at Berkeley routinely urge our students to continue their studies at CEU.* (Berkeley is the third-ranked research university in the world.) In a recent visit to Budapest I visited with one who is pursuing a Masters degree at CEU who told me she had never worked so hard in her life. But she also had never felt as intellectually stimulated.

I might mention that we have a thriving program in Hungarian Studies here at Berkeley that likewise would suffer the loss of professors and academics with whom we have been in touch for many years, if the CEU were to be reduced in its Budapest operation.

It takes extraordinary effort to found and nurture any university, but that is especially true of a university like CEU that depends upon cooperation from scholars and students stemming from over 100 countries. Please, we beg you, let it continue its valued operations in peace. As an author of a book on university history in Central Europe, I have had opportunity to chronicle the ruinous effects states have had when they intervened in the internal workings of universities. Your part of the world has seen too much destruction of culture; please help preserve and protect the Central European University.

Sincerely yours,



John Connelly  
Professor of History and Director

CC: Viktor Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary; Office of the Prime Minister; CEU