



THE KERALA STATE HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL

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Chairman KHEC Commission

To

Rev'd Zoltán Balog,
Minister of Human Resources, Hungary,
1054 Budapest, Akadémia utca 3.

Respected Minister Rev'd. Balog,

We the Kerala State Higher Education Council join the academics worldwide, including several Nobel Laureates, EU Commissioners, the president of Germany, former U.N Secretary General Kofi Annan, the Indian Academy of Sciences, top American universities, including Harvard, Princeton, Yale and MIT, as well as Oxford and Cambridge, besides the President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the major Hungarian universities and largest student organizations, who have already appealed to you and expressed solidarity with the Central European University (CEU) at Budapest, for ensuring the constitutionally ordained autonomy of the institution. It is our distinct belief that you as an enlightened politician have taken note of the University's commendable public support in Hungary and intellectual recognition abroad.

We, the Kerala State Higher Education Council that is the quality lead of the entire universities in the state express our concern about the amendment 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. We are deeply concerned that the new legislation renders the continued operation of Central European University (CEU) in Budapest, an internationally renowned university ranking among the best universities around the globe in the fields of social sciences and humanities, nearly impossible, because it deprives the institution of its integrity and freedom.

It is my personal experience that CEU works on the basis of the universal validity and transferability of high-level knowledge, serving as a platform for intellectual convergence and cognitive encounter between East and West as well as North and South. I know several students and faculty from India, who have found a place at CEU for rethinking issues of global interest and carrying out research into India's past and present, leading to the production of new knowledge. There is a fruitful cooperation between the Indian Embassy in Hungary and its Cultural Centre and CEU, looking back to almost a decade. Also under the leadership of Prof. Istvan Perczel, who is a world renowned scholar in Syriac and Syrian Christian research, a team of enterprising young scholars, engaged in linguistic, ethnic and religious studies, are setting up a centre for South Asian studies. If CEU could not continue its normal functioning, this initiative and the resulting contacts with Indian institutions along with the related invaluable researches under way would also be lost to Hungary.

Professors, researchers, scientists, academic community members in India believe that academic freedom and the integrity of universities are values that are precious and must be defended every time and all around the world. Therefore, we wholeheartedly urge you and the Government of Hungary to restore the constitutionally ordained autonomy of CEU and allow the institution to continue as an American-Hungarian institution in Budapest, by conducting its widely acclaimed academic programmes and issuing U.S. Degrees in Hungary.



Prof. Rajan Gurukkal

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