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## PRESS RELEASE

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### László Hamos Remembered in the Hungarian Parliament *Minority Leaders Recall His Professional Excellence, Personal Integrity*

On July 1, a memorial gathering in the Hungarian Parliament recalled the life and work of László Hamos, founder and president of the Hungarian Human Rights Foundation (HHRF), who passed away April 16 in New York. Nearly 150 invited guests filled the Parliament's Delegation Room, including family, friends, allies and co-workers from many countries.



The memorial speeches gave eloquent testimony to László's remarkable life and personal legacy. The first speaker was **Zsolt Németh**, president of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, who noted that Hungarian organizations in the Western diaspora, such as HHRF, acted as important catalysts for regime change in Hungary. **Árpád János Potápi**, Secretary of State for National Policy, praised László's dedication over more than four decades of professional activity on behalf of human rights for Hungarian minorities. Bishop **László Tőkés**, the Hungarian Reformed minister whose resistance to the Ceausescu regime's campaign of terror and intimidation sparked the Romanian revolution in 1989, expressed his personal gratitude to László, who fought relentlessly and

successfully to keep Hungarian minority issues on the international agenda. Other minority leaders also expressed their indebtedness to HHRF's literally life-saving actions during the Communist era: **Miklós Duray**, twice imprisoned by Czechoslovak authorities, whose case was championed internationally by HHRF; **Géza Szőcs**, a former editor of the "Ellenpontok" clandestine newsletter, whose first-hand information on the plight of the Hungarian minority in Romania was obtained, translated and disseminated by HHRF; and **László Józsa**, a leader of the Hungarian community in former Yugoslavia.

**Hunor Kelemen**, president of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSz), noted that László's unimpeachable reputation literally opened doors for Hungarian minority leaders visiting U.S. officials in Washington D.C. A statement by **László Brenzovics**, president of the Cultural Alliance of Subcarpathia (Ukraine) was read by his colleague **György Kota**, a former intern at HHRF, who added his personal recollections of László during the 1990's. László's niece, **Ildikó Hámos**, poignantly recalled László's supportive love for family members and special capacity for listening. Finally, **Zsolt Szekeres**, HHRF's newly appointed president, briefly touched on HHRF's future direction, building upon the foundations laid by László.

Also in attendance was **László Kövér**, president of the Hungarian Parliament. **László Gy. Kiss**, noted *tárogató* artist (traditional Hungarian wind instrument), provided musical interludes during the program.

The entire program may be viewed [here](#).

The memorial was organized and sponsored by:

- Hungarian Human Rights Foundation (Magyar Emberi Jogok Alapítvány)
- Foundation for the European Representation of Hungarian National Communities (Alapítvány a Magyar Nemzeti Közösségek Európai Érdekképviseletéért)
- Pro Minoritate Foundation (Kisebbségéért – Pro Minoritate Alapítvány)

On June 22, László was posthumously awarded the Magyar Örökség Díj (Hungarian Heritage Award) in Budapest, in recognition of his four decades of activities to protect and promote the human rights of Hungarian minorities. Árpád Hámos, László's brother, accepted the award on his behalf.

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## Hungarian Human Rights Foundation

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