

Hungary's Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Brief summary of the strategic document of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

*

On 1 July 2011 Hungary – after her spell as President of the Council of the European Union – returned to the “daily routine” of life as a Member State, and thus continues to pursue her foreign and Europe policies with the same duties and responsibility as other Member States. This has made it timely for us to review the main premises of Hungarian foreign policy: our values, current status, goals, and future plans.

Hungary intends to conduct a value-based foreign policy. Our goals are not selected on an ad hoc basis, but are a function of those values that are its most important sources: The UN Charter, the North Atlantic Treaty and the Treaty on the European Union and Hungary's constitution, in effect as of 1 January 2012. Having a value-based foreign policy *does not mean that Hungary should inherently limit her relations with countries that do not fully respect the values we adhere to.* The question is what the most effective methods of advancing our value-based interests are. The **harmonisation of our interests and values** must always be based on the rational analysis of the relevant circumstances and on the conclusions drawn from them.

A global realignment of international power relations has taken place in recent years as a result of changes in the economic performance of individual countries, or group of countries. The global transition and the accompanying economic crisis that is having a particularly serious effect on Europe have found Hungary in a socially and economically weakened position. The worsening European and global economic situation makes a visible economic recovery exceedingly difficult, as Hungary is among the most open economies in the world. This continues to pose a great challenge for Hungary, and for our diplomacy as well. Based on Hungary's current situation, Hungary regards the following areas to be of significant importance, i.e. priorities:

- **Regional policy:** the advancement of Hungary's interests in connection with our region (interests in common, or in relation with the other countries of Central, and South-East- Europe), including the advancement of the protection of interests of Hungarians living abroad.
- **Euro-Atlantic orientation:** the representation of our national interests in the EU and NATO, among others working for a strong and united Europe (successful economic crisis management, the prevalence of the community-based method in decision-making) and the further strengthening of transatlantic cooperation.
- **Global opening:** revitalising Hungary's ties with those parts of the world that were accorded lesser importance in Hungary's foreign policy focus in recent years (or were always outside the scope of that focus); increasing our role in shaping the global agenda and strengthening our activism in meeting global challenges.

The role of Hungary's foreign policy is to aid government efforts to make Hungary successful in her international relations, assist in the implementation of the government's program and the individual ministries' sectoral strategies using the tools of political diplomacy – the network of foreign representations and the Ministry's resources.

The sectoral strategies with a strong external dimension which are thus more characteristically present in Hungary's foreign relations, make up together the profile of Hungarian foreign policy. Out of these the strategic document specifically deals with security policy, energy security, the promotion of collective rights of national minorities, the issues of agriculture, food security, sustainable development as well as the goal of respecting cultural diversity.

Hungary continues to be strongly committed to European integration even in a time of economic hardship and the ensuing difficulties in the cooperation within the EU. In line with this, the Hungarian government wants to pursue an active EU policy. Hungary is intent on establishing a **strong and united European Union.** **Hungary's Europe policy must strengthen efforts aimed at combating the leadership crisis and restoring the power of democratically elected governments.**



MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF HUNGARY

Hungary's foreign policy is not an end in itself, but is a public service: it offers the following: strengthening the security in an international context, enhancing the international visibility of the community (our country and nation), securing the external resources for our well-being, broadening the opportunities for external educational and cultural contacts and – last but not least – ensuring access to consular protection for our citizens. Accordingly, Hungary's foreign policy governance develops its modern working methods in order to enhance the efficiency of foreign policy work.