

## **The Hungarian card came out of the vest pocket of Romanian President Klaus Werner Iohannis**

Head of State Klaus Iohannis was reported to the National Anti-Discrimination Council by the Imre Mikó Legal Protection Service. The legal protection service asks the Council to investigate Klaus Iohannis' statement issued this morning, in which the Head of State of Romania seriously violates the right of the Hungarian community to dignity and speaks in an unworthy and discriminatory manner about the Hungarians in Romania.

The President's discriminatory anti-Hungarian outburst was triggered by the tacit adoption of the Romanian House of Representatives of a bill regarding the autonomy of Szeklerland. "Jó napot kívánok PSD," (*Have a good day!*) said the President in Hungarian, who stated, that while the government was fighting the coronavirus, the PSD was working to give the Hungarians Transylvania. "It's unbelievable what's going on in the parliament. What did Viktor Orbán promise Ciolacu (President of the PSD) in return for this agreement?"

While the head of state proudly declares towards the international fora that Romania is the Paradise for national minorities, today in his speech he promised the following: as long as he is the president of Romania, there will be no law that would guarantee autonomy for Szeklerland. Although the submitted draft text on autonomy does not in any way diminish the rights of Romanians, or even the Romanians of Szeklerland, however it would guarantee the use of the mother tongue and the Hungarian language becoming an official regional language in Szeklerland. The draft-bill states what all of us desire: to make our own decisions on issues that affect our own community. According to the draft bill Szeklerland will become an autonomous region of Romania with legal personality, where Hungarian and Romanian language must be used in public institutions, the autonomy of the region does not affect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Romanian state and the government would continue to appoint a prefect to oversee the compliance of the rule of law in the region.

The Romanian Parliament is debating the draft law regarding the autonomy of Szeklerland for the fourth time. So far, the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (RMDSZ) has submitted this legislative initiative to Parliament four times: in 2004, 2012, 2018 and in 2019. In 2018 and 2019, the same bill was introduced, without amendments.

Each initiative was followed by a parliamentary debate in the committees and in the plenary sessions followed by a vote, with the draft law voted down each time by the Romanian parliament. The question is whether there can be an open and fair debate today on the different forms of autonomy in Romania, which is fundamentally nothing more than a form of decentralization. For the time being, there seems to be no chance for a fair, democratic and open debate.

Klaus Iohannis made a hysterical statement unworthy of the President, reminiscent of the violent and dangerous policy of the Greater Romania Party: "Hungarians taking away Transylvania". Today we have witnessed an unprecedented manifestation of the last 30 years,

as misinformation and incitement of hatred against Hungarians can be heard from the microphone of the presidential palace. The Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania strongly rejects this kind of speech and incitement to hatred. The President must apologize for his dangerous words!

“We hope, Klaus Iohannis, that once you have managed to protect Romania and Transylvania from the Hungarians, you will have time to make sure that people have jobs, that they can go to work, so that businesses do not go bankrupt. Because currently this would be your most important task!” said Hunor Kelemen, the president of the RMDSZ.

*29-04-2020 – Csilla Hegedüs*