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December 2, 2005

VIA FACSIMILE

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
Washington, D.C.

Re: Romania

Dear Madam Secretary:

We wish you much success with your trip to Europe, including Romania, this month.

Long-term American interests in maintaining a strong and stable NATO capable of effectively participating in the war against terrorists will be served only if our new allies are strong democracies. Romania needs to push through much-needed political reforms. As noted by the CIA Factbook, Romania “must continue to address rampant corruption – while invigorating lagging economic and democratic reforms” In the context of multi-ethnic Romania, as elsewhere in Central Europe and the Balkans, democracy is, among other things, a function of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect for the rights of national, ethnic and religious minorities. A government that fails to respect minority rights can hardly be deemed genuinely democratic, even if it has come to power through the ballot.

Romania needs to continue its reforms relative to its more than 1.5 million strong ethnic Hungarians. As you continue your broad range of dialogue with Romania, we respectfully urge you to raise with your interlocutors the critical need for that country to address and resolve the following matters, among others:

- Romania’s failure to restore church properties confiscated by the previous communist regime;
- Romania’s failure to adopt the law on national minorities living in Romania;
- Romania’s refusal to support the Hungarian national minority communities’ (cultural and territorial) autonomy proposals that would ensure local self-governance and the protection of their unique culture and ethnic identity; and
- Romania’s refusal to establish a Hungarian-language state university.

In sum, your trip presents a wonderful opportunity to promote continued progress by Romania in developing laws and practices toward its minorities that are compatible with Western values and NATO’s security goals and that thereby will advance vital U.S. interests in a stable and democratic Central and Eastern Europe.

Sincerely,

Frank Koszorus, Jr.
First Vice President