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## House of Representatives

REMEMBERING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TREATY OF TRIANON WITH HUNGARY

HON. ANDY HARRIS  
OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2020

Mr. HARRIS. Madam Speaker, as Co-Chair of the Congressional Hungarian-American Caucus, I rise today on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Treaty of Trianon with Hungary signed on June 4, 1920, at the Paris Peace Conference at the end of the First World War.

The non-negotiable treaty cost Hungary over 70 percent of her territory and one-third or three million of her indigenous ethnic-Hungarian population. For the last one hundred years, these ethnic Hungarian minorities have had to live in neighboring countries, with their cultural and political lives suffering at times.

The Hungarian-American Caucus is a bipartisan group of distinguished House members, which seeks to represent the interests of Hungarian American constituents; foster bilateral relations between Hungary, a strong NATO ally, and the United States; and protect the rights of Hungarian minorities in Europe.

To that end, I include in the RECORD the following statement by the American Hungarian Federation, the oldest American Hungarian association in the United States, founded in 1906 in Cleveland, Ohio, and based in Washington, D.C., on the occasion of this 100th Anniversary of the Treaty of Trianon.

### AMERICAN HUNGARIAN FEDERATION

Akos L. Nagy, President of American Hungarian Federation.

Paul Kamenar, Chair, Executive Committee

Frank Koszorus, Jr., Chair, International Relations Committee.

### THE TREATY OF TRIANON: A HUNGARIAN TRAGEDY

*"Ancient poets and theologians could not imagine such suffering, which Trianon brought to the innocent. In their eyes, that was for the damned in Hell."*—Sir Winston Churchill

One hundred years ago, June 4, 1920, the Hungarian delegation to the Paris Peace Conference was forced to sign the punishing Treaty of Trianon, arguably the most severe of all the post-World War I settlements concluded at the conference. Led by the Big Four—the United States, Great Britain, France and Italy—those treaties were collectively designed to conclude the First World War and make the “world safe for democracy,” according to President Woodrow Wilson.

The “peacemakers” instead concocted a hazardous brew. The ostensible “peace” turned out to be only an armistice as World War II erupted merely 20 years later. Tens of millions of civilians and members of the military died in that war; the Holocaust devastated the European Jewish community; a murderous Stalin occupied Central and Eastern Europe; and the world was thrust into a costly and dangerous Cold War. Supposedly in the name of national self-determination, Trianon dismembered the thousand-year-old Kingdom of Hungary, a self-contained, geographically and economically coherent and durable formation in the Carpathian Basin, boasting the longest lasting historical borders in Europe.

The resulting non-negotiable treaty cost Hungary over 70 percent of her territory and one-third or three million of her indigenous ethnic-Hungarian population. Add to this the loss of all her seaports and up to 90 percent of her vast natural resources, industry, railways, and other infrastructure.

Millions of Hungarians woke up one morning and saw borders arbitrarily redrawn around them without plebiscites, ignoring Wilson’s lofty goal of national self-determination. The “absurd” treaty, as Wilson later referred to it, was never ratified by the United States; ignored a millennia of nation building and age-old cultural affiliations; created new and enlarged countries; and produced millions of new minorities who today struggle for survival of their ethnic identity.

To this very day, Hungarian minorities have been subjected to discrimination, intolerance and violence. Schools in the successor states limit students from studying in their native Hungarian language; Hungarian church properties have been confiscated; and cemeteries and cultural monuments have been vandalized. The “peacemakers” did insist that the new successor states, Romania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, sign various international instruments that included provisions for the protection of minorities. But those promises are largely unkept.

Despite these promises and the fact that Romania obtained Transylvania from Hungary under Trianon—more territory than remained as Hungary—Romania continues to ignore its obligations. Just recently in April, Romania’s president incited animosity against its ethnic Hungarians by making inflammatory statements resulting in tensions between Hungary and Romania, two NATO allies. The Hungarian historical communities in Romania, particularly the Szeklers, are denied a range of rights that threatens their very cultural existence.

Hungarians in Serbia, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine have all requested semi-autonomy by peaceful and democratic means. Such local governance would ensure democracy to beleaguered Hungarians, fulfill promises made to them one hundred years ago, and strengthen the democratic process by serving as a model of how majorities and minorities can work together to redress past wrongs.

Considering the far-reaching implications of discrimination, intolerance, and animosity

directed at the Hungarian minorities, the response from the European Union and the United States to date has been tepid. Stronger measures must be taken to remedy the ongoing abuses of minority rights that contravene numerous European Commission standards.

Together, the European Union and United States must ensure that democratic principles and international norms and practices relating to national minorities will finally prevail in Central and Eastern Europe and bring regional tension to a just and lasting end, all of which is in the strategic interests of the United States and the American people. Only then will the Tragedy of Trianon be addressed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Hawes M.D.", is written in a cursive style.