

Fifth Forum on Minority Issues

27-28 November, 2012

**Statement by H.E. Andras Dekany, Permanent Representative of
Hungary**

Item 4

**Practical use of the Declaration: Identification of good practices and
positive measures**

Madam Chair, Madam Independent Expert,

The recently adopted new **Fundamental Law** of Hungary safeguards the languages and culture of nationalities living in Hungary, and at the same time secures the active participation of the state in promoting nationality languages. The Fundamental Law declares that nationalities living in Hungary are constituent parts of the state; every Hungarian citizen belonging to any nationality has the right to freely express and preserve his or her identity. Nationalities living in Hungary have the right to use their native languages and to the individual and collective use of names in their own languages, to promote their own cultures, and to be educated in their native languages. Nationalities living in Hungary have the right to establish local and national self-governments.

It should be emphasized, that laws related to the preservation and development of settlements with nationality historical traditions and of their architectural monuments cannot be enacted without requesting the opinion of the nationality self-government with nation-wide competence concerned. Similarly, the opinion of the nationality self-governments should also be asked when passing government regulations in connection with the implementation of the act on public education. An important new element is that the nationality self-government with nation-wide competence may go to court directly, with reference to the violation of nationality rights, requesting

the judicial revision of the legislation related to the above mentioned issues with special urgency.

As of the next general elections, the participation of nationalities in the work of the Parliament is ensured by the so-called **preferential representation system for nationalities** — namely a nationality candidate may become a Member of Parliament with only one quarter of the votes required to obtain a mandate.

The **new Nationalities Act** adopted last year — introduced from 1 January 2012 the unified concept of nationalities, instead of the concept of national and ethnic minorities, used since 1993. Provisions of the Nationalities Act include the fundamental, individual and collective rights of nationalities, within the fields of education, culture, media, as well as nationality self-governments and their system and operation.

On the basis of the recently adopted EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, Hungary, after broad professional and public consultation prepared its **National Social Inclusion Strategy** which has been sent to the European Commission. The Strategy is complex: it lays down an immediate action plan, and also assigns long term tasks. In addition, it systemizes all those areas and actors which deal with inclusion policies such as state measures, specified programmes, institutions and other actors.

In parallel with the National Social Inclusion Strategy, the Government also adopted last December a **Governmental Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Social Inclusion Strategy in the Years 2012 to 2014** which determines specific tasks, identifies the responsible Members of Government and sets deadlines in the areas of child welfare, education, employment, health care, housing, the involvement

of the individuals concerned, the awareness raising and the fight against discrimination.

Thank you for your kind attention.