



Geneva, 1 November 2016

HE Viktor Orban
Prime Minister of Hungary
1357 Budapest, Pf. 6

Your Excellency,

The Right Livelihood Award was established in 1980 to honour and support those “offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today”. Presented annually in Stockholm to outstanding environmentalists and proponents of peace and social justice, it has become widely known as the ‘Alternative Nobel Prize’ and there are now 166 Laureates from 68 countries.

The undersigned Laureates of the Right Livelihood Award raise their voice for the cause of Hungarian children of Roma origin, who are denied access to quality education solely because of the colour of their skin. We understand that about half of all Roma children in Hungary attend racially segregated primary schools. Segregation creates a huge education deficiency for Roma children, leaving them semi-literate and without the competences and skills required on the modern labour market, resulting in low employment reinforcing the vicious circle of poverty and exclusion.

The right to education is at the bedrock of international law. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states clearly that everyone has the right to education. This concept is further elaborated on and enshrined in international treaties of which Hungary is a State Party. States Parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognize in Article 10 (3) that “special measures of protection and assistance should be taken on behalf of all children and young people without any discrimination for reasons of parentage or other conditions.” Moreover, States Parties to the covenant recognise in Article 13 (1) “the right of everyone to education (and) that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups...” Segregating children on the basis of ethnicity is incompatible with this provision, as well as Article 29(c) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, where States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to “his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own...” Further, under Article 5(v)



of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, with regard to “the right to education and training.” Racially segregated primary schools are thus irreconcilable with Hungary’s obligations under the aforementioned international treaties and customary international law.

Therefore, we call on you to do your utmost to stop racial segregation for Roma children at school immediately and introduce inclusive education policies as well affirmative action to compensate for past discrimination.

Yours sincerely,

Alla Yaroshinskaya, Russia (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1992)

Alyn Ware, Switzerland/New Zealand (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2009)

Andras Biro, Hungary (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1995)

Angie Zelter, Trident Ploughshares, United Kingdom (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2001)

Camille Selleger, International Baby Food Action Network, Malaysia (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1998)

Chico Whitaker Ferreira, Brazil (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2006)

Committee of Soldiers Mothers of Russia – Ida Kuklina, Russia (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1996)

Dr. Hans Herren, Founder of Biovision Foundation, Switzerland (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2013)

Dr. Ruchama Marton, Founder and President, Physicians for Human Rights, Israel (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2010)

Dr. Sima Samar, Chairperson, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Afghanistan (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2012)

Finnish Village Action – Tapio Mattlar, Finland (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1992)



Jakob von Uexkull, Founder President, Right Livelihood Award

Janos Vargha, Hungary (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1985)

Johan Galtung, Norway (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1989)

Memorial – Grigory Okhotin, Russia (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2004)

Monika Hauser, Germany (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2008)

Nnimmo Bassey, Health of Mother Earth Foundation, Nigeria (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2010)

P K Ravindran, Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad, India (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1996)

Prof Dr. h.c. (mult.) Manfred Max-Neef, Director, Economics Institute, Universidad Austral de Chile, Chile (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1983)

Prof. Dr. Anwar Fazal, Director, Right Livelihood College, Malaysia (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1982)

Prof. Dr. Raúl A. Montenegro, President, Fundación para la defensa del ambiente, Argentina (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 2004)

Serb Civic Council – Miladin Vidakovic, Bosnia-Herzegovina (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1995)

Survival – Stephen Corry, UK/International (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1989)

Vesna Terselic, Croatia (Right Livelihood Award Laureate 1998)