

Speech by the Ambassador of Hungary H.E. Enikő GYÓRI

**commemorating the anniversary of the revolution and freedom fight of Hungary of
1848-49**

Torrejón de Ardoz, 21th March 2017

Commander,

My Fellow Countrymen / Kedves Honfitársaim, Katonák,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The **Hungarian Revolution of 1848** reminds all members of the Hungarian nation, civilians and military alike, that the **concepts of Liberty and Nation** were born that year on March 15th.

It is important to **recall the heritage that we inherited from our revolutionary forefathers** from 160 years ago, even if **it is getting almost fashionable nowadays to question values related to nation and national identity**. Those who disqualify notions such as one's belonging to a nation and consider national feelings as potentially harmful factors, fail to understand that **we all need strong roots in order to flourish** and we can express our national pride without hurting anyone.

In their struggle aimed at getting rid of national identities and the saluting of the national flags, **the same naysayers also wish for a world without armed forces**. The failure of this concept, Ladies and Gentlemen, is nowadays crystal clear. We are **in need of brave patriots** who are willing to **sacrifice their lives** for the community and the nation they sworn to defend. And we have to be grateful to them.

Hungary's revolutionary fights, starting from the March Revolution of 1848 that we recall today, and not forgetting the **1956 Revolution and Freedom Fight** whose sixtieth anniversary we commemorated last October, have always been characterized by **our will to belong to the free community of European nations**. After decades of communist oppression and the fall of the iron curtain, Hungary finally became an **integrated member of the Euro-Atlantic structures**.

Since our accession to the **North Atlantic Alliance** in 1999, NATO has become the cornerstone of our security, and our commitment to the Alliance has significantly increased our **participation in missions beyond our borders**. **Our soldiers in Torrejón and in many other parts of the world** are serving not only the interest of Hungary and the Hungarian nation, but also the international order and security. In effect, in order to take up the fight successfully with the changes of the 21st century and the challenges facing our civilization we need **international cooperation** which implies obligations abroad.

As far as current challenges are concerned, **terrorist networks and radicalized individuals** threaten the security and safety of our citizens all over the world. Hungary, is actively countering this threat, **fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with our allies against terrorist organizations** such as Daesh.

Given the paramount importance we attach to protect our citizens from the threat posed by terrorism, we believe that **threats emanating from the South** are as important as the **challenges coming from the East**. NATO's adaptation should, therefore, reflect a balanced approach, taking into consideration the interests of all Allies: 28 for 28. The Alliance can contribute to handling the problems at their origins by stepping up against threats emerging at its southern flank and by helping improve the security and defence capabilities of relevant partner countries.

Collective defence, solidarity, and the indivisibility of security are NATO's essence. The **Warsaw Summit last July** reinforced these principles and addressed the challenges we are collectively facing as a community. **Preserving the security of our community of nations** is a sacred duty that we inherited from our forefathers, who fought during the battles of our wars of independence.

Given the evolving nature of the transatlantic relationship, we deem it important to strengthen the **EU's Common Security and Defence Policy** as well. Two weeks ago, on March 6th, the **Foreign Affairs Council of the European Union** adopted conclusions that reflect the progress achieved in implementing the EU global strategy in the area of security and defence. The measures adopted include the **establishment of a military planning and conduct capability** (MPCC), within the existing EU Military Staff, whose Director will assume command of non-executive military CSDP missions. Hungary believes that our common European defence, which is compatible with NATO obligations, is an area where we deem necessary further cooperation between member States in order to **enhance the security of our citizens**.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, **remembering the Hungarian revolution and war of independence** of 1848-49, let's bow our heads before all our ancestors, and encourage our soldiers, wherever they serve, to get inspired by their dedication and their **service to the country and the broader Euro-Atlantic community**.