



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES

# BUDAPEST NEWSLETTER

September 2008

## Recently at the Embassy

### Top White House Official Promotes Diversity and Women's Empowerment in Hungary

From September 22-23, a top White House official, Joie Gregor, Assistant to the President for Presidential Personnel, visited Hungary to help address one of Ambassador April Foley's top priorities: promoting diversity and women's empowerment. During her stay, Ms. Gregor delivered the keynote speech at American Chamber of Commerce's (AmCham) 2nd Annual Diversity Conference; spoke at an AmCham breakfast event; and participated with notable women leaders in a roundtable discussion on empowerment issues. [More](#)



### Experts Discuss Energy Security in Europe

Freedom House Europe organized the roundtable series "Energy Security in Europe - From Economic Cooperation to Geopolitics" between September 11 and 25. Participants included Hungarian and international experts as well as government representatives and academics. Ambassador Foley participated in the first roundtable on September 11. In her remarks, she emphasized: "Projects like the Nabucco Pipeline can bring real diversification, but only if they are given priority status." At the second event, former U.S. Ambassador Keith Smith, now a scholar at CSIS, spoke about the lack of transparency in energy transfers that enrich higher level elites. [More](#)

### Ambassador Opens American Corner Directors' Training

Ambassador Foley opened the annual American Corner Director's Training Program at the Embassy on September 17. In her remarks, Ambassador Foley emphasized partnership as the core concept for the program, which continues to strengthen the relationship between Hungary and the United States. The American Corners program is a U.S. Department of State sponsored initiative inaugurated worldwide more than 10 years ago. Hungary has Corners in Pécs, Veszprém, Debrecen and Eger. [American Corners](#)



### Ambassador Foley Welcomes Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis

On September 15, Ambassador Foley expressed her great appreciation and respect to Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis in her welcoming remarks prior to the lecture of the visiting Jewish spiritual leader. In her outstanding lecture of "Life is a test...", the Rebbetzin shared remarkable stories not only about her own family, the rabbinic dynasty of Szeged, but talked about the important questions in life that all of us have in common. The Ambassador in her remarks echoed Rebbetzin Jungreis' general call for religious tolerance and diversity.

### Ambassador Meets with MSZP Faction Leader

[More](#)

Ambassador Foley hosted MSZP Parliamentary Faction Leader Ildikó Lendvai and senior members of the American Chamber of Commerce at a luncheon on September 12 to discuss the political situation and the business climate. AmCham representatives emphasized the importance investors attach to a predictable, transparent environment and underscored the need for continued reforms – particularly to Hungary's party finance laws – to maintain Hungary's international credibility and to enhance its economic competitiveness.



### Hungarian and American Military Cooperation in Action

On September 11, Ohio National Guard contribution to a joint Hungarian-U.S. Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) landed at Ferihegy airport where they had arrived by C-17 from Ohio, via Germany. They were met by a Hungarian Defense Forces representative, who took them to a military base where they will be training with their Hungarian team-mates for a period of several months before deploying together to Afghanistan. [More](#)

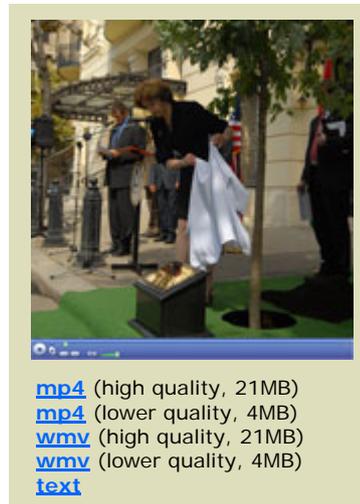
## Tree Planting Commemoration for 9/11 at the Embassy



Ambassador Foley, accompanied by Hungarian Defense Minister Imre Szekeres and Budapest Fifth District Mayor Antal Rogán, participated in a tree planting ceremony at the U.S. Embassy to commemorate the seventh anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

In her remarks, the Ambassador offered her thanks to the government and citizens of Hungary for their continued assistance in the global war on terrorism. She also emphasized the significance of the tree as a symbol of the power of the shared values that are at the heart of the U.S.-Hungarian relationship. Ambassador Foley reiterated President Bush's statement that we seek a "lasting memorial" to the victims in a "safer and more hopeful world."

In a written message, Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány noted the day's significance as a reconfirmation of a Hungarian commitment to freedom. Defense Minister Szekeres spoke resolutely about Hungary's unwavering resolve toward "strengthening the international coalition against terrorism," most notably through Hungary's support for peacekeeping efforts in Afghanistan. [Remarks](#)▶



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[text](#)

## Embassy Has Balanced Relations with Hungary's Political Parties

Ambassador Foley attended a briefing by SZDSZ Party President Gábor Fodor, Parliamentary European Affairs Committee Chair Mátyás Eörsi (recently returned from a trip to the United States), and Member of the European Parliament István Szent-Iványi September 8. In his remarks, Fodor addressed prospects for coming months, emphasizing the importance of action to reduce the state's role in the economy and to improve Hungary's economic competitiveness.



## Hungarian Parliamentarians Look at Agricultural Biotechnology in the U.S.



Coordinated by the Embassy's Foreign Agricultural Service, a group of Hungarian parliamentarians received first-hand information on agricultural biotechnology during a week-long visit to the U.S. at the end of August. In Washington, DC the Hungarian delegation was received by Michael Yost, the FAS/USDA Administrator, and then met with representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration. In Boone and Des Moines, Iowa the delegation saw a Farm Progress Show and spent time with Monsanto discussing new farming technology. They also met with leading scientists at the Iowa State University and examined the issue of biofuels and food. [More](#)▶

## U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary Discusses Situation in Georgia with Hungarian Media

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Matthew Bryza conducted a digital video press conference on the crisis in Georgia with representatives of the Hungarian media on August 28. Having recently returned from a visit to Tbilisi, Mr. Bryza was able to bring his audience up to date on the state of affairs in that region. Besides reviewing the background of the current crisis and the steps taken by both sides that brought it about, he elaborated on the U.S. humanitarian support that is being provided to the Georgians right now. [More](#)▶



## Elections '08



### Presidential and Vice Presidential Debates Are Coming!

In the finish of the 2008 elections, the candidates can present their views and opinions in three presidential and one vice presidential debates. For dates and background information please visit State Department's [Foreign Press Center](#)▶

### 270 Electoral Votes to Win!

Check the number of electoral votes and follow the latest standing of the candidates by state on the interactive map of [Electoral-vote.com](#)▶



# Looking Ahead

## New Public Diplomacy Envoy Fran Drescher to Visit Hungary

Popular actress Fran Drescher, who was named the third American Public Diplomacy Envoy on September 8, will give a public lecture on fight against cancer on October 6, 2:30-4 pm, in the Lecture Hall of the Semmelweis University's I. Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynecology (1088 Budapest, Baross u. 27) [More about Fran Drescher](#)



## Visit of Steve Kohn, Executive Director of the National Whistleblower Center

During his September 30-October 2 trip to Hungary, Mr. Kohn will discuss transparency and anti-corruption measures with Hungarian government and Parliament representatives, business leaders, and members of the media. [National Whistleblower Center](#)

## NATO Ministerial Meeting in Budapest

Budapest will host an informal meeting of NATO Defense Ministers on October 9-10. [NATO](#)

## Diversity Visa (DV) Lottery Program

The DV-2010 Lottery online entry will begin on October 2 and end on December 1. Instructions will soon be available on our [web site](#)

## Attention American Citizens: Voting Assistance

Trained staff will be on hand to help voters on September 30, 1-4pm at the Hungarian-American Fulbright Commission (Budapest, Baross u. 62. Phone: +36-1-462-8040) [More](#)

# In the News... from Washington

## President Bush Addresses United Nations General Assembly (09/23) [More](#)

"Together, we confront and defeat the evil of terrorism. Together, we can secure the Almighty's gift of liberty and justice to millions who have not known it. And together, we can build a world that is freer, safer, and better for the generations who follow."



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## Russia Must Change Course in Georgia, Says Rice (09/18)

"Our strategic goal now is to make it clear to Russia's leaders that their choices are putting Russia on a one-way path to self-imposed isolation and international irrelevance," Rice said in an address in Washington to the German Marshall Fund. [More](#)

## 2008 International Religious Freedom Report

The U.S. Department of State released its yearly report on September 18. [Report](#)

## Hungary—Market of the Month

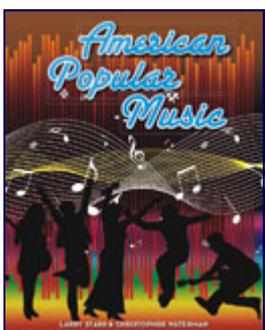
[Export.gov](#)

The Market of the Month program of Export.gov featured Hungary during the month of September.

# New Publications

## eJournal ▶ *The Electoral College*

More than 100 million voters are likely to cast ballots in the nationwide U.S. elections on November 4th. But only 538 men and women will elect the next president of the United States. This indirect presidential election system has shaped U.S. politics throughout history.



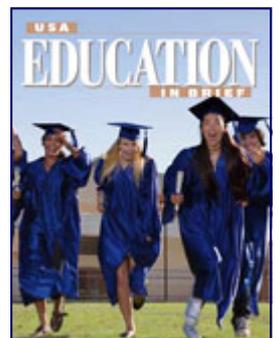
## USA Education in Brief

This new publication in the "in Brief" series provides an overview of the structure of U.S. education; its history and its 21st century challenges; civic, bilingual, and special education; and foreign exchanges. [Publication](#)

## American Popular Music

American popular music is a kaleidoscopic mélange of styles and dreams. Its vibrancy reflects the mating of cultural diversity to artistic and creative freedom. [Publication](#)

## IRC Newsletter: *U.S. Society and Values*



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