

# **Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's address after swearing the prime-ministerial oath of office**

*Budapest, 10 May 2018*

Honourable President of the Republic, Honourable Speaker, Fellow Members of Parliament,

My first words will be of thanks. Thank you to everyone who voted in the election for the National Assembly – whichever candidate they voted for. I especially thank those who voted for us, the civic, national and Christian forces. In addition to thanks, I am grateful to those who supported me personally. I know that I have a special responsibility in relation to them. I shall fulfil my special obligation to them, and I shall align it with my other obligation: that I must serve the whole country, our entire homeland, and every citizen of the nation. My government stands on the basis of a two-thirds parliamentary majority capable of constitutional amendment, but it will always serve the three thirds.

Honourable House,

I have accepted the invitation of the President of the Republic, and for the fourth time I have been able to swear my prime-ministerial oath here before you. I am now beginning my eighth parliamentary term in service of my homeland: I have served my homeland as a member of parliament for twenty-eight years. Even though I am Prime Minister, I ask you, my fellow Members of Parliament, to look upon me as one of you. I continue to believe that the homeland cannot be in opposition, because it stands high above political parties, and service to it cannot be made conditional on whether at a given time we are in opposition or in government. I see debate and conflict as a natural part of politics. Perhaps there is nothing wrong in this: if one hammers a nail into a wall and finds there is no resistance, what can one hang on that nail? I have gained enough knowledge of human nature to know that there is no point in hoping for a victory as placid as a gentle breeze. There is no point in us all wanting benevolent, peaceful agreements based on judgement of the facts: in the world of politics such a situation will hardly present itself to us – or if it does, it will be in rare moments of grace. However, I can promise – and I do promise – that my aim will be to ensure that as often as possible we will feel that an angel is looking down on us here in this house. I promise my opponents that whenever conflict between parties is unavoidable, I shall fight according to the code of chivalry. Meanwhile I

promise the representatives from the governing parties that in debates we shall bow to no one: if we are attacked, you can rest assured that the defence will be equal to the task.

Honourable House, Honourable Fellow Members,

In this house I have told you that politics is more dangerous than war – because in war one is only killed once. This sounds shocking, but in truth it is an optimistic thought, because it holds out the promise that those involved in politics will frequently rise from the dead. I myself have spent sixteen years in opposition and twelve years in government. I have learnt that victory is never final, and defeat is never fatal; all that matters is whether one is prepared to continue the battle. If God permits and we live to see the day, by the time we reach the end of this parliamentary term I will have served the same number of years in government as in opposition. But at that point the scores will still only be level. Let us immediately make it clear – and this is a suitable time and place to do so – that we are sportspeople, and we will not be satisfied with a draw.

Honourable House,

I stand before you full of optimism and hope, and prepared for action. The work completed so far can fill us all with justified confidence. If we look back, even at the mistakes that were made, we could not wish more for Hungary than that the years ahead may always be at least as good as the past eight have been. The electorate may also think this – which would explain the prosaic, arithmetical fact that the Fidesz-KDNP alliance won more votes than the combined total cast for all the opposition parties represented here. And with this, Dear Friends, let us draw a sharply-defined boundary. Let us draw a dividing line which Hungarian politics rarely sees. It does not see it, because it swings from one extreme to the other: from depressing, pervasive Hungarian pessimism to foolish over-optimism – and back again. Therefore let us draw that sharply-defined line: the line separating self-confidence from self-satisfaction. Let us make it clear that one cannot live off past glories. Let us recall the words of warning from King Stephen of Hungary: “Nothing but humility can raise one up; nothing but arrogance and hatred can cast one down.” Let us acknowledge that hidden behind the successes one always finds the grace of God. So the following is not just a rhetorical flourish, and not just tradition, but a deep conviction: *Soli Deo gloria* – Glory to God alone.

Honourable House, Honourable Fellow Members,

Having thus prepared ourselves, and having focused our thoughts, let us bravely declare that we undertake to do great things in the next four years. We know that, once sown, the field cannot be left unweeded: it must be hoed regularly. Therefore we shall carry out day-to-day work methodically, at the appropriate pace, and according to the appropriate routine. But we are eager for much more than this: we want to complete a truly momentous task – several, in fact. We also know that from a certain perspective a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; but now we want to hunt really big game.

Honourable House,

When I speak about Hungary's future, I can only speak with certainty about the next four years, as my mandate extends no longer than that. But you are also well aware that I never only think about the next four years. The opposition often criticise me for this, and my friends in government have warned me more than once to be cautious in long-term planning, because someone who walks without looking down at the ground in front of their feet can easily stumble and fall flat on their face. This has indeed happened to us in the past, and so there is truth in this advice. Nevertheless, I am convinced that we have an opportunity to undertake great tasks. It has been a long time since the stars were aligned as favourably for our homeland as they are right now. Today the Hungarian cause has been won. Everything required for great plans is now in place: there is experience, there are battle-hardened fellow soldiers, there is courage, international recognition, a country in the ascendant, serious plans, dynamism and self-confidence. Hungary and Hungarian citizens have not only regained their vitality, but now something is happening to us which is rare but well-known in Hungarian history: creative forces are coming to the surface. Hungarians now not only believe that, if they acquit themselves well, tomorrow will not be worse than today – although in this part of the world that in itself is not insignificant; but now they also believe that tomorrow can be better. Indeed the election result shows that they think that it not only can be better, but that it will be better. They want us to have a government that is worthy of the opportunities that lie ahead of us: they expect us to rise to the challenge, and in government they expect there to be at least as much optimism, desire for action and creative force as there is among the voters themselves. Wherever in the country one goes, one sees the signs of work, industry and building: tower cranes, construction workers and land under cultivation. Everyone has some kind of plan: they are building, expanding,

adjusting and beautifying. I feel that now we are setting ourselves great goals and we are on the same page – we are on the same wavelength – as the people. This encourages and empowers us to prepare our plans not for four years, but for ten years; in fact now we should think forward over a period of twelve years. What’s more, this is a requirement for responsible governance, as the implementation of the European Union’s next financial framework really will extend up until 2030.

Honourable House,

In politics the most important thing is time. To govern a country requires experience and confidence. One also needs knowledge of the terrain, an international perspective and a long-range view; and if these are accompanied by the courage for renewal and, in addition, we receive the grace of farsightedness, then our cause is already won. To tell the truth, I have always seen the twenty years between 2010 and 2030 as a single period. As I see it, democracy, free elections and the possibility for “political crop rotation” are not opposed to – and certainly do not rule out – long-term thinking and long-term planning. If that were the case, then those peoples who live in democracies would concede an irretrievable competitive advantage to those peoples who do not live in democracies. But common sense guides us in this direction. Anyone who has built a house knows that one should not dig the foundations until one is in possession of the final construction plans.

Honourable House,

I know that many will consider this to be incredible, but I believe that by 2030 it is an achievable goal for Hungary to be among the five best countries in the European Union in which to live and work. Similarly, I also think that it is possible for our homeland to be among the five best European Union states in terms of the new form of competitiveness ranking, in which the criterion is quality rather than quantity. Everyone knows that there are larger, more populous and richer countries than ours. But one could hardly find any that are more beautiful, safer, more steeped in ancient history or well protected as our Carpathian Basin – and, within it, Hungary. Those with an eye for history can see the possibilities here. To the doubters, I can only say that, after winning a two-thirds majority for the third time in a row, we must commit ourselves to the impossible – because the possible can also be achieved by others. This is why we undertake to halt demographic decline – indeed we will succeed in returning Hungary to an

upward trend. Major roads will link Budapest to our cities with county rights, our motorways will extend to the country's borders, and it will be possible to reach a multi-lane highway within thirty minutes of any point in the country. Hungary will be brought to the forefront in clean and sustainable energy production by new solar parks and the Paks II nuclear power plant. At present six hundred multinational companies are responsible for 80 per cent of world export trade. This is why we must bring investments to Hungary which produce high added value and higher wages. In this respect we want to be among the ten best countries in the world. Alongside all this, we will increase Hungarian-owned companies' share in exports from Hungary to 50 per cent of the total. We shall dramatically reduce the extent of widespread illnesses, and to achieve this we shall not shy away from streamlining health care and introducing strong incentives. And we shall finally build up the Hungarian Defence Force. Neighbours are continuously upgrading their military capabilities; and it is generally true that a nation which cannot guarantee its own defence is irresponsible, and is making a historic mistake. I am particularly counting on talented young military officers. In economic terms also we will build up Central Europe's spiritual and cultural community of historical fate, and our capitals and other cities will be linked by road, rail and air. We support the major role of Poland, and in cooperation with it we shall lay the foundations of an extended Central European economic area.

Honourable House,

Another great, inspiring goal for the future is restoration of the former greatness and glory of Budapest, which will play an important role in the unification of the nation. This city is both home to its residents and the nation's capital. For Hungarians Budapest is the eternal city, which belongs to every Hungarian – wherever in the world they may live. It is the city which awaits them. I believe that Hungary, and the Hungarian language and culture, exert an enormous magnetic power, which will attract those Hungarians whom the wind has blown from the Carpathian Basin. The wealthy, well-established and widely envied [Hungarian dramatist] Ferenc Molnár, who by then had settled in New York, was once asked why he was so downcast. He replied: "All my adversaries and enemies are in Budapest. I long for the envy of those over there; the envy of people here does not interest me."

Honourable House,

I have never made a secret of my opinion that the Western crisis of 2008 – which very nearly buried us, along with Greece – closed one era and launched another. At that moment the new world order, which for a long time up until then had been forming in the depths, came up to the surface. It then became clear that these were not simply new and unfamiliar phenomena, but that the world had entered a new era, with its own internal logic and divisions of power.

Before 2010 I already saw the task that lay ahead of me as highlighting and explaining to people the fact that we had entered a new era, and that this demanded change of everyone. I saw my mission as convincing Hungarians that it was not enough to perform better at doing the same thing that we had done the day before. We must aspire to doing new things, and this was true for everyone, for the whole of Hungary – including the Government: all of us were in need of renewal. I finally managed to convince Hungarians that this is not only unavoidable, but that we are also capable of it – individually and collectively. Therefore the aim of the crisis management measures adopted in 2010 was not to return to better times preceding the crisis, but also to lay new foundations, and introduce innovation: a new tax system, new monetary policy, a new constitution, new legal codes, new family support measures and a new attitude to work.

Honourable Fellow Members of Parliament,

When a nation embarks on a new path, as we did, it cannot avoid intellectual debates. At times like this the intellectual followers of the old world order, its financial beneficiaries, the lazy, the idle and the slothful all join forces to attack the innovators. And the more successful we are, the angrier our critics become. It was not possible to avoid these intellectual debates, and it will not be possible to do so in the future. This is true even though there are people who see this debate as an unnecessary burden, and an obstacle which makes it more difficult to gain acceptance for practical political achievements.

Honourable House,

One cannot renew an entire nation in secret. In my view, a contribution to the results we have achieved so far has been made by our open declaration that the age of liberal democracy is at an end. Liberal democracy is no longer able to protect people's dignity, provide freedom, guarantee physical security or maintain Christian culture. Some in Europe are still tinkering

with it, because they believe that they can repair it, but they fail to understand that it is not the structure that is defective: the world has changed. Our response to this changed world, the Hungarian people's response, has been to replace the shipwreck of liberal democracy by building 21<sup>st</sup>-century Christian democracy. This guarantees human dignity, freedom and security, protects equality between men and women and the traditional family model, suppresses anti-Semitism, defends our Christian culture and offers our nation the chance of survival and growth. We are Christian democrats, and we want Christian democracy.

Honourable House,

Let us see the forest as well as trees. Living in the hurly-burly of the everyday world, one cannot be expected to see that one is living through the birth of a new world order, in which new systems of values, new players and new cooperative relationships are being formed. This is why countries have intellectuals, with politicians among them. And so it is also a duty of the Government to draw attention to the fact that new technologies, new business organisation principles, new patterns of consumption, new economic battlefields, new generations and new dynamics have emerged. Today it is also the duty of the Government to prepare Hungary, to prepare members of the Hungarian nation, for the new technological era. In the new era everyone will have to work; and today eight hundred thousand more of us are in work than were eight years ago. In this new era, high government debt spells mortal danger. Our government debt is 17 per cent lower than the eurozone average, while twelve months' wages in 2010 can now be earned in just eight months. In the new era, a key factor will be critical infrastructure which uses market principles to serve national undertakings; this is why we have taken the banking, energy and media sectors into Hungarian ownership. In the new era knowledge will indeed be power; this is why we have taken the first – but only the first – step towards educating young people to always be able to land on their feet, whatever happens. As you can see, preparations are gathering speed; but we still have a long way to go.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable House,

Innovation is a fine thing, as are optimism and great plans, but we must also bear in mind that we are a country with a history of more than a thousand years. In the politics of such an ancient country there are some features which are permanent – such as the nation's size, position and spirit. The newly-elected prime minister, prospective government members and Members of

Parliament in general should be aware of this fact. If we want to decide what Hungarians can aspire to in the world, we must not ignore our size. Over the past 1,100 years this has continually changed, but we have never been among the world's most populous nations. The situation today is that Hungarians account for 0.2 per cent of the total world population. From this it clearly follows that the survival of Hungarians as a nation is not automatic. For populous peoples with extensive cultural networks it is simply inconceivable that there could be a world without them: a world in which their kind does not exist. Hungarian policy, however, should be predicated on the possibility that we could disappear, we could be dispersed, we could become extinct, and the world could go on without that species of Homo sapiens known as the Hungarians. There have been some who have entertained this idea. Praise be to God that we – and not they – stand here today. Therefore, taking this additional aspect into consideration, it is a duty of Hungarian politics to continuously explore what is happening to Hungary and around Hungary. Survival is a question of life force, and therefore the Hungarian state and the Hungarian government of the day must be stable, strong and ready to take action. This takes priority over everything; this supersedes all else.

Honourable House,

We are a unique species. We have a language that is unique to us. There is a world which we alone see and which we alone render through the prism of Hungarian language and culture. Without us human civilisation would certainly be deprived of a language, a view and a characterisation of the world. This must sustain the firm resolve of the government of the day. In the outside world the Government should present itself and represent Hungary in the knowledge that we have achieved a great deal, and that we have contributed to the sum total of human achievement in science, culture, sport and the arts. We must have the confidence and dignity of a country which knows that the Hungarians have given more to the world than they have taken from it. Our achievements give us the right to continue our history. The Government must continuously expand this rightful claim, and the Hungarian community's contribution to the world.

Honourable Fellow Members of Parliament,

Several states share the territory of the Carpathian Basin. In addition to this consequence of history, for us the Carpathian Basin is an organic natural, cultural and multilingual unit. I would



like to convince our neighbours that in cooperation we can transform the Carpathian Basin into Europe's safest, fastest growing, unified economic, trade and transport region. In the past few years we have provided ample evidence that there is no reason to be afraid of the Hungarians, and those who cooperate with us reap the benefits.

Honourable House,

Like the human heart, the Hungarian nation at times contracts and at other times expands, but in essence for 1,100 years we have inhabited the same place chosen for us by our great state founders. The specific location of our homeland means that Hungary must favour geopolitical or geographical considerations over ideological thinking. Hungary is and will continue to be a committed member of the Western system of alliances, but this does not change the geographical characteristics of Hungarian statehood and Hungarian politics. To the West is the land of German iron chancellors; to the East the Slavic world of military nations; and to the South the Islamic multitude. Berlin, Moscow and Istanbul: these are the vertices which define the area within which Hungary lives. This is what we must continue to account for in the future. Therefore, Hungarian policy cannot align itself with theories of the export of democracy, it cannot join in delivering sermons to other nations, and it cannot find common voice with those who insult the German, Russian or Turkish peoples and their leaders. This is not only prescribed by basic decency, but also by our interests. We must intelligently integrate this system of relations into Hungarian policy.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable House,

The literature of the nation's spirit can fill libraries. My government belongs to that school which holds that the Hungarians have never wanted to be a slave-like nation. Every Hungarian child takes this oath: "Who lived and died free, Can find no rest in a land enslaved. To the God of the Hungarians we vow, We vow, that slaves no longer shall we be!" My government believes that, to ensure freedom, it is not enough to keep the three great armies – of Germany, Russia and Turkey – outside the Carpathian Basin: we must also create conditions which allow us to freely arrange our affairs within our own country – not only collectively, but also individually. In other words, my government will be a government of free Hungarians and a sovereign Hungarian state. I trace my commitment to freedom not only to the struggle against dictatorship and soviet occupation, but also to economic considerations. I belong to the

generation which can remember that the death sentence for the communist state-building experiment was sealed by its own disregard – indeed rejection – of one of human nature’s fundamental laws: communism forbade individuals from independently improving their situation through their own initiative and strength as individuals. This is why we felt that communism was not only oppressive, but also unnatural. In the future I also wish to build our policies on the foundations of this experience. My goal is to give people the greatest freedom possible to enable them to advance according to their own lights. We cannot seek to solve all problems in an individual's life, but we want to – and we can – create circumstances which enable people to guide their own lives and prosper on their own terms.

Honourable House,

I must also speak about the place we occupy in the European Union. We want a strong Europe, peace and mutually advantageous agreements. We need the EU, and the EU also needs us. Therefore we are ready to play an active role in the changes which the EU cannot avoid – even if it wants to. We shall focus all our strength on representing the view that the EU must operate as an alliance of free nations, and must give up the fever dreams of a United States of Europe. The European Union must return to reality. As a first step, it must change its thinking on migration, mass population movement and immigration. In Brussels nowadays people believe that it is unfair if one is not born in the country where one would like to live. They believe that it is fair to give people the right to move to wherever they would like to live. In Brussels nowadays there are thousands of paid activists, bureaucrats and politicians working to have migration declared a fundamental human right. Therefore they want to deprive us of the right to decide for ourselves who we let in to the country and who we refuse entry to.

Fellow Members of Parliament,

I am convinced that migration eventually leads to the disintegration of nations and states: national languages weaken, borders become blurred, national cultures dissolve; and what remains is a single “open society”. Finally the merging of European societies makes such headway that a single, unified European government can come into being. This is the fate that awaits those who fail to defend themselves against migration – perhaps not tomorrow, but within the foreseeable future. This is the name of the game; this is the true master plan. I will not conceal our intentions: here before you I am making it clear that, acting in the name of

Hungarian freedom, my government will be a determined opponent of this plan, the process that has led here and its intermediate steps. Multiculturalism was the first such step. Political correctness, which muzzles freedom of speech, was the second. This is where Europe stands today. The third step would be the mandatory migrant resettlement quotas. We must and we will enter the arena of European politics, in order to stop the Europe that we love – and for which we are ready to make major sacrifices – climbing to the next step towards self-immolation. We shall oppose the mandatory quotas, stand up for Christian culture, and fight to defend borders.

Fellow Members of Parliament,

In closing, let me say that a few minutes ago I swore the prime-ministerial oath for my fourth time, but in this house we have never fully clarified what this oath is ultimately about. The law provides us with no guidance on this, so we have to make sense of it for ourselves. The oath is a promise, a pledge and an offer. I believe that, should we break an oath, the supreme power will punish us through our conscience. Therefore, now that I have taken my oath, my conscience demands that I confirm my pledge to every member of the Hungarian nation – to all fifteen million Hungarians, both individually and collectively – that in all my actions I will be guided by the service of our nation and country, the Hungarian people, Hungarian interests and Christian values.

So help me God.