

TOM LANTOS, CALIFORNIA  
CHAIRMAN

HOWARD L. BERMAN, CALIFORNIA  
GARY L. ACKERMAN, NEW YORK  
ENI F. H. FALEOMAVAEGA, AMERICAN SAMOA  
DONALD M. PAYNE, NEW JERSEY  
BRAD SHERMAN, CALIFORNIA  
ROBERT WEXLER, FLORIDA  
ELIOT L. ENGEL, NEW YORK  
BILL DELAHUNT, MASSACHUSETTS  
GREGORY W. MEEKS, NEW YORK  
DIANE E. WATSON, CALIFORNIA  
ADAM SMITH, WASHINGTON  
RUSS CARNAHAN, MISSOURI  
JOHN S. TANNER, TENNESSEE  
GENE GREEN, TEXAS  
LYNN C. WOOLSEY, CALIFORNIA  
SHEILA JACKSON LEE, TEXAS  
RUBÉN HINOJOSA, TEXAS  
JOSEPH CROWLEY, NEW YORK  
DAVID WU, OREGON  
BRAD MILLER, NORTH CAROLINA  
LINDA T. SANCHEZ, CALIFORNIA  
DAVID SCOTT, GEORGIA  
JIM COSTA, CALIFORNIA  
ALBIO SIRE'S, NEW JERSEY  
GABRIELLE GIFFORDS, ARIZONA  
RON KLEIN, FLORIDA

ROBERT R. KING  
STAFF DIRECTOR

PETER M. YEO  
DEPUTY STAFF DIRECTOR

DAVID S. ABRAMOWITZ  
CHIEF COUNSEL

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS  
**CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES**  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

TELEPHONE: (202) 225-5021  
[HTTP://WWW.FOREIGNAFFAIRS.HOUSE.GOV/](http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/)

October 17, 2007

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, FLORIDA  
RANKING REPUBLICAN MEMBER

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, NEW JERSEY  
DAN BURTON, INDIANA  
ELTON GALLEGLY, CALIFORNIA  
DANA ROHRBACHER, CALIFORNIA  
DONALD A. MANZULLO, ILLINOIS  
EDWARD R. ROYCE, CALIFORNIA  
STEVE CHABOT, OHIO  
THOMAS G. TANCREDI, COLORADO  
RON PAUL, TEXAS  
JEFF FLAKE, ARIZONA  
JO ANN DAVIS, VIRGINIA  
MIKE PENCE, INDIANA  
JOE WILSON, SOUTH CAROLINA  
JOHN BOOZMAN, ARKANSAS  
J. GRESHAM BARRETT, SOUTH CAROLINA  
CONNIE MACK, FLORIDA  
JEFF FORTENBERRY, NEBRASKA  
MICHAEL T. MCGAUL, TEXAS  
TED POE, TEXAS  
BOB INGLIS, SOUTH CAROLINA  
LUIS G. FORTUÑO, PUERTO RICO  
GUS BILIRAKIS, FLORIDA

YLEEM D. S. POBLETE  
REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

MARK C. GAGE  
REPUBLICAN SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR

KIRSTI T. CARLOCK  
REPUBLICAN CHIEF COUNSEL

His Excellency Robert Fico  
Prime Minister  
Úrad vlády Slovenskej republiky  
Námestie slobody 1  
813 70 Bratislava  
SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

As founder and Co-Chairman of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus (CHRC), I am writing to express my concern about worrying developments in Slovakia's relations with its ethnic Hungarian population. In particular, I am troubled by the judicial system's handling of the alleged hate crimes against Ms. Hedvig Malina and the Parliament's recent reaffirmation of the Benes Decrees.

First, there appears to be a lack of due process in the investigation of the attack against Ms. Hedvig Malina. As I understand the situation, this university student was viciously attacked in Nitra on August 25, 2006. The reported reason for this brutal attack was that Ms. Malina spoke Hungarian, her native tongue, in a public venue. Two assailants told her to speak "only Slovak in Slovakia," which suggests this was a hate crime. On September 11, 2006, the Slovak authorities ended their investigation of her case. The following day, you were joined by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior Robert Kalinak, as well as Chief of Police Jan Packa, in suggesting Ms. Malina fabricated her story. As a result of this statement and a denunciation by an unknown person, she was charged on November 10<sup>th</sup> with giving false testimony. However, a significant body of evidence, including statements by witnesses and psychological investigations, supports the validity of her claims. The charges against Ms. Malina have not been dropped, while the perpetrators who attacked her remain at large. She has since turned to international human rights forums to assist her quest for justice. I would hate to assume that this apparent miscarriage of justice is the result of radical nationalism in Slovakia and a failure to extend due process to all citizens irrespective of their ethnic origin. I urge you to end the investigation against Ms. Hedvig Malina and ask prosecutors to resume proceedings against her assailants.

His Excellency Robert Fico  
October 17, 2007  
Page Two

Second, I was alarmed to see that the Parliament of Slovakia recently voted to reaffirm the Benes Decrees that revoked Czechoslovakian citizenship from ethnic Hungarians and confiscated their property. This action clearly contradicts the proclamation by the Slovak National Council in February 1991 that acknowledged the brutal injustice of the Benes Decrees. Indeed, Slovak citizens are still seeking compensation for property that was unjustly confiscated at the end of World War II. While it was already troubling that these post-war relics remained on the statute books, I fail to understand how the Slovakian Government, or indeed the citizens of your fine country, benefit from embracing a deeply flawed principle of collective guilt more than 50 years after the Decrees' introduction. I am writing to request that you publicly disavow the Benes Decrees and seek to ensure that ethnic Hungarians are treated as equal citizens in Slovakia.

Mr. Prime Minister, I am hoping that you can assuage my concern about this seemingly-negative treatment of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. I would be grateful for assurances that your government will reconsider its approach to such matters and ensure that Slovakia provides a just and hospitable home for all of its citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Lantos". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

TOM LANTOS  
Chairman  
Co-Chair  
Congressional Human Rights Caucus

TL:hh/mco