

URGENT ACTION

PRESIDENT APPROVES LAW TARGETING NGOS

President Janos Ader has signed a law targeting Hungarian NGOs which receive funding from abroad, on the grounds that they may represent “foreign interests. Once the law takes effect, it will be a new tool to discredit and intimidate NGOs and undermine their capacity to protect human rights and provide valuable services to Hungarian people.

On 16 June, President Janos Ader signed the “Law on the Transparency of Organizations Funded from Abroad” (T/14967) and announced he did not have any concerns about its contents. It had previously been approved by the National Assembly on 13 June and will soon be published in the Hungarian Gazette – thereby triggering the registration and labelling requirements – and take effect eight days after publication.

The law, submitted to the National Assembly on 7 April by members of the governing Fidesz party, will force **Hungarian NGOs** receiving more than 7,200,000 HUF (approx. €24,000) per year from abroad to register as “civic organizations receiving foreign funding” and to put this label on all their publications. Organizations which fail to comply with the new requirements will face sanctions that could go up to dissolution. This is the newest step by the government to intimidate and silence critical voices and NGOs delivering essential services to citizens and refugees and migrants in the country. While the proposal was under discussion in the National Assembly, the government continued to denounce and discredit NGOs and accused several of them of undermining national sovereignty.

The adopted law, by only applying to certain types of civil society organizations will discriminate against these NGOs and impose limitations on their right to association. The right to be protected from discrimination is enshrined in the constitution (Article XV). Amnesty International will continue to challenge this law which violates the right to freedom of association, including the right to seek, receive and use funding from foreign and international sources.

No further action is required of the UA network at this time. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the second update of UA 119/17. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur27/6514/2017/en/

Name: NGOs in Hungary

Gender m/f: all

Further information on UA: 119/17 Index: EUR 27/6533/2017 Issue Date: 16 June 2017

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