Speech by Viktor Orbán at the 32nd Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp

Tusnádfürdő [Băile Tuşnad], 22nd July 2023

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Summer Camp.

We have arrived here after advancing through the Romanian troops. But we would prefer to see them as a welcoming committee, and we have good reason for that: in our European struggle for Christianity, we weakened Latin Christians will also need Romanian Orthodoxy. So we welcome interested Romanians who are in the audience.

Every year there is some head scratching over what we should in fact talk about; because of course we know in advance what we will all end up thinking – but the question is how we will get there. This year I have been given some helpful material in this regard, because the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania - which I understand to belong more to the presidential branch of power – has come to my aid and sent me a démarche. In this they have told me what I should not talk about, what I can talk about - and how - and what I should avoid. This is an official state document. I will share its contents with you. We are advised not to talk about anything that might offend Romanian sensibilities. Then these are listed. National symbols. Fine, I think we can agree on that. I will not talk about that, but I welcome our friends who have come with Hungarian and Szekler flags. We should not talk about collective minority rights. I will not talk about those either, but will just state that they exist and are the entitlement of the Hungarians living here. They say not to talk about non-existent administrative areas in Romania. I have thought hard about what they could mean by that. I think they mean Transylvania/Erdély and Szeklerland, but we have never claimed that these are Romanian administrative areas. Then they say what things we can talk about - but only if we do not present them in a bad light. For example, Western values. If one is involved in European politics, as I am, then today "Western values" mean three things: migration, LGBTQ, and war. My Dear Romanian Friends, these do not need to be presented in a bad light, as they already present themselves in a bad light. And finally, there is one more pearl referring to what must be left out: "xenophobic overtones related to a revisionist approach on migration". Now this is like communist time travel. It reminds me of the jokes of Hofi [a Hungarian comedian from the communist era], which were about who was able to say, in one breath, "imperialist, revisionist, bourgeois, clerical, chauvinist, fascist". One almost shudders at the thought. So we will avoid those subjects.

In return, having received such a démarche, what will we offer our Romanian friends? First of all, if the Romanian president comes to Hungary and gives a speech, which we invite him to do, we will not dictate to him what subjects he can talk about, and how he can talk about them. We also recommend that our Romanian brothers and sisters take note of the fact that Hungary fully supports Romania's main national ambition at the moment: membership of the Schengen Area. We would like to draw their attention to the fact that from 1 July 2024 Hungary will be holding the Presidency of the European Union, and that our programme's highlighted goal is for Romania to gain Schengen membership. Until then, all we can say is that Romania has a new prime minister. God bless him! A new prime minister, a new chance, and maybe something will come out of this that will be good for both of us. Since I have been prime minister he is my twentieth Romanian counterpart, so we hope for success on the twentieth occasion. Now, after the démarche, let us look at what we should talk about.

Dear Friends,

We are living through a particularly dangerous period in the history of humanity. These are years of great change. This change is affecting every corner of the globe and every country, so if we want to say something valid about Hungary, about Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin, we must first talk about the world. The essence of my message is that the balance of power in the world has shifted, and now we are suffering the serious consequences of this. Looking back, we see that for eighty years after the Second World War there was a balance of power in the world. For us Hungarians, this period consisted of two parts. There was the first forty-five years, when the Anglo-Saxons handed us over to the Soviet communists – and, incidentally, back then they were not as squeamish about the Russians as they are now. And then there has been the second period, of thirty-three years so far, when we have been able to live in freedom without military occupation, the Soviet Union and communists. Although this was a huge change over eighty years, the balance of the world was not upset, because we managed to lead the Soviet Union out of the parade of history without a war. But now China has shifted the balance of the world. This is one of the Western world's old fears. Even Napoleon said, "Let China sleep, for when she wakes she will shake the world." How this situation has come about is instructive.

I will make a brief digression, a digression on methodology. In my experience, when you make a political decision, you have to simultaneously visualise three timeframes. The issue to be decided on must first of all be classified in one of these timeframes, and you should only make a concrete decision on it once you have classified it. So there are three timeframes in which politics exists: tactical time, strategic time, and historical time. If you make the wrong classification, your decision will have unintended consequences. Let me give you two examples. When Chancellor Merkel was confronted with the migrant invasion in 2015, she classified the problem in tactical time, and said, "Wir schaffen das", or "We can handle this". Today it is clear that in reality the issue belonged to strategic time, because the consequences of her decision would transform the entire culture of Germany. Now we come to China. The second example is from the United States in the early 1970s. Back then the US decided to free China from its isolation, obviously to make it easier to deal with the Russians; and so it put that issue in the strategic timeframe. But it has turned out that in fact this issue, the liberation of China, belongs to the historical timeframe; because as a result of that liberation, the United States – and all of us – are now facing a greater force than the one we wanted to defeat.

Wrong classification, unexpected consequences. But what happened has happened, and now the fact is that there has never been such a rapid and tectonic shift in the global balance of power as the one we are living through today. Remember - or note - that the way in which China is rising is different from that in which the United States rose: the United States emerged; China was, and is. In other words, we are really talking about a return: we are talking about the return of a 5,000-year-old civilisation of 1.4 billion people. And this is a problem that needs to be solved, because it is not going to solve itself. China has become a production powerhouse. In fact it has already overtaken the US - or is overtaking it at this computers, very moment: car manufacturing, semiconductors, pharmaceuticals, infocommunication systems; in the world today it is the strongest in all of these areas. What has happened is that China has made the roughly three-hundred-year journey from the Western industrial revolution to the global information revolution in just thirty years. As a result, it has lifted hundreds of millions out of poverty, and today humanity's combined prosperity and knowledge is greater than it was. But if this is the case, what is the danger? The danger, the reason the situation is dangerous, Dear Friends, is that the gold medal already has an owner: after its own civil war, from the 1870s onwards the United States grew to be the preeminent country, and its inalienable right to world economic supremacy is part of its national identity, and a kind of article of faith. And whenever that position has been challenged, the United States has always successfully repelled the challenge. It repelled the Soviet Union. And, let us remember, it also repelled the European Union. A few decades ago the European Union's plan was to promote the euro as a world currency alongside the dollar. We can see where the euro is today. And we also had a plan, which we expressed as the need to create a great free trade zone stretching from Lisbon to Vladivostok. What do we see today? Today, the free trade zone stretches from Lisbon to the outskirts of Donetsk at the furthest. In 2010 the US and the European Union contributed 22 - 23 per cent of total world production; today the US contributes 25 per cent and the European Union 17 per cent. In other words, the US has successfully repelled the European Union's attempt to move up alongside it – or even ahead of it.

Dear Summer Camp,

In international politics there is a simple correlation: the bigger your GDP, your gross domestic product, the more influence you have in international affairs. In other words, what we are seeing today is a steady decline in American dominance on the world stage. And no preeminent world power will take kindly to that sort of thing. Their reasoning is simple. It can be roughly summed up as follows: "We're at the top of the world. We climbed here in order to stay here forever. Of course, there's this thing called history, which is disagreeable, but the point is that what's always happened to other countries and other peoples has come to an end with us, and we'll stay here at the top of the world forever." This is a tempting thought, but the unpleasant truth of our life today is that in world politics there are no eternal winners and no eternal losers. An even more unpleasant truth is that the current trends favour Asia and China – be those trends in economics, technological development, or indeed military power. A still more unpleasant truth is that changes are also taking place in international institutions. We all know the correlation which shows that whoever creates international institutions will thereby gain an advantage from them. So China has quite simply created its own: we see the BRICS and the One Belt One Road Initiative; and we also see the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the development resources of which are several times greater than the development resources of all the Western countries.

In other words, Asia, or China, stands before us fully attired as a great power. It has a civilisational credo: it is the centre of the universe, and this releases inner energy, pride, self-

esteem and ambition. It has a long-term plan, which is expressed as "Ending the century of humiliation" – or, to paraphrase the Americans, "Make China Great Again". It has a medium-term programme: to restore in Asia the dominance that existed before the West arrived. And it can neutralise the chief US weapon, the chief US weapon of power, which we call "universal values". The Chinese simply laugh at this, describing it as a Western myth, and noting that such talk of universal values is in fact a philosophy hostile to other, non-Western, civilizations. And, seen from over there, that view contains some truth.

In other words, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Summer Camp, the situation we are living in today is one in which day by day we are moving towards conflict. The question - the 1million-dollar question – is whether this conflict can be avoided. There are ever more studies and books on this, and I am also working from them. One notable work says that in the last three hundred years there have been sixteen occasions when a new "champion" has risen to pull alongside - or overtake - the world's leading power. The bad news is that of the sixteen instances thus identified, twelve have ended in war, and only four were peacefully resolved. In other words, Dear Friends, we are at the most dangerous moment in world politics today, when the leading great power sees itself sinking towards second place. Experience shows that the dominant great power tends to see itself as more benevolent and better-intentioned than it really is, and attributes malice to its challenger more often than is – or should be – justified. Consequently, the starting point for each opposing party is not the intentions of the counterpart, but its capabilities: not what the counterpart wants to do, but what it is capable of doing. And thus war is already in the making. This is what is called the "Thucydides Trap", named after the man who wrote the history of the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens, and who first identified the problem.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The implication for our lives is that a clash between the two great powers – including between their soldiers – is more likely than we are able to see from here in Tusnádfürdő today. The good news – or at least a ray of hope – is that war is not inevitable. Its avoidance is conditional on the world's ability to find a new equilibrium to replace the one that is now in motion. The question is how this can be done. The truth is that this is a task for the "big boys". We have not been dealt a hand in that card game. Let us not misjudge our role. All we can say is that now something should be done that has never been done before: the big boys

should accept that there are two suns in the sky. This mentality is radically different from the one we have lived with for the last few hundred years. Regardless of the current balance of power, the opposing sides should recognise each other as equals. You can see that there is a conveyor belt of high-level American officials going to Beijing, which is a sign that in the United States they see the danger and the trouble. The Secretary of State has been there, the Treasury Secretary has been there, and – most recently – the former national security advisor Mr. Kissinger has been there. And if you have been reading the news, you will have seen that a few days ago the Japanese announced that they are doubling their military spending, and will be building one of the most powerful armies in the world.

So, from this analysis of the situation, what do we need to do? What is worth understanding, Dear Friends, is that the settling of the new equilibrium will not happen overnight – or even from one month to the next. The settling of such a new equilibrium will take a whole generation. This means that not only will we live our lives within this global system of relations, within this world era, this zeitgeist: so too will our children. And we Hungarians must make headway in this world situation and zeitgeist, and we must shape our Hungarian national plans with this in mind.

Let us take one step closer to Tusnádfürdő, and let us say a few words about the European Union. When you look at the European Union today, you may get the impression that it is plagued by anxiety and that it feels hemmed in. There are good reasons for this. The EU has about 400 million people; and if I add in the rest of the Western world, that is another 400 million. So this amounts to 800 million people, surrounded by another seven billion. And the European Union has an accurate view of itself: it is a rich union, but a weak one. It is a rich and weak union that sees around it a world in revolt, a world in confused uproar, old grievances, many hungry mouths, raging development, colossal consumption, and millions of people about to set off for Europe. It sees a wave of millions of people gathering in the Sahel, which, if we are unable to restrain it, could spill over onto the European side of the Mediterranean. Earlier this week there was a Latin America-EU summit in Brussels, where I saw and heard all this with my own eyes and ears. In the vocabulary of Latin American leaders, the most common terms were these: "native genocide", which I think means the extermination of indigenous peoples; slavery and the slave trade; and "reparatory justice", meaning reparations for injustices. These are the terms in which they are thinking. No wonder the European Union feels hemmed in.

And if we take a look at the International Monetary Fund's list ranking countries by the size of their economies, by their national GDPs, we see that in the rankings for 2030 Britain, Italy and France will have dropped out of the top ten where they still are today; and Germany now fourth - will have slid down to tenth place. This is the reality. Today this fear, this feeling of being hemmed in, is driving our European Union towards seclusion. It is afraid of competition - like an ageing boxing champion, showing off his championship belts, but not wanting to ever enter the ring again. From this comes seclusion: seclusion in an economic, political and cultural ghetto. They have developed the language for this, which is something they are strong in: they are still strongest in formulating and briefly describing complex situations. They call this seclusion "decoupling" - or, more subtly, "de-risking", which is a form of risk reduction. If you look at it from this point of view, the policy towards Russia is also a decoupling: an attempt to decouple Russia from the European economy through wartime sanctions. And of course Europe can be cut off from Russian energy, but in fact this is ineffective and illusory, because Russia cannot be cut off from the rest of the world. Russian raw materials will be bought by others, while we will suffer from wartime inflation and lose our competitiveness. I will quote you two figures. The amount paid for the European Union's imports of gas and oil – the two together – was 300 billion euros before the Russian war, and 653 billion euros last year. So the way the European economy is operating today – the way we want to compete today – is with energy costing twice what it used to cost, while in many parts of the world it is still available at the price it was in the previous period. This is the great debate for Europe in the years ahead. This is what we Hungarians have to prepare for: either to decouple, or to participate in international competition. As they say in Brussels, "de-risking or connectivity".

Here I will make an informational digression. The big European companies do not want to decouple. They do not even want to get out of Russia. I have looked up the relevant statistics. Of the 1,400 largest Western companies, 8.5 per cent have pulled out of Russia – 8.5! From the pharmaceutical industry, 88 per cent have stayed; 79 per cent of the European mining industry is still in Russia, as are 70 per cent of energy companies and 77 per cent of manufacturing companies. And you will never guess: last year, in 2022, the Western companies that stayed paid a total of 3.5 billion dollars into the Russian central budget. Now, seen in that light, the attack that the Ukrainians are launching against our poor, small Hungarian OTP bank is nothing but a manifestation of Hungarophobia. We must therefore

reject it. I am not even going to talk about clever little European tricks such as the sudden doubling – in a single year – of the volume of goods exported from Germany to Kazakhstan. I wonder why that was?

Another European development in relation to which Hungarians will need to position themselves in the coming years is the struggle between federalists and sovereigntists. Empire or nations? Here we suffered a serious blow to the lower ribcage, when Brexit caused our British friends to leave the European Union. This upset the balance between sovereigntists and federalists within the EU. The earlier configuration was the French and the Germans as federalists on one side, and the British and us - the V4 [Visegrád 4] - on the other. If the British were in the European Union today, we would not even have to learn terms like "rule of law mechanism", "conditionality" or "economic governance", as they would not exist. These could only be introduced in the European Union because the British left and we V4 members could not prevent them – and indeed the V4 was attacked by the federalists. We can all see the result. The Czechs have basically changed sides, Slovakia is wobbling, and only the Poles and Hungarians are holding out. Of course, we have a chance to increase the number of sovereigntists. I can see that chance, as such a government has been formed in Italy, there is also movement in that direction in Austria, and tomorrow there will be elections in Spain. Let us be under no illusion: the federalists are carrying out an attempt to oust us; they have openly said that they wanted a change of government in Hungary. They have used every means of political corruption to finance the Hungarian opposition. They are doing the same thing in Poland, and remember how they tried to prevent the Meloni right from winning in Italy. All these attempts have failed, and I hope that the European Union elections in June 2024 and the subsequent redistribution of power will result in a more favourable balance of power in Europe than the one we have today. This brings us to Hungary, Ladies and Gentlemen.

What can – and what should – Hungary do in this international situation, in this European environment, amidst this great fracturing? The most important thing is to know ourselves. Here I am not referring to our eleven centuries of history, and not even to the brilliant summation given by the RMDSZ [Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania]: "One thousand years in Transylvania/Erdély, one hundred years in Romania." What we must now keep in mind is the path onto which we finally stepped in 2010, after the twenty chaotic years of the transition from communism. In 2010 we opened a new era, and we must not lose sight

of that – whatever the difficulties we face, whatever storms, lightning bolts and thunderstorms greet us. Ours is a new era, which has spiritual and economic foundations.

First let us briefly recall the spiritual foundations of this era. These spiritual foundations are summarised in the Constitution. And the new Hungarian Constitution is the document that most clearly distinguishes us from the other countries of the European Union. If you read the constitutions of other European countries, which are liberal constitutions, you will see that at the heart of them is the "I". If you read the Hungarian Constitution, you will see that it is centred on the "we". The Hungarian Constitution's essence, its founding premise, is that there is a place that is ours: our home. There is a community that is ours: this is our nation. And there is a way of life – or perhaps more precisely an order to life – which is ours: our culture and our language. Therefore in the Constitution our spiritual starting point is that the most important things in human life are those which cannot be obtained alone. This is why the "we" is at the heart of the Constitution. Peace, family, friendship, law and community spirit cannot be obtained alone. And, Dear Summer Camp, even freedom cannot be obtained alone: the person who is alone is not free, but lonely. All the good things in life are essentially based on cooperation with others, and if these are the most important things in our lives, says the Hungarian Constitution, then these are the things that society and the legal system must protect. Now, as the conceptual foundation of our new era, this recognition and these shared things manifest themselves in the life of the individual as bonds to others. Therefore, the Hungarian Constitution is a constitution of communal ties, which seeks to strengthen these ties, and therefore stands on the ground of a culture of strengthening. Liberal constitutions do not describe a world of attachment, but of detachment; and they do not seek to affirm something, but to reject something - in the name of individual freedom. Our Constitution, however, affirms the place where our children will live as being our homeland. It affirms our identities as men and women, because that is what we call family. It also affirms our borders, because that is how we can say who we want to live with. When in 2011 we created the new Constitution – a Hungarian, national, Christian constitution, different from other European constitutions - we did not make a bad decision. Indeed, let us say that we did not make a bad decision, but rather made the right one; because since then we have been beset by the migration crisis, which clearly cannot be dealt with on a liberal basis. And then we have an LGBTQ, gender offensive, which it turns out can only be repelled on the basis of the community and child protection.

The failure of the liberal-based countries is that they thought their old communities would be replaced by new ones; but instead all that has happened is that everywhere a strange alienation has emerged. Of course France, which is suffering from this, is a great nation; it has "la gloire", and it will surely find some kind of solution. But, with spiritual foundations in mind, and digging a shovelful deeper, it is also worth saying that at the base of the Hungarian Constitution and the intellectual foundations of the new era there lies an anthropological insight. Two hundred and forty years ago, during the Enlightenment, left-wing, internationalist and liberal intellectuals and political leaders thought that the rejection of religion and Christianity would be followed by the emergence of an ideal, enlightened community based on an understanding of the good and the common good, living a free and superior life according to recognised, sociologically based societal truths. This is what they hoped for from the rejection of Christianity and religion. At that time, two hundred years ago, that was not out of the question. It might have been a possibility. But two hundred years have passed, and today we can see that it is pure illusion: by rejecting Christianity, we have in fact become hedonistic pagans. This is the reality! This is why, in my eyes, it was predestined that our 2011 Constitution was proclaimed at Easter, and its birth name is the Easter Constitution.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This also lies at the heart of the conflicts between the European Union and Hungary. The European Union rejects Christian heritage, it is managing population replacement through migration, and it is waging an LGBTQ offensive against family-friendly European nations. Just a few days ago we saw the fall of Lithuania, which had a really fine, remarkable, great child protection law, which we used as a starting point when constructing ours. And I see that, under great pressure, the Lithuanians have withdrawn and annulled the child protection laws that they had adopted back in 2012. "I fear the Greeks, even when they bring gifts..." This is where American friendship leads, Dear Friends!

Well, we have to say that Europe today has created its own political class, which is no longer accountable and no longer has any Christian or democratic convictions. And we have to say that federalist governance in Europe has led to an unaccountable empire. We have no other choice. For all our love of Europe, for all that it is ours, we must fight. Our position is clear: we do not want everyone to share the same faith, and we do not want everyone to have the same family life or to celebrate the same public holidays; but we insist on having our common

home, our common language, our common public sphere and our common culture, and that this is the basis for the security, freedom and prosperity of Hungarians. Therefore this must be protected at all costs. This is why we shall not compromise. We shall not back down. In Europe we shall insist on our rights. We shall not yield to political or financial blackmail. Bargaining is possible in relation to issues linked to tactical time – or even strategic time; but never on issues that belong to historical time.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

And finally, if Zsolt will allow me, I will say a few words about the economic foundations of the new era. We have been building our new economic system for thirteen years. In that time, it has been constructed quite well and has performed well. Our plan was that up until 2030 it would serve Hungary without any major changes: it would result in a secure, prosperous Hungary and a Hungarian population in the Carpathian Basin. We are on track to meet our targets. In thirteen years the Hungarian economy's overall performance has trebled: from 27 trillion forints to 80 trillion forints. And although in political schools they teach you that when you speak you should never put a number and a date together in the same sentence, our goal is to have a GDP of 160 trillion forints by 2030. If we look at our development targets, I can tell you that in 2010 we stood at 66 per cent of the European average, in 2022 we were at 78 per cent, and by 2030 we want to be at between 85 and 90 per cent. If we look at the Hungarian economy's competitiveness, in other words its exports, I can say that in thirteen years we have doubled them; and within them the share of Hungarian products - products from Hungarianowned companies – has increased. Our energy dependency has reduced according to plan: imported electricity currently provides 28 per cent of consumption, and by 2030 – with Paks II [nuclear power plant expansion], solar energy and network developments - we want to reach zero. We are building our power plants accordingly, and we will spend 11.5 billion forints on this. In 2010, employment was 62 per cent, today it is 77 per cent, and by 2030 we want to have increased it to 85 per cent. We have a huge university development programme. In 2010 no Hungarian university was in the world's top 5 per cent; but last year eleven Hungarian universities were in the top 5 per cent. As far as family support is concerned, we used to have a childbirth rate of 1.2, but we have raised that to 1.5. This is called the fertility rate or reproduction rate, which is not a nice term; but it was 1.2, and now it is 1.5. In order for our population to stop falling, however, we need it to be 2.1. This shows that we are in big trouble, and we must continue to mobilise all our strength and energy, and resources - government budgetary resources – towards family policy. And defence is also starting to recover. We have, or are beginning to have, an effective army. We will have warriors instead of employees in uniform. Alongside them we now have a national defence industry. We are one of the few NATO member countries that can devote at least 2 per cent of its annual GDP to this. And we are not far behind in our national unification programme for 2030. We have implemented a tenfold increase in the 2010 level of funding for national unification beyond the borders, and this year – at a time when we are facing all sorts of difficulties – we are increasing support for education and training fivefold: by 500 per cent. I can say that we are seeing the results of this. I would like to congratulate those Szeklers and Transylvanians who took part in the collection of signatures for the Minority SafePack Initiative and the European Citizens' Initiative on national regions, who were able to collect more than a million signatures on each issue. This takes strength, people and strength. It was a great achievement. Congratulations!

And finally, these economic foundations – the economic foundations of the new era – are fine, and they sound good; but there is a snag, and that is what I would like to end with. The snag is that within the space of three years we have been hit by two meteorites. The first was COVID, in 2020. We somehow managed to defend ourselves against that, and relatively quickly we were back on the path we had set for ourselves, the path we plan for 2030. But in 2022 another meteorite attacked us; this one was a war, and that is a tougher nut to crack. This meteorite has knocked us off course. And I can tell you that today Hungary, the Hungarian people and the Hungarian government are struggling and fighting to get back from this deflected course and back onto the normal path that will take us to 2030. I see the earliest date for a return to this path as being around July 2024. That is when I hope to be able to report to you that economic growth in Hungary is once again significant, with bank lending strong again and a return to a growth path well above the European average.

The most difficult period is now behind us. Inflation was sky-high, but now we are breaking its back, and we have every chance of getting it below 10 per cent by the end of the year – so in single figures. The first half of the year was very difficult, because inflation in Hungary rose faster than wages. This has not happened for a very long time, maybe more than ten years. But in the second half of the year we will straighten out, and if the Good Lord helps us we will be able to nullify the depreciation of wages across the whole year, for 2023. Interest rates on loans in Hungary today are also sky-high, but I believe that we will be able to

normalise them and bring them back to an acceptable level by the second quarter of next year at the earliest. This means that if we do everything right, if we are lucky and if God helps us, by the time of the European Parliament and local elections in 2024 we will be back on the path that will take us to 2030. And then, at the 2024 Tusványos camp, I will be able to talk calmly about the plans for 2030 to 2040.

So to sum up, Ladies and Gentlemen, I can tell you that one should be shrewd in major world affairs, build connections in the world economy, fight in EU disputes, persevere in spiritual matters, and remain steadfast in national unification.

God above us all, Hungary before all else!

Go Hungary, go Hungarians!