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American Hungarian Federation President Authors Article on Autonomy and Romania

(Washington, D.C.) Federation president, Frank Koszorus, Jr., authored an article titled, "Autonomy: The Path to Democracy and Stability in Romania," *Foreign Policy Review*, volume 6 (2009).

The author makes a compelling case for the recognition of autonomy as a means of strengthening democracy and stability in Romania. He points out that since autonomy is about power sharing, it is an essential element in a country such as Romania insofar as democracy also is about power sharing.

The author addresses the legitimate aspirations of the members of the Hungarian community in Romania to preserve their cultural and historical identities. He reviews the background of the Hungarian historical community in Romania, discusses current international norms, and identifies different forms of successful autonomy arrangements in Europe. The author recognizes the markedly different historical experiences of the United States and Central Europe. He persuasively argues that the United States must nevertheless "be prudent and not only support autonomy for ethnic groups when tensions rise and threaten violence – that sends a wrong signal to the international community."

The author notes that while the "European community . . . recognizes the critical role played by various autonomy arrangements to advance democracy and promote stability," Romania unfortunately does not.

The author concludes with the observation that the "United States, with its interest in promoting democracy and stability in Central and Eastern Europe and respect for local self-government, federalism and human rights, has a special role to play in encouraging Romania to recognize and grant the Hungarian community's legitimate and democratically expressed aspirations for autonomy."

The article is available on:

www.americanhungarianfederation.org/news_rumania_Autonomy.htm

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Mr. Koszorus, is an attorney in Washington, D.C. He has lectured and written about minority rights, coauthored (with Csaba K. Zoltani) "Group Rights Defuse Tensions," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* (1996), and was a Study Group participant in a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace project which culminated in a book on self-determination. Mr. Koszorus was appointed a public member of the U.S. delegation to the Paris meeting of the CSCE Conference on the Human Dimension.