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“Hungary Day in Georgia” proclamations from the State of Georgia

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Ambassador of Hungary to the United States to Visit Atlanta, February 17 and February 18

Morrow, Ga., Feb. 15, 2012 -- As further evidence of the growing connections between Georgia and Hungary, His Excellency György Szapáry, Ambassador of Hungary to the United States, will be making his first trip to Atlanta on Friday, Feb. 17 and Saturday, Feb. 18. John E. Parkerson, Jr., honorary consul of Hungary for the Southeastern United States, president of the World Trade Center Atlanta (WTC), and director of International Programs for Clayton State University, has been working closely with the embassy in Washington to arrange meetings for the Ambassador, including “Hungary Day in Georgia” proclamations from the State of Georgia.

To preserve their rich culture, the Hungarian community of Georgia started a new tradition in 2010 with the Hungarian Carnival Ball, or Farsang. This year, they have organized the Third Hungarian Ball for Feb. 18. The Hungarian Ball, which will be held at The Carlyle House in Norcross, 173 S.Peachtree St., starting at 7 p.m., is organized by the Hungarian Community Church of Georgia, the Honorary Consulate of Hungary in Southeast U.S., and The Hungarian Meetup Group in Atlanta. On Friday afternoon, Feb. 17, the Georgia House of Representatives will declare Feb. 18 as an official Hungary Day in Georgia. The Ambassador will open the Hungarian Ball as guest of honor; and guests will enjoy folk dance performance, live music, traditional farsang acting, socializing, raffles, and doing whatever else Hungarians do when they celebrate Carnival. The Hungarian Ball also serves as a fundraising function for the colorful Hungarian cultural activities and educational programs. “With the proclamation of the Hungary Day, the State of Georgia sends a clear message to Hungarians and non-Hungarians alike that everybody can play an integral role in the life and community of Georgia,” says Parkerson. “It is a special privilege to accept the invitation to serve as a main patron of the Third Annual Hungarian Ball, or Farsang. Georgia is home to a remarkable Hungarian community that, with this third Farsang, continues a now well-established Georgia tradition. I am proud to be included in the Hungarian-American community and to have this opportunity to participate in the Third Annual Hungarian Ball.”

Clayton State University, which has many ties to the nation of Hungary, is a sponsor of a Friday, Feb. 17 reception for the Ambassador. The reception will run from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., at the City Club of Buckhead, 3343 Peachtree Rd., Ste. 1850, Atlanta. Clayton State President Dr. Thomas J. Hynes will also be attending the reception.

In addition, the Ambassador will speaking to Clayton State MBA students at the World Trade Center Atlanta on Friday, Feb. 17, at 1 p.m. Parkerson also notes that Clayton State and Kennesaw State University students will be taking an MBA international business study abroad trip to Hungary and Austria from Mar. 2 to Mar. 11, 2012. All but two days of that trip are in Hungary, and two of the days in Hungary will be hosted by Clayton State’s Hungarian partner institution, the University of Pannonia in Veszprem, Hungary. The Ambassador’s WTC Atlanta talk will be to a pre-trip group of all 20 MBA students from Clayton State and Kennesaw who will be going on the study abroad.

For many people in the world, United States of America means the country of freedom and opportunities; a country where many ethnic, racial and religious groups can live together in peace, one another as good neighbors. This multicultural society does not weaken -- it strengthens the country. The Hungarians are also part of this multicultural society. Throughout history, many Hungarians had to leave their home country because of economic or political turmoil. The U.S.A. opened its gates to Hungarian immigrants during several difficult periods. Skilled Hungarian laborers and renowned professionals came to the U.S.A. because of its freedom to pursue new careers and to raise their families. Thus, today more than two million Hungarians live in the U.S.A.; and several thousands of them, a relatively small but growing community, live in Georgia. Is the Hungary Day important to Georgia? Yes, it is. Business, educational and cultural ties between the state of Georgia and the country of Hungary are growing. Hungary, an EU member and NATO ally country of 10 million people in Central Europe, is today a truly important partner of Georgia.