

Dr János Áder  
President of Hungary  
Office of the President of the Republic  
1536 Budapest  
Pf. 227  
Hungary

Prague, 6 April 2017

Dear Mr President,

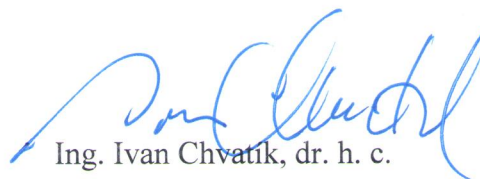
The Center for Theoretical Study (CTS), a joint research institute of Charles University and the Czech Academy of Sciences, condemns in the strongest terms the legislation directed at the Central European University (CEU). We urge you not to sign this bill into law, which would in effect make the continued operation of CEU in Budapest impossible.

The early history of the CTS is uniquely linked with that of CEU. In the early 1990s both institutions had their seats at the Hotel Olšanka in Prague, which led to a lively exchange of ideas between their respective members. Ivan Chvatík, co-director of the CTS since 1993 and head of the Jan Patočka Archives, assisted in the founding of CEU as a governmental liaison and served as the Secretary to the Board of Trustees of the Prague CEU Foundation until 1997. As you are undoubtedly aware, the continued existence of CEU in Prague was made impossible for political reasons by the government of Prime Minister Václav Klaus. The Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has, to all intents and purposes, the same agenda. Given the fact that the new Higher Education Bill (tellingly dubbed “lex CEU” by the press) passed by the Hungarian Parliament on 4 April imposes all but impossible conditions on the continued operation of CEU in Hungary, it is clear that the bill is designed to drive CEU out of the country.

CEU represents an extraordinary centre of higher learning for Hungary, Europe and the world. The legislation mentioned above is an unacceptable attack on academic freedom, and as such, the CTS vehemently opposes it. We stand with our colleagues from CEU and support their efforts to remain in Budapest.

Yours sincerely,

  
Prof. David Storch, PhD

  
Ing. Ivan Chvatik, dr. h. c.