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Permanent Mission of Hungary to the OSCE, the UN and other International
Organizations in Vienna

Farewell speech of Ambassador Károly Dán

6th of July 2023

Dear Mr. Chairman, Dear Igor,

Madame Secretary General,

Dear Colleagues,

I am honoured that you are present here today at my last Permanent Council meeting.

There is no other way to start my farewell note than thank my team of nine years: Zsófi, Sándor, Ági, Lilla, Bence, Marci and Ivett for every day of their dedication and friendship. Thanks to you I never had sleepless nights because of work, you prepared everything that I needed even without asking for it and just as importantly, you shared with me the same culture and vested interest of a common cause of 57 countries that sit at this table. You not only worked, but you were a fibre of it, and I'll remain indebted to you for that forever.

If the rest of my farewell will partly sound like a love song to Vienna, then it's just right. In fact, every day of my life here was a note in that song. In this magnificent city where no one is ever in a hurry, but somehow things fall in place. To me this is the city where Beethoven, Bruckner and Mahler used to walk the streets. Also, in his last years, György Ligeti, my compatriot, and to me the most complex composer of the 20th century. I know where they lived, where they, or at least Schubert, went to school, and the magic of it all is that almost all of those places still exist. Past and present is never an issue in this city; Vienna never rolled over Beethoven, and I love and admire it for that.

About Beethoven, just living in Löwelstraße gave me a clue to his music. I'll demonstrate: this is what two horse carriages sound like when the horses are in sync: (knocking on table). But when the carriage goes uphill, just like on Metastasiogasse from Minoritenplatz, and the two

horses go off sync for a short while, the pattern becomes this: (knocking again on the table). Exactly the rhythmic pattern of the 2nd movement of Beethoven's 9th symphony. This is how simply this beautiful city inspires us to connect Earth and Heaven, as if it was trying to suggest that we all have it in us.

Carrying on with this spirit I especially want to thank the Liechtenstein family. Also, my best neighbour ever, but now especially for donating the land of Volksgarten to the city and its residents because this was the place where I spent so many afternoons smoking cigars and reading my books, often with my son and my two daughters, now sitting behind me. I would not be surprised to see my name on one of those benches - with some luck – a few decades later.

Speaking about benches and trees, and continuing with who to be thankful to, I would like to mention two names especially. One happy, and one sad. I'll start with the sad.

Every time when I walk into Volksgarten, I pass by the tree of Hadewych Hazelzet, a young Dutch diplomat, the former political counsellor of the EU Mission. Her untimely passing reminds me how unfair life can be. Hadewych was a true professional and a true European, and a happy spirit most of all. I do not think this room will ever hear a bigger laughter than hers. What we do here as Ambassadors, is contributed by the dedicated work of decent individuals, by professionals like Hadewych. With that I wish to extend my gratitude to all of our colleagues and diplomats of all ranks, who grow into their jobs along with us, supporting us, and building us.

And now, the happy one: Ambassador Clemens Koja, the excellent, deeply cultured and always impeccably elegant Chairman of 2017, who entrusted me with the work of the cyber IWG and with that he gave meaning to my work every single day. I was fortunate to continue that for 6 and a half years, and it was just enough to gradually, block by block build it into something that's a living testimony that it is worth doing what we are doing here at the OSCE. Thank you, dear Ambassador, and I hope you're hearing me now in faraway Tashkent. You also exemplified the comradery we share at this table, and through you I want to thank the at least 100 Ambassadors I have served together with. I never counted, and I think one hundred might actually be a very low estimate. Feel free to round it up to 150 if you like ...

I think it's clear by now that this will not be a farewell speech that wants to bury the OSCE. Quite the contrary. The Helsinki Process had many different, often contradicting interpretations in its 50 years. To me, it is undoubtedly the most important common endeavour of my age, one that proved to be a solid backdrop to the vast changes that happened in 1989 and 1990 and ever since. And this coming from someone who celebrates 1989/90 as his second birth.

I cannot imagine a safe and secure Europe, or the astonishing transformation of the European development, that we live and breathe together every day, without it. I cannot conceive the development of Central Asia, carving its own future, without it. The Helsinki Process proved to be the solid ground we have walked on ever since. It is our duty to give our best intellectually, professionally and personally to find a way back to it.

And now, a fitting end to my farewell.

If everyone who ever asked me whether I would miss this - and I think you know what I mean by „this”, the often repetitive and dire atmosphere of the PC – so if every such person had given me one Euro, I would be a very, very rich person.

And yet, I have a clear answer to that question: I believe we have a purpose here, and that purpose does not come from our capitals, it doesn't even come from just who we are individually or as peoples or nations.

Because that purpose is us together. That is a purpose that we will only find together, and we will only find in each other.

And THAT I will miss very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I kindly ask you to attach my last humble statement to the journal of the day.