My Dear Compatriots,

Greetings to you on our national day marking the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence.

Around the world a wide variety of events are commemorated on this day. We Hungarians, however, have more reason than anyone to regard it as a special day because, after long centuries of oppression, 15 March 1848 showed what a spirited and courageous nation we are.

The storm of revolution swept through many of Europe’s cities in that “Springtime of the Peoples”, but there was only one country in which the flaming beacon of revolution it ignited did not die within moments. It did not die, because a whole nation gathered around to feed it and fan it. When the fire blazed we were truly jubilant, and when it began to weaken we Hungarians united – from Upper Hungary in the north, to Transylvania in the east and Délvidék in the south, from the foothills of the Alps to the crescent of the Carpathian Mountains – and came with fresh wood to revive the flames.

The Hungarian message of freedom was sounded in Pest on the steps of the National Museum, but it echoed throughout our homeland: on Lajos Kossuth’s triumphant recruitment campaign in the Great Plain, and in Áron Gábor’s Transylvanian cannon foundry. The one hundred and sixty-seven years that have passed since then have brought many changes, but to this day we see the truths of that time as eternal. We still believe that Hungarian freedom can only be won by the Hungarians: through solidarity, work and reconciliation.

Just as then, in 2015 the Hungarian nation can wish for nothing else but this: “May there be peace, freedom and accord.”

15 March 2015

Budapest

Viktor Orbán