

THE PRESIDENT'S REPLY
TO THE REMARKS OF THE
NEWLY APPOINTED AMBASSADOR
OF THE REPUBLIC OF HUNGARY
BELA SZOMBATI
UPON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF
HIS LETTER OF CREDENCE

Mr. Ambassador:

It is with great pleasure that I accept your Letter of Credence, which establishes you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Hungary, and I acknowledge receipt of the Letter of Recall of your predecessor, Ambassador Ferenc Somogyi, who was exceptional in representing Hungary in the United States. I extend a warm welcome to you and your family, and I look forward to working closely with you to broaden and deepen the already close relations between our countries.

Hungary and the United States share a long history of friendship. Long before the historic changes of the past decades, our greatest figures in history drew inspiration from each others' ideas and each others' actions. I am pleased this ceremony follows so closely Hungary's national day, when we also commemorate the 1956 uprising. Freedom and democracy are often intertwined. Today we stand as partners advancing democracy and

freedom, and as NATO allies actively advancing regional and global security. Our countries' collaboration to support the NATO mission in Afghanistan illustrates our common interests and a commitment to achieving tangible results that reflect our values. I thank Hungary in particular for its assistance in taking a Guantanamo Bay detainee, which will help to speed the closure of that detention facility.

Mr. Ambassador, I look forward to working with you to advance our common agenda and deepen the strong and abiding friendship of our countries. It is a pleasure to welcome you back to Washington.