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**UNIVERSITÄT
BERN**

Departement Sozialwissenschaften, Fabrikstrasse 8, CH-3012 Bern

His Excellency, Dr. János Áder
President of the Republic
Sándor-Palace
Szent György tér 1-2.
1014 Budapest
Hungary

Faculty of Economics and Social
Sciences

Departement of Social Sciences

Berne, 6 April, 2017

Dear Dr. Áder

The Department of Social Sciences of the University of Bern learned that the Hungarian National Assembly adopted an amendment of the country's Law on Higher Education changing the regulation regarding international institutions operating in Hungary. The amendment severely affects the academic freedom and even the very existence of the Central European University.

We are joining the thousands of scholars from around the world to show our support and solidarity with the faculty and students of the Central European University. The adopted legislation threatens one of the most important European research centers in social sciences. We also feel obliged to speak out in defense of academic freedom, as the proposed amendment does not only endanger the Central European University, but would also restrict academic freedom in Hungary in general.

Central European University was set up in Budapest over 25 years ago within a legal framework that was actively supported by the Hungarian authorities. In this two and a half decades the Central European University has become one of the leading European research centers in political science, international relations, sociology, environmental policy, networks studies, media studies and public policy, and our Department maintained regular and very fruitful students' and research exchanges with the CEU during that time. It would be a true loss to not count anymore on this bilateral collaboration.

The Department of Social Sciences of the University of Bern strongly urges you not to sign the amendment. We urge Hungarian government to enter into negotiations with the CEU to find a satisfactory solution to all parties concerned.

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Isabelle Stadelmann-Steffen
Head of Department

CC: Zoltán Balog, Minister of Human Capacities; Central European University