



## **Adopted resolution**

### **NATO Surveillance Tower on Kanya Hill**

#### **Background Information**

A 65 m. NATO military spying tower was constructed in Hungary on the territory of privately-owned wood on Kanya Hill in the northern section of Zemplen Mountains. The building was carried out without obtaining the necessary planning permission and the consent of the forest owners in clear defiance of local government regulations and the rule of law.

The area in question is at present a nature reserve. It belongs to the special protected zone bordered by the Landscape Area of Zemplen. It is also a green corridor and since 1994 it has been on the list of special areas at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Water Management. Since 2005 it has also been an area designated by NATURA 2000, it is a wooded area owned by 141 private persons.

The building work of the tower has violated all planning laws in Hungary. The majority of objections to the tower have come from statutory authorities, such as local authorities, national park and forestry authorities, and particularly a judgement by the Court of the first instance.

They have not done any Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), no professional approval of the construction has been obtained from either the Bükk National Park or the State Forest Service. Owners of private forests have not been asked for their approval of the building works, either. Soil was removed and the landscape was transformed without any permission.

The way the construction was carried out served only the profitable interest of the construction company. The powers of the planning authority have been arbitrarily taken over by the military, all plans are designated as secret, which means that the local authorities are unable to do anything against the illegal construction, so they cannot have the tower demolished or partially demolished or receive legitimate revenues.

According to a Court's first level judgement the military occupation of the site was an act of trespassing and the construction itself was declared illegal. All those having suffered damages can turn to the Court for compensation. The Court has also decided that the army has to dismantle the fence and make it possible for forest owners or tourists to visit the area without restrictions.

Immediate action is required to prevent:

- irreparable damage of the area
- the Defence Ministry from confiscating the 500 hectares, a change that would mean declaring Kanya Hill area a military zone
- after 3 rejections by the administrative authorities, the Ministry enforcing the take over the lands to become a special military construction zone.

The judgements of the Court says anyone has the right to enter the area. However the army can delay their withdrawal, this has already been abused by the army. Any further damages can be only be stopped the personal presence and taking local action by forest owners and environmentalists.

In the next few weeks we will come to a decision whether the Northern Zemplen Mountains, an area having natural and landscape scenery values of European significance will become a military zone at the edge of a military alliance constituting a permanent menace or it will be allowed to remain what it is now, a destination of European ecotourism having peace and quiet.

The mayors supported by the local population of the area think that military considerations have been favoured exclusively at the expense of the public interest.

This issue has become a question of fundamental democracy, the abuse of the powers of local government and the rights of the citizens of the European Union.

### **Resolution**

Therefore we the Green Democrats of Hungary in partnership with the mayors of this region call on the EGP Council at Helsinki to condemn this illegal action and supports our efforts to protect this important natural area.