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HHRF ALERT

September 27, 2005

District Prosecutor Files Charges against Gabriella Agoston and Gabor Nemes of Subotica, Serbia

Defendants Released from "Preliminary" Detention



Gabriella Ágoston lawyer
from Subotica/Szabadka

Gabriella Agoston, lawyer, and **Gabor Nemes** businessman of Subotica/Szabadka, in Vojvodina Province, Serbia, were released on Monday, September 19, after several months of illegal detention. The court decision acknowledged, among others, that their incarceration violated the European Convention on Human Rights. Concurrently, the Subotica District Prosecutor filed charges against Agoston, former town clerk and Nemes, a director of the Subiro Company, for their 1997 role in a business venture between the latter and the municipality.

At a September 20 meeting with the Hungarian Human Rights Foundation's (HHRF) Vojvodina representative and Hungarian American Coalition President Maximillian Teleki, Agoston and her husband, **Antal Kujundzsics**, thanked international organizations for their intercession, as well as **Congressman Tom Lantos**, whose September 9 [letter](#) to **Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica** was pivotal in securing her release. This was the Ranking Democratic International Relations Committee Member's second letter to Kostunica on his government's

failure "to take effective action to suppress harassment and physical violence against non-Serbs, the intimidation of ethnic Hungarian, the harassment of individuals who have advocated greater autonomy in Vojvodina, the desecration of cemeteries, the appearance of anti-Hungarian, Croatian and Semitic graffiti in public places, and the vandalism of historic symbols."

The couple reiterated to HHRF that Agoston's legal defense of several victims of anti-minority violence in the province was the true reason for her detention and current indictment. HHRF has [documented 132 incidents](#) since January 2003 in this escalating campaign. Agoston and Nemes's incarceration and indictment are part of a seemingly coordinated series of "legal" measures to incapacitate key leaders of the country's 300,000-strong Hungarian community, the largest national minority in Vojvodina province. HHRF's August 23 [report](#) details the numerous due process violations in Agoston's case, which we continue to monitor closely.