

Opening address by Prof. Dr. E. Sylvester Vizi, President of the Hungarian Atlantic Council, at the conference “Good public governance indicators”

Budapest, 27 August 2013

Mr. Vice -Rector, Mr. State Secretary, Ladies and Gentlemen!

I believe that when one has the honour of opening a conference of this kind, the aim of which is to discuss how to improve the activity of the state, one must think about the challenges facing mankind and the challenges facing the Hungarian nation in the 21st century. I have no doubt, and for me as the former President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences it is absolutely clear, that the knowledge industry plays a significant role in the development throughout the world, and Hungary is no exception. Our country is entering a new world dedicated to a knowledge-based society, and we must acknowledge the challenges of an information revolution that is expanding day by day, month by month, year by year. I have mentioned a knowledge industry. Yes, if we look back upon the past century, it is absolutely clear that the strengthening and revaluation of intellectual capital was a characteristic of the 20th century. The development of human thinking has led to a stage in which today's human is able to be creative, which has accelerated development, and this accelerated development raises ethical questions. Since the birth of Christ, morality has indeed developed, but only linearly at best. However, the result of the rapid

development of science in the 20th century has been the exponential development of technology. The technology (weapons) at our disposal can be used for good or for bad. This is a moral question. The role of the state, the role of a well-functioning state, has become more important in this situation. It must guarantee security, justice and opportunities for its citizens.

The aim of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, or NATO, is to provide security in Europe and throughout the world. Like NATO, the Hungarian Atlantic Council also has an important role. Here, I must quote the words of Secretary General Rasmussen, who said in this context: „Today, the ranking of the countries is decided no longer only by the size of the army available, but also by the quality of technology and intellectual capital of the country in question.”

In everyday life, competitiveness is also determined by these factors. There are new threats (international ballistic missile attacks, cyber attacks, terrorism, energy security problems, organised crime etc.) in the world. I am convinced that to improve a country's competitiveness in innovation, research, or higher education at universities and the safety and security of its citizens, the well-functioning state has an important role. It is, therefore, important that the state serves the *bonum commune*, the public good.

Therefore, this conference has the mission of helping Hungary, which is part of the European Union, to be a well-functioning state.
