



The International Academy of Trial Lawyers Applauds Hungary’s Free Election and Peaceful Transfer of Power as a Victory for the Rule of Law

May 10, 2026—The [International Academy of Trial Lawyers](#) (the Academy) congratulates the people of Hungary for their courageous use of the ballot box to bring about peaceful change in their nation. The recent election, and the peaceful transfer of power that followed, mark an important democratic milestone. Together, they demonstrate that free and fair elections remain one of the most powerful tools people have to restore the Rule of Law when a nation has drifted toward authoritarianism.

The Rule of Law is fundamental to human freedom. Its continued existence depends on:

- **The right to self-determination**, in which people choose their leaders in free and fair elections that result in the peaceful transfer of power.
- **An independent and impartial judiciary** that is free from bias and conflicts of interest.
- **An independent and free press** that functions free from government control, intimidation, or retaliation.

These fundamental rights are enshrined in foundational legal documents, including the [United Nations Charter](#), the [European Convention on Human Rights](#), and the [U.S. Constitution](#).

During its 16 years in power, the authoritarian regime of Viktor Orbán undermined the Rule of Law in Hungary. It eroded the independence of the judiciary by bringing it under state control. It exerted significant control over press content, eroding the freedom of the press. Corruption was rampant. These and other actions resulted in sanctions against Hungary by the European Union. And they prompted the Hungarian people to act.

Exercising their fundamental rights to self-determination, the people of Hungary voted in record numbers to retake control of their government and restore the Rule of Law, delivering a landslide victory to the Tisza party. The newly elected Hungarian leader, [Peter Magyar](#), has promised to act swiftly to restore an independent judiciary and a free press, among other reforms. It will be important for the Tisza party to deliver on these reforms, which are essential to restore the Rule of Law in Hungary.

Though the Hungarian election ended Viktor Orbán’s 16-year reign as Prime Minister, he immediately conceded, accepted the results, and promised a peaceful transfer of power to Mr. Magyar. The peaceful transfer of power following an election is a hallmark of the Rule of Law.

That principle is especially significant now, as the Rule of Law has come under strain in other countries, including Brazil and the United States, where leaders disappointed by election results have encouraged and fomented resistance to the peaceful transfer of power.

The International Academy applauds the Hungarian people for their commitment to democracy and the Rule of Law. The Academy urges the new government to govern as it promised, by instituting prompt reforms to restore the Rule of Law, including an independent judiciary and a free press.



About the Academy

The International Academy of Trial Lawyers (the Academy) is a fellowship of lawyers with a singular mission: to protect and promote the Rule of Law. Founded in 1954, the Academy is composed of distinguished trial lawyers recognized for skill, experience, ethics, and civility. It includes both plaintiff and defense counsel in civil litigation, as well as prosecutors and defense lawyers in criminal cases. The Academy includes trial lawyers from the United States, Canada, and more than 30 other countries. Fellowship is by invitation only. Nominees must have distinguished themselves through careers defined by exceptional trial skills, professionalism, and integrity. They become Fellows only after a rigorous vetting process that includes both peer and judicial review. For additional information, visit IATL.net.