

blinken
osa

Archivum

Open:
Tuesday–Sunday
10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

Blinken OSA Archivum
Galeria Centralis
Arany János utca 32,
1051 Budapest,



on Peace square

The Peace Group for Dialogue

June 19 – October 25, 2026

Opening event

June 18, 2026, Thursday, 6:00 p.m. -

The exhibition is open to the public until October 25, 2026, free of charge.

Opening speech by

Éva Forgács, Melinda Kassai, Pál Kochis, and
Zoltán Rozgonyi, - Dialogue members

Opening remarks by

Gergő Bendegúz Cseh,

Director General,

Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security
Services


Csaba Szilágyi,

Interim Manager and Chief Archivist,

Blinken OSA Archivum

Galeria
Centralis

 **CEU** Political
Science

 **ABTL**

Állambiztonsági
Szolgálatok
Történeti
Levéltára

About the exhibition

On June 18, 2026, the exhibition *On Peace Square – The Peace Group for Dialogue* will open at the Galeria Centralis. Organized in collaboration by the Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security and the Blinken OSA Archivum, the exhibition presents the early history of the Peace Group for Dialogue, a unique grassroots initiative in 1980s Hungary. The exhibition explores how young Hungarian peace activists sought to organize an autonomous movement independent of both the state apparatus and the democratic opposition. Drawing on documents produced by the Dialogue group, state security reports, and Western information sources—and leaving room for the imagination—it reconstructs the group’s actions while revisiting questions of peace, political agency, and dialogue, which remain relevant today.

“You live on Peace Square. What does peace mean to you?” asked a leaflet distributed by the Peace Group for Dialogue. In the 1980s, the question was topical once again; a renewed arms race and regional conflicts replaced the *détente* of the previous decade. While the fight for peace was a central component of state propaganda in the Socialist countries of the Eastern Bloc, and Western peace movements experienced a new wave of popularity, Hungarian university students sought new forms for demanding peace, and launched, in 1982, the Dialogue. They organized debates in private homes and at universities, brought their messages into the public sphere, joined state marches, and carried out independent actions. They aimed to maintain conversations across the Iron Curtain with both Western and Eastern peace movements, participated in peace gatherings abroad, and hosted foreign peace activists. Meanwhile, they strived to establish a new, autonomous position: to find their place independent both from the state monopolizing the struggle for peace and from the democratic opposition opposing the regime.

The exhibition *On Peace Square* presents the early history of the Peace Group for Dialogue in international and domestic contexts. Through the spheres in which the group pursued its activities—including the private domain, official collaborations, and the public—we explore the room for maneuver available to a grassroots peace movement in 1980s Hungary. The show combines documents preserved at the Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security and at the Blinken OSA Archivum, initiating conversations between state security reports and Western information resources, state propaganda and the documents of the Peace Group for Dialogue. At the same time, just as the group sought to break free from the constraints of its era, the exhibition goes beyond presenting archival sources: it leaves room for the imagination, when visualizing actions known only from textual documents, as well as actions that were never realized.

Can peace be an honest, unifying aspiration, or does it inevitably become a tool serving political ends? Did Dialogue members genuinely believe in the struggle for peace, or were they primarily driven by the possibility of independent political action? Inspired by their example, *On Peace Square* is conceived as an open exhibition; a space for conversation, distinct answers and memories. “We would love to talk and correspond with you as well!”

Kurátorok: Tóth Eszter, Viszket Zoltán (ÁBTL) | Zsámboki Miklós (Blinken OSA Archivum)

Kiállításdesign: Szalay Péter

A kiállítás az Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történeti Levéltára és a Blinken OSA Archivum együttműködésében valósult meg.

Szakmai partner: Department of Political Science, Central European University (CEU)