

PRESS RELEASE

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## Romania to Join the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity

**On May 28 in Bucharest the Ministers of Culture of Poland and Romania, Bogdan Zdrojewski and Hunor Kelemen, along with the representatives of Germany, Slovakia and Hungary, will sign an annex to the founding declaration of the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity, an organisation whose aim is to develop dialogue and a community of remembrance around twentieth-century history. Pursuant to this document, Romania will join the activity of ENRS, which up to now has involved Poland, Slovakia, Germany, and Hungary.**

*'The inclusion of Romania into the activities of the European Network is a major step in the history of our initiative,' explains Prof. Jan Rydel, Chairman of the ENRS Steering Committee. 'We are glad that the first major expansion of our activities will take place in the year we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the collapse of communism in Europe. For some time now, Romania has actively participated in the development of the programme of the 'Freedom Express' social and educational campaign. An important element of the campaign will be the journey of a group of young artists, social activists and historians across 6 European countries. Timisoara will be one of the cities on the itinerary'.*

*We are confident that the inclusion of Romania in the development of ENRS will significantly contribute to raising public awareness about the shared history and interests of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe – explains Nadia Tunsu, Director of the Department of International Cooperation and European Affairs within Romania's Ministry of Culture.*

The mission of the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity consists not only in raising awareness of national historical narratives across the region and in solving the resultant misunderstandings, but also in attempts to overcome social stereotypes and build mutual respect among Europeans. ENRS is also involved in the study of the history of totalitarian systems, dictatorships, wars, and persecution in twentieth-century Europe, and

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in the dissemination of modern forms of international dialogue about these aspects of history.

The initiative of creating the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity as a forum of international cooperation was launched nearly ten years ago. Years of talks on its establishment culminated, on 2 February 2005, in the signature of a special founding declaration by the Ministers of Culture of Germany, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary. Scientists and politicians from these four countries are members of ENRS bodies. Representatives of the Czech Republic, Austria and Latvia are also present. Negotiations have been held with those countries concerning their inclusion in ENRS activities. More recently, Croatia has expressed an interest in becoming involved in the work of the Network.

There will be a celebration on Wednesday in Bucharest to mark the signing of the declaration that will see Romania become a member state of the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity. The event will be attended by the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland, Marek Szczygieł, members of the ENRS Steering Committee and the Permanent Representation of the European Union to Romania, as well as representatives of Romanian academia and major institutions concerned with history - the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile (IICCMER) and the National Institute for the Study of Totalitarianism.

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**European Network Remembrance and Solidarity (ENRS)** is an international project dedicated to studying, documenting and disseminating knowledge about the history of Europe in the 20th century and ways of its remembrance, with special emphasis on the period of dictatorship, wars and social opposition against enslavement.

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