



Romanian
Chairmanship
2016

**Speech of the Romanian IHRA Chair, Ambassador Mihnea Constantinescu,
at the unveiling of the Holocaust Memorial Monument in Gherla (Romania)**

22 May 2016

Dear Mr. Mayor,

Dear Mr. Deputy Prefect,

Dear Mme. Ambassador,

Dear Mr. Chairman of the Jewish Community in Gherla,

Dear survivors and descendants of Holocaust survivors,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, I would like to express my warmest appreciation for unveiling this important Holocaust memorial monument in Gherla. It is a historically important event, for which I would like to express our acknowledgments and admiration. I would also like to thank our friends from Israel and the United States, who supported the creation of this monument and stand here today together with the inhabitants of Gherla.

The Gherla Memorial is a significant contribution to Romania's efforts towards acknowledging the past and making Romanians, especially the young generation, aware of the tragic actions and sufferings during the Holocaust time.

We respectfully bow our foreheads when standing in front of this monument that reminds us of the crimes and horrible sufferings of the Jewish community in Gherla. We think about all the people who suffered during the Holocaust, as a result of the most brutal and odious acts in the history of humankind.

Romania's chairing the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance is an expression of our strong commitment to promote education and research in this field. In addition, our IHRA Chairmanship recommends the member states of the Alliance to actively and wisely confront the lessons of the past with the realities and challenges of the present, to make sure such tragic moments never happen again.

The Holocaust memorial monument that was inaugurated today in Gherla reminds us that we all have the duty of making more and of acting in a more efficient manner in this sense. The Gherla monument brings to our attention to the dangers generated by anti-Semitism, extremism, racism or xenophobia.

When facing such challenges, each of us has to defeat his or her fear and take a stand. It is the responsibility of each of us to contribute to the education of the young generation and teach them to defend and promote the democratic and universal values of humankind.

As of tomorrow, for a period of four days, we will organize the plenary meeting of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. More than 300 experts, researchers, government representatives in 41 states will discuss these subjects and will analyze how Holocaust remembrance is reflected on the education programmes and public space.

Today's event is an important contribution of your city's inhabitants to the mission of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and an example for other municipalities in Romania and the entire Europe.

I assure you that the Romanian IHRA Chairmanship will promote your initiative as a positive example and a contribution for better knowledge, understanding and action, so that such horrors never happen again.

Allow me to conclude by thanking, on behalf of the Romanian IHRA Chairmanship and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, to all who contributed to the realization of this monument and I would like to reassure all the inhabitants of Gherla municipality of our full support and appreciation.