

## **IHRA Plenary Meeting in Bucharest**

24 May 2016

The first plenary meeting of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) under Romanian chairmanship is taking place in Bucharest from 23 to 26 May 2016.

Around 200 experts from around the world are attending the conference in order to discuss the importance of the Holocaust as a politically relevant matter. Representatives from almost 40 countries, among them the European Commission's coordinator for combatting anti-Semitism, will participate in the conference where they shall discuss issues such as the preservation of memorial sites that are in danger of neglect.

Hannah M. Lessing, Secretary General of the National Fund, shall be attending with a delegation from Austria and will provide an update on the renewal of the Austrian national exhibition in Block 17 at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. If all goes to plan, the new exhibition entitled "Far Removed. Austria in Auschwitz" shall be opened in 2017. Dating from 1978, the former exhibition was dismantled in 2013 and has been documented in a photo book.

At present the exhibition concept has been refined by the exhibition's team of curators and is now the subject of intense discussion among the project's advisory boards (Academic Advisory Board, Societal Advisory Board, Steering Committee). On the basis of the artifacts and texts contained in the concept, the architect Martin Kohlbauer is drawing up a concept for the visual presentation and layout of the exhibition. At the same time, a program for the renovation of Block 17, which will house the exhibition, is being developed and coordinated with the Museum. In 2015 the National Fund commissioned a Polish conservator to develop a conservation program for the listed building and following a call to tender contracted a general planner for the renovation.

Founded in 1998, the IHRA has 31 Member States, ten Observer States and seven partner organizations. It has set itself the task of promoting Holocaust education and research and Holocaust remembrance at a national and international level. Austria has been Member of the IHRA (known until 2012 as the International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, ITF) since 2001, chairing the organization from March 2008 to March 2009. The National Fund acts as the Coordination Office for Austria.

### **Links**

IHRA Website: <http://holocaustremembrance.com/>

Press Release IHRA Plenary Meeting Bucharest: <http://bit.ly/1W3PDdq>

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