

The Hague, 29 March 2010

Mr Kelemen Hunor, Minister for Culture and National Heritage  
**Ministerul Culturii si Patrimoniului National**

Șoseaua Kiseleff nr. 30, Sector 1  
011347 Bucharest  
ROMANIA

**Re: Safeguarding Rosia Montana**

Dear Minister Kelemen,

In solidarity with our Member Organisations Pro Patrimonio and the Transylvania Trust, and following preliminary discussions with our Council, Europa Nostra's Board unanimously voted at its recent meeting (The Hague, 11-12 February) to renew our campaign calling for the protection and preservation of the extraordinary cultural heritage site of Rosia Montana. Europa Nostra, representing millions of engaged European citizens, repeats its urgent call to the Romanian Government to make a clear choice for the long-term sustainable future of this area of outstanding beauty and of historic and cultural significance, and to not sacrifice it for short-term benefits.

Europa Nostra calls on you personally, Minister Kelemen, to do everything in your power to protect the cultural heritage site of Rosia Montana. As Executive President of Europa Nostra, and on behalf of our organisation as a whole, I would like to express our hope that your recent appointment as Minister for Culture and National Heritage will bring with it a renewed respect within the Romanian Government for your country's rich and valuable cultural heritage. We wish to remind you that belonging to the family of European Union Member States, also entails the responsibility and expectation to protect our common cultural heritage situated on Romanian ground and which belongs alike to all Romanian but also all European citizens.

Europa Nostra has been alerted to the preparatory works being carried out by Gabriel Resources and later by the Rosia Montana Gold Corporation (RMGC) for the development of large-scale open cast mining at Rosia Montana. RMGC has not proven itself a trustworthy partner in conservation, as numerous buildings and sites they have bought to include in a so-called "Historic Protected Area" which will be left over between the areas of mining activities, have so far been left derelict, demolished, or have been badly renovated. The effects of the open pits ravaging the landscape, of the huge tailing facility planned in the valley of Corna, and of the accompanying industrial effects of the proposed mining activities, would inevitably damage the landscape forever and preclude any sustainable development of the area. An ecological disaster caused by the massive amounts of cyanide required for gold mining will always remain a threat hanging over the area forevermore. Ultimately a mining company is primarily concerned with its own profits which will largely leave the country. Destructive industrial activity for the predicted useful life for the mine of 16 years, cannot be seen to outweigh the perhaps slower, but in the long-term ultimately much more beneficial and valuable economic development, brought through proper attention to conserving and developing the rich cultural heritage of the Rosia Montana area.

As you are aware, cultural tourism is one of the largest economic forces at play in Europe today, and it is a growth industry. As a new member of the European Union, Romania now has a unique opportunity to invest in the sustainable development of its regions. Experience has shown that especially in newly acceded Member States, there is an enormous interest from European citizens in the culture and landscape



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of these countries. Cultural tourism, and the sustainable development it generates, can serve as a driving engine for economic and social development for your country, pulling it up to the level of older Member States, by allowing the energy and pride of its citizens a positive outlet. Many European countries have found resources for protecting their natural and historic heritage, and transforming it as a major resource of development, for their own benefit, that of the local communities, and for the benefit of European culture and tourism. The Romanian government must be concerned with sustaining and supporting its own communities and its heritage, and protecting its cultural landscapes for its citizens, and those of Europe and the world.

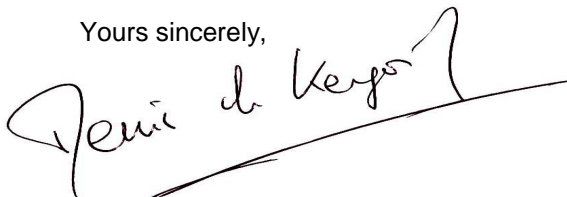
Rosia Montana's protected status is ensured by law and with this in mind, we would like to encourage you to enforce the relevant legal provisions that will ensure the protection of its remarkable and unique heritage. We encourage you to:

- Urgently set up a programme to save the site and stop the destruction of valuable monuments, whether such destruction is intended or results from neglect;
- Put under real and effective protection the heritage whose classification has been requested by independent experts;
- Reintroduce the Carnic Massif in its entirety, including the valuable exploitation systems and Roman and medieval mine galleries, onto the list of Historic Monuments, as defined by the Romanian Supreme Court (December 2008);
- Disallow areas with industrial zoning to be superimposed over zones containing historic monuments, such as the Carnic and Orlea massifs;
- Constitute an international commission with expertise in Mining Archaeology to advise the Romanian National Commission for Archaeology (NCA) with regard to evaluating Rosia Montana's true worth and any requests for Archaeological Discharge for the area; and
- Request an analysis of the cultural heritage importance of Rosia Montana to be carried out by the National Commission for Historic Monuments before considering any Archaeological Discharge.

Cultural tourism brings sustainable development which in turn can provide economic security : one suggestion we could make is that you should use all means at your disposal to place Rosia Montana on the World Heritage List. We understand that in mid-2009, a formal application to register the site on Romania's tentative WHList was officially submitted. Europa Nostra puts itself at your disposal to support this application in any way we can.

For Romania the time has come to choose between two directions of regional development: • either destructive, short-term mono-industrial development; or the alternative : • long-term sustainable development through enhancing the full range of unique assets Rosia Montana and the whole area of the Apuseni Mountains offer. We strongly encourage you to opt for the latter.

Yours sincerely,



Denis de Kergorlay  
Executive President

