

## **An appeal in defense of the *Memorial* Society**

On 28 December 2021, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation issued a verdict ordering the closing of the International Historical, Educational, Charitable and Human Rights Society *Memorial*.

As university lecturers – in particular as historians – as well as members of the academic committees and councils, we protest vehemently against this decision and stand in unanimous solidarity with the employees and volunteers of the *Memorial* Society.

It is impossible to overestimate the significance of the *Memorial* Society and its research into the crimes of the totalitarian regime in the Soviet Union, the museum, archive, and library that it has created, the exhibitions and scholarly initiatives that it has organized, or its publishing and public outreach activities. The Society has contributed enormously to the elucidation of the darkest chapters of 20<sup>th</sup> century history. *Memorial's* activities benefit not only the Russian Federation and its citizens, but also the global community. The Society remains indispensable to Russia and Poland as well as, in a broader perspective, to Europe and the world.

The fact that *Memorial's* endeavors have always been centered on the defense of human rights, empathically offered to groups and individuals alike, establishes the Society as one of Russia's most important and praiseworthy non-governmental organizations. It truly is – as the whole democratic world justly emphasizes today – the conscience of the nation.

We urge for the renunciation of further steps aimed at nullifying *Memorial's* legacy of over 30 years. We call for a positive evaluation of the appeal of the verdict, to which the organization is rightly entitled, and for enabling it to continue functioning freely without fear of repressions and restrictions.

We assure the creators, employees, and volunteers of the *Memorial* Society of our solidarity and gratitude. We ask the whole democratic international community and all people of good will for consolidation around the defense of this unique, distinguished, and critically necessary organization.

*Dean, Dean's Board and Council for Discipline of History of the Faculty of History, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (UAM)*

*Dean and Council of the Faculty of History, University of Gdańsk (UG)*

*Dean and Council of the Faculty of History, Jagiellonian University in Kraków (UJ)*

*Dean, Dean's College, Council of the Faculty of Humanities, Director and Council of the Institute of History, Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce (UJK)*

*Dean and Scholarly Council of the Faculty of History, Casimir the Great University in Bydgoszcz (UKW)*

*Dean, Dean's College and Council of the Faculty of Philosophy and History, University of Łódź (UŁ)*  
*Directors and Scholarly Council of the Institute of History, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin (UMCS)*

*Chairman and Council for Discipline of History, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (UMK)*

*Chairman and Council for Discipline of History, KEN Pedagogical University in Kraków (UP KEN)*

*Vice-Rector and Scholarly Council of the College of Humanities, University of Rzeszów (UR)*

*Chairman and Scholarly Council of the Institute of History, University of Szczecin (USz)*

*Director and Council of the Institute of History, University of Silesia in Katowice (UŚ)*  
*Dean and Council of the Faculty of History and International Relations, University of Białystok (UwB)*  
*Chairman and Scholarly Council for Discipline of History, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (UWM)*  
*Dean and Council of the Faculty of History, University of Warsaw (UW)*  
*Dean and Council of the Faculty of Historical and Pedagogical Sciences, University of Wrocław (UWr)*  
*Chairman and Council for Discipline of History, University of Zielona Góra (UZ)*  
*Director and Council of the Institute of History, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (KUL)*  
*Director and Council of the Institute of History, Pomeranian University in Słupsk (APS)*  
*Directors and Scholarly Council of Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences (IH PAN)*  
*Ethnological Sciences Committee, Polish Academy of Sciences (KNE PAN)*  
*Committee on Philosophical Sciences, Polish Academy of Sciences (KNF PAN)*  
*National Historical Committee, Polish Academy of Sciences (KNH PAN)*  
*Committee on Ancient Culture, the Polish Academy of Sciences (KNoKA PAN)*  
*Slavic Studies Committee, Polish Academy of Sciences (KS PAN)*  
*President and Executive Board of the Polish Historical Society (PTH)*  
*President and Board of the Polish Ethnological Society (PTL)*  
*President and Executive Board of the Polish Sociological Association (PTS)*