

**Open Letter to**

*José Manuel Barroso*, President of the European Commission

*Traian Băsescu*, President of Romania

*Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu*, Prime Minister of Romania

**Academic rights in Romania**

Your Excellences, fifteen years ago, when the revolution in 1989 demolished Nicolae Ceaușescu's dictatorship, a group of intellectuals expressed their concern about academic freedom and minority rights in Romania: they demanded the restoration of the Hungarian-language Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár. Now, the appeal is repeated because no progress has been made in achieving this aim.

This Hungarian-language university existed in Romania from 1945 till 1959 and its planned liquidation, by forcedly assimilating it into the mainly Romanian Babeș-Bolyai University, was one of Ceaușescu's personal political triumphs. Over the last fifteen years coequality in higher education could not be achieved and it is clear that the present structure does not serve the adequate training of Hungarian professionals in Romania. Although two private universities in Transylvania are sustained by the Hungarian government, Hungarians in Romania are heavily underrepresented in higher education.

There are successful examples of higher education in minority languages in Europe and elsewhere – e.g. Albanians in Macedonia, Catalans in Spain, Gagauz in Moldavia, Hungarians in Slovakia, Sámi in Norway, and Swedes in Finland who enjoy the benefits of a public (state-financed) university or universities in their own languages.

We understand Romania's pressing current problems but feel that in order to create a truly democratic society, the Romanian authorities should grant the minority rights mentioned above to the one and a half million strong Hungarian ethnic minority in Romania. We, therefore, urge that immediate steps be taken to re-establish the public Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca / Kolozsvár.

16<sup>th</sup> of February, 2006

Yours sincerely,

**Atiyah, Michael F.**, Sir, Prof, Abel Prize Laureate and Fields Medalist, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh, UK

**Gennes, Pierre-Gilles de**, Prof, Nobel Laureate and Wolf Prize Laureate in Physics, Fellow of the Royal Society, Member of the National Academy of Sciences, USA, Institut de France, Académie des Sciences, Collège de France and Institute Curie, Paris, France

**Hubel, David H.**, Prof, Nobel Laureate, Member of the US National Academy of Sciences, Harvard University, Boston MA, USA

**Kandel, Eric R.**, Prof, Nobel Laureate, Member of the US National Academy of Sciences, Columbia University, New York, USA

**Kertész, Imre**, Nobel Laureate, Budapest, Hungary

**Klug, Aaron**, Sir, Prof, Nobel Laureate, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, University of Cambridge, UK

**Levitzki, Alexander**, Prof, Wolf Prize Laureate, Member of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

**Lovász, László**, Prof, Wolf Prize Laureate, Member of The Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Microsoft Research, Redmond, USA

**Oláh, George A.**, Prof, Nobel Laureate, Member of the US National Academy of Sciences, University of Southern California, USA

**Wiesel, Elie**, Prof, Nobel Laureate, Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Boston University, Massachusetts, USA

**Witten, Edward**, Prof, Fields Medalist, Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey, USA

\* \* \*

**Baltay, Charles**, Prof, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA

**Barabási, Albert-László**, Corresponding Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, USA

**Barrio, Rafael A.**, Prof, Member of the Mexican Academy of Sciences, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico

**Belmonte, Carlos**, Prof, Member of the Royal Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences, Director, Instituto de Neurociencias de Alicante, Universidad Miguel Hernandez, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Sant Joan d'Alacant, Spain

**Björklund, Anders**, Prof, Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Lund University, Sweden

**Bliss, Timothy V. P.**, Dr, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, MRC National Institute for Medical Research, London, UK

**Bodmer, Walter**, Sir, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, Oxford, UK

**Castillejos, Raquel Pérez**, Dr, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

**Castrén, Eero**, Academy Professor, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

**Changeux, Jean-Pierre**, Prof, Member, Institut de France, Académie des Sciences, Institut Pasteur, Paris, France

**Cochran, Robert**, Prof, Director of the Center for Arkansas and Regional Studies at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA

**Collingridge, Graham**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, University of Bristol, UK

**Costa, Erminio**, Prof, Member of "Accademia dei Lincei", Rome, US National Academy of Sciences, University of Illinois, Chicago, USA

**Cowey, Alan**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, University of Oxford, UK

**Csernai, László P.**, Prof., Doctor Honoris Causa of Babeş-Bolyai University, Member of Academia Europaea, University of Bergen, Norway

**Cull-Candy, Stuart**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, University College, London, UK

**DeFelipe, Javier**, Prof, Instituto Cajal, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, Spain

**Dockray, Graham**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, University of Liverpool, UK

**Eberle, Alex N.**, Prof, University Hospital, Basel, Switzerland

**Graybiel, Ann**, Prof, Member of the US National Academy of Sciences, MIT, Cambridge, USA

**Griffiths, Gareth**, Dr, Group Leader, European Molecular Biology Laboratory, Heidelberg, Germany

**Grillner, Sten**, Prof, Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden

**Hamingway, Richard J.**, Honorary Research Professor of Physics, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada

**Hokfelt, Thomas**, Prof, Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden

**Jessell, Thomas M.**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, Member of the US National Academy of Sciences, Columbia University, New York, USA

**Jones, Arwyn Tomos**, Dr, Cardiff University, Wales, UK

**Kaila, Kai**, Academy Professor, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

**Klein, Eva**, Prof, Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden

**Klein, George**, Prof, Member of the European Academy of Sciences, Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden

**Korn, Henri**, Prof, Member, Institut de France, Académie des Sciences, Institut Pasteur, Paris, France

**Kossut, Malgorzata M.**, Prof, Member of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology, Warsaw, Poland

**Lerma, Juan**, Prof, Deputy Director, Instituto de Neurociencias de Alicante, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, UMH, Alicante, Spain

**Llinás, Rodolfo**, Prof, Member of the US National Academy of Sciences, New York University, New York, USA

**Lopes da Silva, Fernando**, Prof, Member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

**Lucas, Amand A.**, Prof, Member of the Royal Belgium Academy of Science, Facultés Universitaires Notre-Dame de la Paix, Namur, Belgium

**Maffei, Lamberto**, Prof, Vice-President of the Italian Academy of Sciences (Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei), Member of the European Academy of Sciences, Chairman of the Institute of Neurophysiology of the Italian National Research Council, Pisa, Italy

**Mangano, Michelangelo L.**, Dr, Senior Scientist, PH-TH Department, CERN, Geneva, Switzerland

**Metspalu, Andres**, Prof, IMCB/Estonian Biocentre, University of Tartu, Tartu, Estonia

**Moser, Edvard**, Prof, Member of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters and of the Royal Norwegian Society of Science and Letters, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway

**Nakanishi, Shigetada**, Prof, Director, Osaka Bioscience Institute, Osaka, Japan

**Nicoll, Roger**, Prof, Member of the US National Academy of Sciences, University of California, San Francisco, USA

**North, Alan R.**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, Vice-President and Dean, University of Manchester, UK

**Okada, Yoshio**, Prof, Kobe Gakuin University, Japan

**O'Mara, Shane**, Prof, School of Psychology & Trinity College Institute of Neuroscience, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

**Ottersen, Ole Petter**, Prof, Member of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, University of Oslo, Norway

**Pan, Christoph**, Prof, Head of the South Tirolean Institute for Ethnic Groups, Italy

**Plane, David E.**, Dr, CERN, OPAL Experiment Spokesman, Geneva, Switzerland

**Prochiantz, Alain**, Prof, Member, Institut de France, Académie des Sciences, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris, France

**Pujol, Ángel Gabilondo**, Prof, Rector Magnífico de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain

**Pungor, Ernő**, Prof, Doctor Honoris Causa of Babeş-Bolyai University, Member of the European Academy of Sciences, Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society, Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Hungary

**Radda, George**, Sir, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, University of Oxford, UK

**Raska, Ivan**, Prof, Institute of Cell Biology and Pathology, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

**Ribeiro, Joaquim A.**, Prof, Inst. Farmacologia Neurociencias, Faculdade de Medicina, Univ. Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal

**Romo, Ranulfo**, Prof, Member of the Mexican Academy of Sciences, Foreign Associate of the US National Academy of Sciences, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico

**Saarma, Mart**, Prof, Member of the Estonian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Biotechnology, Univ. of Helsinki, Finland

**Sarna, Tadeusz**, Prof, Head, Department of Biophysics, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland

**Schulz, Thomas F.**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists, Hannover Med. School, Germany

**Singer, Wolf**, Prof, Member of Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, Director, Max-Planck-Institute for Brain Research, Frankfurt am Main, Germany

**Somogyi, Péter**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, University of Oxford, UK

**Stanley, Eugene H.**, Prof, Member of US National Academy of Sciences, Director, Center for Polymer Studies, Boston University, Massachusetts, USA

**Storm-Mathisen, Jon**, Prof, Member of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, University of Oslo, Norway

**Strata, Piergiorgio**, Prof, Member of Academia Europaea, Director of Rita Levi Montalcini Center for Brain Repair, University of Torino, Italy

**Strausfeld, Nicholas J.**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, University of Arizona, Tucson, USA

**Tenchini, Roberto**, Prof, Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, Pisa, Italy

**Tubella, Imma**, Prof, Rector, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain

**Ullrich, Axel**, Prof, Max-Planck-Institute of Biochemistry, Director of the Department of Molecular Biology, Martinsried, Germany

**Vigneron, Jean Pol**, Prof, Facultés Universitaires Notre-Dame de la Paix, Namur, Belgium

**Vizi, Szilveszter E.**, Prof, President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary

**Waessle, Heinz**, Prof, Member, Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, Director, Max-Planck-Institute for Brain Research, Frankfurt am Main, Germany

**Wagner, Albrecht**, Prof, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron, Hamburg, Germany

**Weiskrantz, Larry**, Prof, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, University of Oxford, UK

**Winkler, Hans**, Prof, Member, Academia Europaea, University of Innsbruck, Austria

**Zerwas, Peter M.**, Prof, Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron – DESY, Hamburg, Germany