

TRANSLATION from ROMANIAN

Bucharest August 16, 2011

To: The Romanian Academy, “Iorgu Iordan – Alexandru Rosseti” Institute of Linguistics
Attention of: Mr. Academician Marius Sala, Director

CC:

- **Attention of Mr. Csaba Ferenc ASZTALOS**

The President of the National Council for Combating Discrimination

- **Attention of Mr. Aurel Vainer**

The President of the Federation of the Jewish Communities in Romania

REF: Letter # 878 issued by the Romanian Academy on 10 August 2011

Dear Academician Marius Sala,

Thank you for the prompt response issued by the Romanian Academy to our letter dated August 8, 2011.

The “error” invoked by you as the cause that led to defining the word “JIDAN” (“*KIKE*” in English) as familiar, is an “error” difficult to accept and understand, when it comes from the Romanian Academy. This is a very serious “error”, which needs to be corrected promptly and adequately.

The effect of this situation, of this context, of this reality which the Romanian Academy has established through an “error”, as you say, has the effect of bringing into our present, in actual palpable manner for the Jews, the echoes of that dark period in Romania’s history, when the word “JIDAN” was used with the frequency and ease of a “familiar” word.

The fact that, in your reply to our request related to the current definition of the word “JIDAN”, you considered it necessary to describe the process of the development of the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language (DEX) as one which aimed to come up with definitions which are, among others, “as politically correct as possible”, obliges us to come back with the following specification: our request is to remedy the definition of a deeply offensive and anti-Semitic word.

Our request addressed to the Romanian Academy to correctly define the word “JIDAN”, pointing out its racist and anti-Semitic meaning, is not, from our point of view, a matter of “political correctness”. It is a matter of offering to the public a correct, a real and a non-discriminatory

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definition for one of the words, from the Romanian language vocabulary, carrying the heaviest and most terrible load with devastating effects on the Romanian Jewry.

In the context of a Romanian consciousness which still finds it in a guilty drowsiness as to what "JIDAN" has meant in the history of our country, assuming a correct and complete definition for this word enters under the mandate of the institution you are administrating and it is imperatively necessary.

In this context, aside from the obligation you assumed that, in future editions of all dictionaries issued by the honourable institution that you manage, a fair and clear definition of "JIDAN" will appear, we accept your proposal that, in a press release, also posted on the website of your institution, an explanatory note be given, which, we hope, will define the word "JIDAN" in a manner which conveys the anti-Semitic and profoundly offensive meanings of this word.

Defining this word only as being "pejorative and not recommended", as you proposed in your reply to us, omits the irreparable, destructive effects which the word "JIDAN" has produced since the times when it was adopted, formally and at national level, as another "familiar" name for "Jew". This is a name which represented then, and continues to represent today, the denial of our own humanity.

Under these conditions, expressing again our appreciation for your prompt response, we ask you that, in the process of the immediate correction of the definition for the word "JIDAN", you take into consideration our opinion, those who are still named "JIDAN" in Romania and who, at present, on the background of the current definition of the word "JIDAN", are struggling to find and defend our right to live in dignity in our country

In conclusion, we ask you Sir to explain to our fellow citizens the real meaning of the word "JIDAN".

Yours sincerely,

Maximillian Marco Katz – Founding Director of MCA Romania
Dr. Alexandru Florian – Executive Director of MCA Romania
Marius Draghici – International Affairs Director of MCA Romania
Delia Nita – Anti-discrimination Program Manager, Centre for Legal Resources

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