



Musée Holocauste Montréal  
Montreal Holocaust Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ***Montrealers Commemorate 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Romani Genocide***

**Montreal, July 24, 2019** – On August 1, the Montreal Holocaust Museum, in partnership with Romanipe, will host its fourth annual commemoration of the Romani Genocide. The public is invited to attend and learn more about the organized murder of Roma and Sinti peoples by the Nazis and their collaborators during World War II.

The commemoration will take place at the Montreal Holocaust Museum on **Thursday, August 1 at 7 pm**. Testimonies of genocide survivors will be read and **Margareta Matache**, Roma rights activist, Harvard instructor and Director of the Roma Program at Harvard FXB, will speak about the legacy of the genocide and the ongoing persecution of Romani peoples, notably in Europe.

August 2 has been designated by international Roma and Sinti as the day to commemorate the Porrajmos, or Romani Genocide during World War II. On this date in 1944, the last remaining 2,897 Roma and Sinti imprisoned in the so-called Zigeunerlager, or “Gypsy Camp” were murdered in the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau. The most recent estimate indicates that at least 500,000 Roma and Sinti were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators during World War II.

Last year, on August 2, 2018, the Canadian government issued a statement in remembrance and recognition of the Romani Genocide. Despite this achievement, much work remains to be done so that an official Act of Parliament can be adopted to officially recognize the Romani Genocide. With this official Act, Canada would become the fourth country in the world to recognize the genocide. “We welcome the previous steps taken by the Canadian government,” expressed Dafina Savic, Founder of Romanipe. “We are hopeful that the government will fulfill its commitment by passing an Act of Parliament, which would officially recognize the Romani Genocide and reaffirm its commitment to combatting ongoing violence and racism faced by Romani populations today. Canadian Roma, notably Romani Genocide survivors eagerly await the government’s final step.”

Currently, we are witnessing ongoing segregation, persecution and violence against Romani peoples in Europe. “Through public education and this annual commemoration, we hope to shine a light on the dangers of normalizing anti-Roma crimes and to build a culture of understanding and acceptance,” stated Dorothy Zalzman Howard, President of the Montreal Holocaust Museum.

**About the Montreal Holocaust Museum:** The Montreal Holocaust Museum educates people of all ages and backgrounds about the Holocaust, while sensitising the public to the universal perils of antisemitism, racism, hate and indifference. Through its Museum, its commemorative programs and educational initiatives, the Montreal Holocaust Museum promotes respect for diversity and the sanctity of human life.

**About Romanipe:** Romanipe is a not-for-profit organization whose main mission is to defend the dignity and human rights of Roma populations worldwide.

-30-

For more information please contact: Sarah Fogg, Head of Marketing, Communications and PR at 514-345-2605 ext. 3437 (514-240-7357 cell [sarah.fogg@museeholocauste.ca](mailto:sarah.fogg@museeholocauste.ca))