



Engaging communities  
through international  
arts partnerships

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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

20 June 2012

Victor Ponta  
Prime Minister  
Republic of Romania

Dear Sir:

I write as the Director of CEC ArtsLink, a cultural institution in New York City that has worked for over 15 years with great success with the Romanian Cultural Institute to share the incredibly rich culture of your country with communities here in the US. It has come to my attention that the mission of RCI is altered and its operations are threatened. On behalf of the many communities in the United States with which we work, we wish to protest strongly against the current Romanian government's proposal to change the mission of the Romanian Cultural Institutes.

We beg you to recognize the uniquely excellent, accountable, efficient and effective work that the ICRs have been doing and to leave their mission, independence as it stands. There is no need to fix something that isn't broken.

We and our audiences have learned about the beauty of Romanian culture through these Institutes; we have learned of the richness of contemporary thought in Romania and we have had the good fortune to 'discover' and work with the finest of both young and accomplished Romanian artists... all thanks to the independent Romanian Cultural Institutes.

With far less resources than other state cultural institutes, ICR has truly put Romanian art and artists onto a very competitive international cultural map. Like the Goethe and French Institutes, the British Council and many more, the Romanian Cultural Institutes form a space for international cultural exchange, supporting the emergence and development of international cultural collaboration and exchange. Like the other cultural institutes, the ICRs dispel stereotypes, support talent, internationalize careers, and foster understanding of the best of their cultures.

Romania is a signatory to many international treaties and declarations, some legally binding and some not, which oblige states to pro-actively support freedom of artistic and cultural expression. An "emergency" measure to radically change the ICR mission and submit it to obvious politicized control is against the spirit and the letter of these documents, and we urge you to rethink this position.

Sincerely,

Fritzie Brown  
Executive Director