

Statement of Benjamin Nägele,
Director of European Affairs
B'nai B'rith International

B'nai B'rith International, the world's oldest Jewish organization, representing more than 100,000 members and supporters around the globe, is deeply concerned about the plans to build a statue in Székesfehérvár honoring Bálint Homan, a key figure in the persecution and deportation of Hungarian Jews during World War II.

Homan implemented discriminatory anti-Semitic laws and actively supported the destruction of Hungarian Jewry under both the pro-German government of Miklos Horthy and the fascist Arrow Cross puppet regime.

B'nai B'rith feels that the intended statue trivializes this dark legacy. It also ignores Hungary's share of responsibility for the Holocaust, evidenced by the active participation of Hungary's own wartime government in the atrocities that occurred during the Holocaust era.

Rather than honor an anti-Semitic figure, Hungary needs to undergo a much-needed critical examination of its own role in the Holocaust and condemn the actions of wartime leaders who participated in the degradation and liquidation of Hungarian Jewry. Hungary's role as chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance demands nothing less of it.

B'nai B'rith asks for a strong signal from the Hungarian government in the fight against anti-Semitism and urges it to immediately abandon plans to rehabilitate the legacy of Balint Homan. This shameful statue has no place in Hungary.