

***Churches and religious associations behind the „Iron Curtain”. Part one: 1945-1956, September 6-7, 2023, Warsaw (The deadline for the submission of abstracts: May 30, 2023)***

Institute of National Remembrance (Poland), Nation's Memory Institute (Slovakia), Committee of National Remembrance (Hungary) have the honour to invite you to an international conference *Churches and religious associations behind the „Iron Curtain”. Part one: 1945-1956, September 6-7, 2023 Warsaw*

As a result of World War II in 1945, Europe was divided into two parts: the democratic West and East, the countries under the domination of the Soviet Union, or how it was assumed to be behind the "Iron curtain".

Having seized power, the communists immediately began attacking churches and believers. The harshest harassment and persecution was primarily directed at the Catholic Church as the largest denomination in several countries of the Soviet bloc states. However, the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, the Protestant Reformed Church, and several smaller churches and religious societies were also targeted. The driving force behind these attacks was the fundamental Marxist-Leninist view of religion as *'the opium of the people'*, and belief in God, an old-fashioned relic.

The conference organizers decided to take a closer look at the broadly understood situation of Churches and religious associations in the European countries of the Eastern Bloc in 1945-1956. We will try to look for similarities and differences between their activities, religious policy of the authorities, and the situation of the followers of particular Churches. We are interested in how churches and religious associations found themselves in the realities of functioning in an extremely hostile political environment, in countries whose ideological assumption was to fight with every religion.

The topics of the papers may relate to the following issues:

- international context of churches and religious associations situation
- activities of the Holy See in the countries of the Eastern Bloc and its attitude to the Soviet Union.
- religious policy of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries
- persecution against the church hierarchy and believers

- the internal situation of individual Churches and religious associations
- situation and attitudes of the church hierarchy
- position and attitudes of the clergy and the faithful
- position and attitude of individual Churches and religious associations to the activities of the churches and the anti-communist resistance
- important events in the internal life of the Churches
- relations between individual Churches and religious associations
- relations of emigration to Churches activities

**Language of conference will be English.**

**Coordinators: Rafał Łatka, Mirosław Szumiło, Gergely Isó, Peter Jašek**

**The deadline for the submission of abstracts: May 30, 2023**

**Please send paper proposals consisting of paper title, a brief (up to 250 words) abstract and a short biographic entry (up to 100 words) to [rafal.latka@ipn.gov.pl](mailto:rafal.latka@ipn.gov.pl) ; [jasek@upn.gov.sk](mailto:jasek@upn.gov.sk) ; [gergerly.iso@neb.hun](mailto:gergerly.iso@neb.hun)**