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Public Statement in Support of Academic Freedom and University Autonomy at the University of Belgrade

Blokada Beč

We, the undersigned academic institutions and academic units, express our serious concern over the police action carried out at the University of Belgrade on March 31, 2026 and over the pressure directed at its students, faculty, deans, and leadership.

This action came after more than 16 months of escalating pressure on Serbia's public universities because students, professors, and deans had spoken out against corruption and in defense of rule of law, freedom, and free elections.

Universities must remain spaces of academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and lawful public debate. Accountability in the investigation of the tragedy that happened on March 26, 2026 at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade is essential, but it must not be used as a pretext to compromise university autonomy or to intimidate members of the academic community.

We therefore:

- affirm our support for the autonomy and integrity of the University of Belgrade

- call on the relevant authorities to refrain from further pressure on the university community and to ensure that the tragedy of 27 March is not used to undermine academic freedom or institutional autonomy.

- call on international academic institutions, academic-freedom networks, and partner universities to provide sustained public attention, monitoring, and practical support to students, faculty, deans, and university leadership at the University of Belgrade in the event of further pressure or retaliation.

Sign the letter: https://docs.google.com/document/d/11rmifP4iFP2Y_FI96c3G8NpydyXHe_TApBAiCbYwUxY/edit?tab=t.0