The Right to the Truth

Sweden's Disappeared and the long Search for Justice



The 3rd Raoul Wallenberg International Roundtable 14-15 September 2017 Stockholm

Press Release

The Raoul Wallenberg Research Initiative RWI-70

is honored to host the

3rd Raoul Wallenberg International Roundtable

14 September 2017 9:00 - 17:00

15 September 2017 9:00 - 15:00



Swedish Army Museum

Riddargatan 13

114 51 Stockholm

Victims of repression like Raoul Wallenberg and their families have a right to truthful information about their ordeal. But what good is this 'Right to the Truth' when one cannot enforce it?

For the first time ever, Swedish families of the disappeared, past and present, will have a chance to meet each other and share their experiences. Together, they will explore how to pursue and enforce the legal 'Right to the Truth' more effectively.

Aside from Raoul Wallenberg's family and the families of other disappeared Swedes, we will be joined by historians, international legal experts, journalists, former political prisoners and human rights defenders.

The event will be open to the public, with a joint **Press Conference** scheduled for Thursday,

14 September

15:00 - 16:00

Participants include

Klas Åmark - Cecilia Ahlberg -Susanne Berger - Vadim Birstein - Percy Bratt - Ingrid Carlberg - Magnus Christiansson - Irwin Cotler - Mats Deland - Louise von Dardel - Marie Dupuy - Staffan Gadd - Angela Gui -Esayas Isaak - Bengt Jangfeldt - Gellert Kovacs - Christer Lokind - Nina Lagergren - David Matas - Ivan Pavlov -Nikita Petrov - Peter Ruggenthaler - Arne Ruth- Göran Rydeberg - Martin Schibbye - Georg Sessler - Kerstin von Seth - Daria Sukhikh - Matthias Uhl - Manuel Vergara Céspedes - Evabritta Wallberg - Irmtrud Wojak

For more information and a detailed program, please go to www.buxus-stiftung.de or contact

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The Raoul Wallenberg Research Initiative (RWI-70)

Founded in 2015, the Raoul Wallenberg Research Initiative (RWI-70) is an informal alliance of more than 80 international historians, Holocaust survivors, family members of former political prisoners, legal experts and human rights defenders.

The central aim of the RWI-70 is to determine the full circumstances of Raoul Wallenberg's fate in the former Soviet Union. To achieve this aim, we work to obtain access to relevant files that currently remain classified in Russian archival collections, especially those of the former Soviet State Security and Intelligence Services. We also wish to bridge the gap between pure academic research and human rights advocacy. In doing so, we hope to improve cooperation among scholars and to develop new tools for solving cases of the long term disappeared.

With these steps we intend to free the Raoul Wallenberg case from it strictly historical context, placing it instead squarely in the center of the current civil and human rights debate in Russia. By insisting on access to key documentation we aim to make the Wallenberg case a test case of current domestic and international law. Together with our Russian partners, especially Team 29, a group of constitutional lawyers located in St. Petersburg, we are currently preparing appropriate legal steps in Russia. If these efforts were to prove successful, they would set an important new legal precedent in the fight for freedom of information, in particular uncensored access to historical records, and the search for justice; not only for Raoul Wallenberg, but also for the millions of other victims of Soviet repression.

Selected Media Reports

https://www.svd.se/susanne-berger-om-ratten-till-sanning/om/sakerhetsradet

http://www.svd.se/hoppas-fa-besked-om-raoul-wallenberg

http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Raoul-Wallenberg-Getting-to-the-core-of-the-mystery-479641

https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/the-mysterious-case-of-raoul-wallenberg-soviet-prisoner-55533

http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/Wallenbergs-family-demands-access-to-key-documents-in-his-case-345071

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/01/world/europe/71-years-after-he-vanished-raoul-wallenberg-is-declareddead.html?_r=0

http://ros-lehtinen.house.gov/press-release/ros-lehtinen-lowey-seek-answers-72-year-old-mystery-introduce- bipartisanmeasure

http://www.svoboda.org/a/28024543.html

http://www.interfax.ru/world/555936

http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2016/11/02/01003-20161102ARTFIG00256-l-enigme-wallenberg-sauveur-de-juifssuedois-enleve-en-1945.php

The Raoul Wallenberg Research Initiative (RWI-70) - Additional Information

Founded in 2015, the Raoul Wallenberg Research Initiative (RWI-70) is an informal alliance of more than 80 international historians, Holocaust survivors, family members of former political prisoners, legal experts and human rights defenders, all of whom pool their expertise in an effort to obtain full clarity about Wallenberg's fate after he disappeared in the Soviet Union in 1945.

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As part of the RWI-70, we have created a joint, comprehensive catalogue of all unanswered questions and pending research requests in the Wallenberg case in Russia. Members of Raoul Wallenberg's family and a delegation of the RWI-70 formally submitted this catalogue to Russian authorities in Moscow in September 2016. So far, no access to these key files has been granted, in direct violation of current Russian and international law. We are now in the process of preparing a similar catalogue to be submitted to Swedish authorities and archival entities.

In 2016, the RWI-70 also conducted two successful Raoul Wallenberg International Roundtables, in Budapest and Moscow, to explore new ways of obtaining access to specific historical records in Russia and to make our research as precise and effective as possible. A third installment in this series is scheduled for September 2017 in Stockholm, where we will focus on the right of victims of repression and their families to the truth, as stipulated by the U.N. Convention on Enforced Disappearance and other legal norms.

Objectives and Activities

For more than seventy years, Soviet and later Russian authorities have issued false and intentionally misleading statements about the fate of Raoul Wallenberg. The Russian government's continued refusal to provide access to key files that could potentially solve the full circumstances of Wallenberg's disappearance constitutes a violation of both Russian and international law. Together with Team 29, we insist that the rights of Raoul Wallenberg and other victims of repression and their families are respected by Russian authorities and that Russian laws governing issues like privacy and secrecy are properly applied or possibly amended.

Over the past two years, historians and other Wallenberg experts have worked to formulate highly specific and precisely targeted questions concerning the inquiry into Wallenberg's fate which Russian officials can and must answer. Since the Russian government has so far refused to comply with our requests, we are currently preparing appropriate legal actions. Depending on the outcome, we are ready to pursue the matter further in Russian as well as international courts. We are firmly convinced that the law is on our side. The first legal filing in Russia is scheduled for September 2017.

The project intends to underscore that the search for historic truth, however arduous and 'idealistic', is not just a laborious and potentially futile exercise but a vitally important process, especially for members of democratic societies. Together with remembrance, it is the key step that enables us to learn from history. The question of how one balances the rights of the individual vs. the interests of the state is as current today as it ever was. For this debate alone historic truth is critical and a democratic society has to insist on full disclosure, as a matter of principle. It is the declared aim of the RWI-70 to make this one of the lasting legacies of the Raoul Wallenberg case.

The Raoul Wallenberg International Roundtable, 14.-15.September 2017 Swedish Army Museum, Stockholm

Today, crucial gaps remain in the official Wallenberg case record and that of other disappeared Swedes. The continued existence of these 'white spots' is in and of itself revealing. Our efforts are intended to emphasize the urgent need for transparency and verification of information received from Russian authorities over the past seventy years. Our project aims to underscore the rights of political prisoners like Raoul Wallenberg and their families to truthful information about their ordeal. But what good is this 'Right to the Truth' when one cannot enforce it?

At the upcoming Raoul Wallenberg International Roundtable in Stockholm we, therefore, plan to examine the opportunities and current limitations of this official 'Right to the Truth' from all angles, including the problems that stand in the way of obtaining access to key documentation and evidence from various governmental authorities as well as the courts.

We will explore how to pursue and enforce the legal 'Right to the Truth' more effectively. Just as importantly, we will examine how to improve communication between the families of victims of repression and official entities.

The official theme of the conference is "The Right to the Truth - Raoul Wallenberg and other disappeared Swedes as test cases of international law".

Aside from Raoul Wallenberg's family and the families of other disappeared Swedes, past and present, we will be joined by leading international jurists (from Sweden, Russia, Canada, Spain and the U.S), experts of the Swedish Foreign Ministry, human rights defenders, historians and journalists. The event will be open to the public, with a joint public press conference scheduled at its conclusion.

This will be a two day event. On the first day (**14 September**), the discussion will explore the official handling of a number of cases of Swedish disappeared. These include

- Raoul Wallenberg's arrest and subsequent disappearance in Moscow in 1945
- The disappearance of eighteen Swedish ships, with more than 100 crew members, in the Baltic Sea during the Cold War. Most of the men remain unaccounted for
- The shoot down of a DC-3 reconnaissance aircraft by a Soviet fighter jet on June 13, 1952. Of the eightmen crew, only four have been recovered

We hope that our discussions will also provide new impetus for ending the plight of

- Swedish-Eritrean journalist Dawit Isaak who has been imprisoned in Eritrea without charge or trial since 2001
- native Chinese publisher Gui Minhai, a Swedish citizen, who has been illegally detained in China since 2015

This will further underscore the crucial link that connects the present with the past.

At the Roundtable, international scholars and experts will make presentations on the latest findings regarding these cases, with a special focus on how to obtain access to the specific information and evidence needed to advance their resolution. Legal experts will focus on the possibility of supplementing and expanding the opportunities offered by traditional historical/archival research. Special presentations on a number of these additional tools will be held by, among others:

- **The Hon. Irwin Cotler,** former Minister of Justice and Director of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, Canada on fighting impunity and the global expansion of the Magnitsky Act
- David Matas, Barrister, Canada on the 'Right' to the Truth' and the legal aspects of the Raoul Wallenberg Case
- Daria Sukhikh, Lead Attorney, Team 29, Russia on the fight for Freedom of Information in Russia
- Manuel Vergara Céspedes, Legal Director FIBGAR on Universal Jurisdiction
- Percy Bratt, Human Rights Attorney, Sweden on the utility of 'Habeas Corpus'
- Magnus Christiansson, Swedish Defence College on the benefits and risks of silent diplomacy

We will also be joined by a number of family members of the disappeared, including

- Members of the von Dardel and Lagergren Families the family of Raoul Wallenberg who disappeared in the Soviet Union in 1945
- Esayas Isaak brother of Dawit Isaak who was arrested in Eritrea in 2001
- Angela Gui daughter of Gui Minhai who was kidnapped by Chinese Security Forces in Thailand in 2015
- Victoria Gustafsson sister of Johan Gustafsson who was released in June 2017, after more than five years imprisonment in Mali
- Kerstin von Seth daughter of Gösta Rudnert, Captain of the Sten Sture, which disappeared with an 18men crew in 1947
- Roger Älmeberg son of Alvar Älmeberg, pilot of the DC-3 shot down over the Baltic Sea in 1952

as well as a number of technical and other experts, as well as journalists, among them:

- Staffan Gadd, radar and signal intelligence expert, Sweden
- Arne Ruth, Editor-in-Chief (ret.), Dagens Nyheter, Sweden
- Irmtrud Wojak, Director of the Buxus Foundation, founder of a new human rights database, the Fritz M. Bauer Database and Library, Germany
- Hans Magnusson, Ambassador (ret.), The Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden former Chairman of the Swedish-Russian Working Group (1991-2001)
- Christer Lokind, former Swedish Intelligence Office and expert on the DC-3

These various presentations will be followed by a panel discussion, with questions posed by other experts as well as the audience. The focus of the discussion will be strictly outcome oriented: How can we improve the application and enforcement of the 'Right to the Truth' in general, but also very specifically, for the cases under consideration?

On Day 2 (15 September), the discussion will focus almost exclusively on the Raoul Wallenberg case. Historians and other experts will highlight new findings, with a special emphasis on the many unsolved Swedish aspects of the Wallenberg case. The deliberation will address the need for access to specific Swedish archives, including those of the Swedish military and signal intelligence agencies, as well as a number of private archival collections. The main focus, however, will rest on the question how this information and new insights can best aid the ongoing investigation of Wallenberg's fate in Russia. Participants/Presenters will include, among others

- Vadim Birstein, Author and Historian, U.S. expert on Soviet era archival collections
- Susanne Berger, Journalist and Historian, U.S. expert on Sweden and the Raoul Wallenberg case
- Ingrid Carlberg, Author and Journalist, Sweden author of an award winning biography on Raoul Wallenberg
- Gellert Kovacs, Author, Sweden expert on Raoul Wallenberg's activities and contacts in Hungary in 1943-1945

- Nikita Petrov, Historian and Co-Chairman, Memorial International Society, Russia leading Russian expert on the history of the Soviet Security Services
- **Peter Ruggenthaler,** Historian, The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute, Austria, expert on Soviet-Swedish relations during the Stalinist period
- Bo Theutenberg, Ambassador, Professor of Law and Chief Legal Director (ret.), The Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden - expert on Swedish diplomatic history and Soviet Cold War infiltration in Sweden
- Matthias Uhl, Historian, The German Historical Society, Russia expert on WWII records held in Russian archival collections

Background

The story of the Swedish businessman and diplomat Raoul G. Wallenberg (1912-1947?) seamlessly links the two defining events of the 20th Century, the Holocaust and the Cold War. Young and idealistic, he fought one totalitarian regime (Nazism) only to fall victim to another (Stalinism).

At the end of WWII, Wallenberg showed extraordinary courage when he embarked on a humanitarian mission initiated and funded in large part by the U.S. War Refugee Board - to protect the remaining Jewish communities in Hungary from Nazi persecution. During six harrowing months in 1944, Wallenberg and his colleagues managed to protect thousands of Budapest's Jews from deportation and certain death. In January 1945 Wallenberg was detained by advancing Soviet military forces and taken to Moscow where he disappeared. Soviet and later Russian authorities have claimed that Wallenberg died suddenly in a Moscow prison on July 17, 1947, as a result of a heart attack. The information has never been confirmed.

In 1981, in recognition of his unique courage and accomplishments, President Ronald Reagan signed Legislation proclaiming Raoul Wallenberg an Honorary Citizen of the U.S.. At the time, it was only the second time this honor had been bestowed on a foreigner, after British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

Although the Soviet state ceased to exist twenty-six years ago, Raoul Wallenberg's family still has not received answers to their most pressing questions: Why was Raoul Wallenberg arrested and why was he never released? And what exactly happened to him in the summer of 1947, after his trail breaks off in Moscow's Lubyanka Prison? Soviet and later Russian authorities have claimed that he died on July 17,1947, as a result of a heart attack, but the information has never been verified.

In 2001, an official bilateral Swedish-Russian Working Group concluded its ten year investigation without obtaining full clarity of Raoul's disappearance. Unfortunately, many of the documents released by the Russian side of the Working Group were heavily censored and important collections remained altogether inaccessible to independent experts. Since 2001, as a direct result of researchers' efforts, new documentation has emerged from Russian archives that had not been made available previously. This includes information that Raoul Wallenberg may have been held as "Prisoner no. 7" in Lubyanka Prison and that he was interrogated on July 22-23, 1947, a full six days after his official death date. In spite of repeated requests, Russian officials have not permitted independent researchers or Raoul Wallenberg's family access to verify the information and to pursue additional inquiries.

The emergence of this new information underscores the fact that important material with direct relevance to the question of Wallenberg's fate continues to be found in key Russian archival collections, especially those of the former Soviet State Security and Intelligence Services. It also serves to shatter the myth that the mystery of Wallenberg's disappearance cannot be solved.

In the autumn of 2016, Raoul Wallenberg's family and a delegation of the RWI-70 traveled to Moscow to submit to Russian authorities a comprehensive list of the most urgent questions and pending requests in the Raoul Wallenberg case. Until today, no access to these files has been granted to the family or independent researchers, in direct violation of current Russian and international law. In Russia, independent historical review has become close to impossible and obtaining direct access to archival documentation continues to pose a major problem. The restrictive trend started already back in 1993, when the Russian parliament enacted the Russian Law on State Secrets which resulted in the re-classification of numerous previously opened archival collections.

Last year, on April 4, 2016, Russian President Vladimir Putin actually signed a decree stating that from this day forward, the Russian federal archives that belong to the centralized *Rosarchive* system - which includes the Archive of Socio-political History [RGASPI], The State Archive of the Russian Federation [GARF] and Russian State Military Archive [RGVA]) - are placed under his personal control. [See "Putin: *Rosarchive* will be transferred under direct control by President." *TASS.* April 4, 2016; <u>in Russian</u>]

The Kremlin apparently feels that revelation of the truth about historically sensitive cases like that of Raoul Wallenberg or Katyn (the massacre of thousands of Polish officers by the Soviet Armed Forces during World War II) runs counter to its current policy of promoting only "useful" history, meaning the presentation of historical events in ways that serve to reinforce President Putin's idea of a strong, powerful Russia. In addition, the recently revived Tsarist era Imperial Historical Society has promoted an "All Russian Cultural View" and "a single view of history." Russian school text books regularly celebrate Soviet dictator Josef Stalin's leadership in the defeat of Nazi Germany, while failing to mention anything about his role in the genocide of millions of Soviet citizens during government ordered purges.

One of the hallmarks of democratic societies is that they value and protect the rights of every individual person. In Russia, where civil liberties have been under serious assault for years, Team 29, a group of young legal professionals, has been at the forefront of this battle, regularly defending these rights in Russian courts. Taking their name from Article 29 of the Russian Constitution (which guarantees Russian citizens the right of freedom of expression), they represent ordinary citizens who find themselves accused and convicted of the most grievous crimes, such as espionage or treason, for simple acts like forwarding a job application to a foreign company or criticizing Russian governmental policies in an SMS sent to a friend. Team 29 also continues to assist historians who challenge Russian authorities to comply with existing laws governing privacy, secrecy and access to historical records.

In 2012, Team 29's representation of Russian historian Nikita Petrov who challenged the refusal by the Russian State Security Services (FSB) to release specific historical records for the years 1946 until 1956, led to a potentially groundbreaking decision by Russia's Constitutional Court. The court sided with Petrov, stating that historical documents generally should not be classified more than thirty years. The work of the RWI-70 aims to test and build on this decision. Earlier this year, Team 29 successfully defended the historian Boris Sokolov against charges of slander when he publicly challenged the provenance and some of the information contained in the recently published memoir of the former Chairman of the KGB, Ivan Serov.

Still, human rights defenders, journalists as well as historians working in Russia continue to face enormous pressure. Both foreign and Russian researchers continue to work in Russia, under very difficult circumstances. That is why a joint, international effort in the Raoul Wallenberg case, in close cooperation with Russian historians and legal representatives, offers the best chance of success. Russian officials find themselves under some pressure to show that the rule of law is still a reality in the country. Also, official international bodies are beginning to actively support our efforts, increasing public and diplomatic pressure. A good example is the official Resolution that was introduced in the U.S. Congress (House of Representatives) by U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen earlier this year, which requests the U.S. President to demand from the Russian government the release of all information that can serve to fully clarify Raoul Wallenberg's fate.

http://ros-lehtinen.house.gov/press-release/ros-lehtinen-lowey-seek-answers-72-year-old-mystery-introducebipartisan-measure

Also, official diplomatic representatives from the U.S., Sweden, Israel, Canada and Germany attended our two Roundtables in Budapest and Moscow, sending a very important signal of support.

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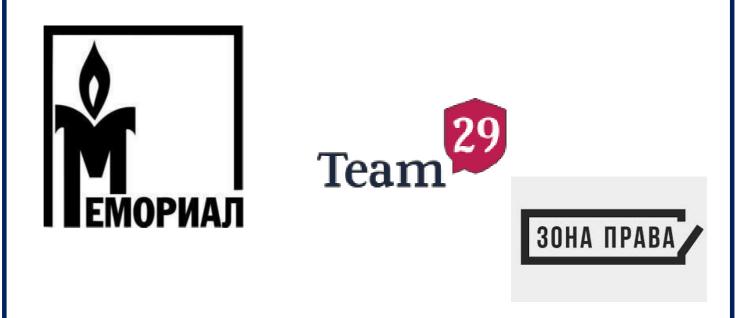






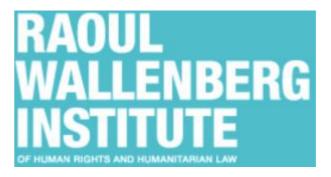


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(ע"ר) המוזיאון למורשת היהדות הדוברת הונגרית A MAGYAR NYELVTERÜLETRÖL SZÁRMAZÓ ZSIDÓSÁG EMLÉKMÚZEUMA MEMORIAL MUSEUM OF HUNGARIAN SPEAKING JEWRY