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## **Romania: Catholics and Jews sign Kishreinu, “sign of long friendship, based on appreciation and mutual respect”**

The President of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania, Silviu Vexler, described the ratification in Bucharest of the Kishreinu declaration, an initiative launched “to strengthen Catholic-Jewish bonds in the world”, as “a truly historic act”. In Hebrew, Kishreinu means “our ties”, and the document was presented by the World Jewish Congress in the Paul VI audience hall on 22 November, in the presence of Cardinal Kurt Koch, Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity. Back then, it was described by Cardinal Koch as “a new charter”. Kishreinu is the response of the Jewish communities to the Second Vatican Council’s declaration “Nostra Aetate”. Kishreinu was signed some days ago in the Romanian capital by President Vexler, by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bucharest, Mgr. Aurel Percu, and by the Auxiliary Bishop of the Greek Catholic Archeparchy of Alba Iulia and Făgăraș, Mgr. Cristian Crișan. The “Nostra Aetate” declaration, President Vexler explained in a statement, “radically changed the relationship between the Holy See and the Jewish people”. The ratification in Bucharest of the Kishreinu declaration, he added, “is a sign of the long friendship, based on mutual appreciation and respect, that defines the relations and special bonds between the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania, the Holy See, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Romanian Greek Catholic Church united with Rome”. According to the latest population census (in 2021), there are approximately 2,400 Jews living in Romania.

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