

**Address delivered by Ivan T. Grbešić, Chair of the Endowment Council of the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund at the Preview of the Canadian History Hall at the Canadian Museum of History on June 12, 2017:**

*Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.*

*Bonjour mesdames et monsieurs.*

*Dobar dan, dame i gospodo.*

*Greetings as well to their Excellences, diplomatic representatives, elected officials of all levels of government, and members of the clergy, who are here with us today, most of whom were introduced.*

*I would like to thank the Canadian Museum of History and its President and CEO, Mark O'Neill for providing me with the opportunity to address you here today in my capacity as Chair of the Endowment Council of the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund.*

*[As mentioned earlier], the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund is a \$10 million endowment established by the Federal government to support projects that commemorate and recognize the experiences of all the ethno-cultural communities affected by Canada's first national internment operations of 1914 to 1920.*

*Internment directly impacted 8,579 so called "enemy aliens" including, among others, Ukrainians, Croatians, Armenians, Bulgarians, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Macedonians, Polish, Romanians, Russians, Serbians, Slovaks, Slovenes, Turks and others from the Ottoman Empire, of which most were Ukrainians and most were civilians.*

*Those who learn about Canada's first national internment operations often ask:*

- How come I never heard of this?*
- How could this part of our history be unknown?*
- Why did we not learn about this in school?*
- Why did it take nearly 100 years for this tragic episode to be told?*

*We are working hard on shedding light on this tragic yet little known chapter in our Canadian history. Since the inception of our Fund back in 2008, the Endowment Council has awarded over \$3 million in grants. The Grant projects include: historical exhibits, awareness campaigns and presentations, commemorative plaques and statues, internee cemeteries, films, historical research, artistic endeavors, symposiums, and educational resources, among others.*

*We are pleased to have contributed \$100,000 in support of the Museum's new signature exhibition, the Canadian History Hall, which will be the largest, most comprehensive exhibition on Canadian history ever developed - celebrating our collective achievements as Canadians but also focusing on some of the dark chapters of our Canadian history.*

*The amount of \$100,000 is fitting given that it has taken almost 100 years for the story of Canada's first national internment operations to come alive through various events, exhibits and legacy projects like the one here today.*

*On behalf of the Endowment Council of our Fund, I would like to thank the Canadian Museum of History for its inclusion of Canada's first national internment operations in the Canadian History Hall. This exhibit will ensure that visitors to the Canada Hall will learn of the effects of the War Measures Act and its crippling legacy 100 years after it was first implemented. It will also represent an important contribution to remembering, commemorating and recognizing the historic injustice suffered by thousands of innocent people and to learning from our Canadian history as ensuring that a similar tragedy not be repeated again.*

*Au nom de notre Conseil, j'aimerais remercier le Musée canadien de l'histoire pour l'inclusion des premières opérations nationales d'internement au Canada dans la Salle de l'histoire canadienne. Cette exposition permettra aux visiteurs de connaître les effets de la Loi sur les mesures de guerre et l'impact de l'internement au Canada de 1914 à 1920, 100 ans après sa mise en œuvre. La Salle de l'histoire canadienne représentera également une contribution importante à la mémoire, à la commémoration, à la reconnaissance de l'injustice historique subie par des milliers de personnes innocentes, et à l'apprentissage de notre histoire canadienne afin de s'assurer qu'une tragédie semblable ne se répète plus jamais.*

*Having joined the Endowment Council as a representative of the Croatian community in Canada in 2008 and having served as the Chairman of the Endowment Council for the past six years, the time has come for me to step down. I had the privilege to oversee an exciting period during which we shared the story of Canada's first national internment operations and I am proud of the progress that we have made over the life of the Endowment Council and of the current direction of the Council - it is the efforts of all the current and past members of the Endowment Council and our Program Manager that got us here and I am confident that the story of this tragic chapter will continue to be developed and that it will find its rightful place in our Canadian history.*