
ROMANIA'S PRESIDENT SLAMS EASTER AGREEMENT BETWEEN INTERIOR MIN. AND CHURCH

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Romanias president Klaus Iohannis criticized the agreement between the Interior Ministry and the Orthodox Church that translates into a relaxation of the COVID-19 restrictions on the occasion of Orthodox Easter. He once again asked Romanians to stay home and respect social distancing even on Easter.

Dear Romanians, no matter what others say, I tell you the same thing that the doctors say, starting with the minister of health, the same thing that the experts say, the same thing that the World Health Organization says: Stay at home! Otherwise, after the holidays, we will have funerals! Iohannis said in a statement on Wednesday, April 15.

The president thus renewed his call to Romanians to respect the COVID-19 restrictions, which he launched on Tuesday, April 14, when he signed the decree for extending the state of emergency in the country by another month.

On the same day, interior minister Marcel Vela, the key person in setting and enforcing the COVID-19 restrictions in Romania, announced that he signed an agreement with the head of the Orthodox Church, patriarch Daniel, allowing churches all over the country to distribute blessed bread (known as paste) and the Holy Fire to believers on Easter. Moreover, the minister said that the personnel under his coordination (national and local police, firefighters, and military) would help church volunteers take the Holy Fire to believers on Easter night. As for the blessed bread, he agreed to allow churches to distribute it to believers in specially arranged places, respecting the social distancing restrictions.

However, many criticized the agreement saying that it signaled the relaxation of restrictions that have been in place for a month since the state of emergency was declared in the country.

President Klaus Iohannis said that the agreement between the Interior Ministry and the Church caused more confusion and complications than good.

It is regrettable to note, both in our lives and in public life, that often the best intentions generate the greatest complications. This seems to be the case with a so-called agreement between the Ministry of Interior and the Orthodox Church. Probably the intentions are very good, but no one has understood very well its purpose. Many Romanians have understood that it is time to relax. Its not the case! And the explanations given have been too optimistic, Iohannis explained.

In a few minutes, I will start a meeting with prime minister Orban, minister Vela, other ministers and advisers. In this meeting I will ask PM Orban and the minister of the interior to review this agreement, to find, if they want, a formula that respects the principle "Stay home!" and, obviously, respects all military orders, the president added.

<https://www.romania-insider.com/coronavirus-romania-president-agreement-interior-ministry-church>

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