



## PRESS RELEASE

### **The Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic for the first time compensated a former German Democratic Republic citizen for injury caused by the Czechoslovak Border Guards**

**Prague, 31 January 2019.** In a decision issued by the Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic on 28 January 2019, compensation was granted to a former East German refugee who was badly injured in 1982 by the Czechoslovak Border Guard in his attempt to cross the Iron Curtain.

In his escape attempt 27 year-old Mr S. F. was shot to his right leg by the patrol near Volary in South Bohemia. After being detained for 6 days he was expelled back to the GDR. Mr S. F. was, in June 2018, fully rehabilitated by the Czech District Court in Prachatice. This is the first time that the Czech authorities have acknowledged a significant financial compensation to a German for the injury caused by the Border Guard.

Based on the [breakthrough ruling of the district court Bratislava I](#) from March 2017 in the case of Hartmut Tautz, the 18-year-old high school graduate from Magdeburg who was killed on the Czechoslovak border with Austria in 1986, the Platform of European Memory and Conscience and the Union of Victims of Communist Tyranny in November 2017 [called upon former East German refugees who were arrested in former Czechoslovakia to apply for court rehabilitation and compensation from the Czech and Slovak Republics.](#)

The court decisions are based on Act No. 119/1990 on judicial rehabilitations, confirming unlawful restrictions on individual liberties. As of today 15 people have been rehabilitated and more are still in progress. [The first rehabilitation in the Czech Republic for a German who attempted to escape across the Iron Curtain](#) was issued by the District Court in České Budějovice in May 2018.

*“This is another great achievement for all the victims of Communism and upholding their rights. This also shows us that process of reconciliation with the Communist past is not finished yet. We believe that more similar rehabilitation cases of those victims who survived will teach us another lesson from the dark side of our history and will help us to avoid similar in a future,”* says Mr Peter Rendek, Managing Director of the Platform.

The activities are a part of the Platform’s [“Justice 2.0”](#) project.

#### **For more information, please contact:**

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**The Platform of European Memory and Conscience** brings together 62 governmental, public and private institutions and organisations from 14 EU Member States, Ukraine, Moldova, Iceland, Albania, Canada and the USA working in the field of coming to terms with the legacy of totalitarianism on European soil.