**Speech by Ms. Sabrina Rasom,**

**Vice President of the Network Promoting Linguistic Diversity (NPLD)**

**at the Opening Ceremony of the Academic Year at Partium Christian University**

**Oradea/Nagyvárad, First of October, 2019.**



Rector Magnificent, Dear President, Dear Professors, Dear Gábor, Dear Students of Partium Christian University, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very proud to be here as representative of the NPLD-Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity, to celebrate the beginning of the academic year. A very important appointment that opens a year of intellectual growth and of discovery of knowledge. This appointment becomes even more awaited and worthy, when you know that the goal of this institution is to safeguard and promote Hungarian in Romania, that’s to say a minorized language in this State.

We believe that the enhancement of languages in all their aspects and that their study and presence at academic level guarantee not only the survival of that same language, but also the survival of those values that uniquely characterize a people, its past, its history, its traditions, its culture and its roots, but also its present and its future. When a language happens to overcome the boarders of the Region or State it belongs to, it becomes something new, assuming linguistic and ethnical features that make it a treasure of originality, mirroring the history and the vicissitudes of the people speaking it.

Ladies and gentlemen, the NPLD recently welcomed Partium Christian University among its members and we are sure that this is a fundamental new piece of the puzzle of the constitutional, regional and small-state languages we aim at representing in Europe. Your University has already demonstrated its enthusiasm to concretely work with our network, taking part in the European Charter Classroom Activities Project some members of our network are working on, to spread at school level the contents and the values of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The project aims at rising awareness about the rights and duties foreseen by Charter among pupils and among teachers. We thank you very much for your participation and for offering your academic expertise for the goals of these activities.

I would like to conclude my speech addressing the students attending this university. In doing this, let me tell you a piece of my life as a student. I belong to the Ladin community of the province of Trento, in Italy, and of course, I speak Ladin. My valley is very small, in the mountains, the Dolomites. Only about 30.000 people speak this idiom, if we count also the near valleys. I studied foreign languages in Italy, in Padova, a very old and known historical university, founded in 1222, where also Galileo Galilei and Goethe where hosts. Padova is not a Ladin city, it’s far from my Ladin valley, but there, I discovered that they offered a very brief course in Ladin philology. As a young and curious student, I enrolled in that course without even imagining that my curiosity would change all my perspectives towards my mother tongue, for me, at that moment, a language to use at home, very far from being worthy to be studied for my future and appreciated at academic level. I became prouder and prouder to be Ladin and understood the intrinsic value of that language my parents passed me. Welcome, as students, the opportunity of cultivating your language, choose the possibility of using it and transmitting it to the new generations, be proud of it, be protagonists of this University, speak and use your language, because your language expresses your being and originality, which are fundamental characteristics to find the own way in life, at personal and at professional level.

Thank you very much.

Sabrina Rasom-Vice Chair of the NPLD