

THE FOURTH
INTERNATIONAL
**LET MY
PEOPLE LIVE!**
FORUM



**LET MY PEOPLE LIVE!
THE FOURTH
INTERNATIONAL
FORUM**

**26–27 JANUARY 2015
PRAGUE/TEREZIN
CZECH REPUBLIC**

LET MY PEOPLE LIVE!

THE FOURTH
INTERNATIONAL
FORUM

INTERNATIONAL
HOLOCAUST
REMEMBRANCE DAY

70TH ANNIVERSARY

I. INTRODUCTION

Photographs from the Terezín Archives	7
Special messages:	
Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress	17
Miloš Zeman, President of the Czech Republic	19
Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament	21
Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission	23

II. FORUM OF WORLD CIVIL SOCIETY – PRAGUE CASTLE
SPANISH HALL – 26th January, 2015

History of the Prague Castle	27
Introductory speech by Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress	37
Panel discussions	
Moderator: Stephen Sackur, BBC HARDtalk	46
Highlights of the discussions:	
Panel 1: The role of the media and public figures	50
Panel 2: The role of legislation and law enforcement	68
Panel 3: The role of politicians	80

III. DINNER – MUNICIPAL HOUSE
PRAGUE – 26th January, 2015

Highlights of the speeches:	
Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress	98
Miloš Zeman, President of the Czech Republic	100
Lubomir Zaoralek, Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs	102
Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament	103
Tribute to Viktor Ullmann	
Recital by Sir Ben Kingsley: Excerpt from 'Goethe and Ghetto'	
by Viktor Ullmann	107
Marek Halter: Terezín, after 70 years	108
Extract from Viktor Ullmann's Concerto Op. 25	
performed by Nathalia Romanenko	111

IV. CLOSING SESSION – PRAGUE CASTLE,
SPANISH HALL – 27th January, 2015

	119
Prague Declaration on Combating Anti-Semitism and Hate Crimes	121
Speeches by:	
Miloš Zeman, President of the Czech Republic	122
Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament	124
Rosen Plevneliev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria	126
Yuli-Yoël Edelstein, Speaker of the Knesset	128
'Yellow Stars Concerto' composed by Isaac Schwartz and	
conducted by Maestro Vladimir Spivakov	132
Closing speech by Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress	140
European Minute of Silence	142

V. TEREZÍN COMMEMORATION CEREMONY

	147
Art Alley: Special extract from <i>Vedem</i> – magazine written	
and illustrated by children imprisoned in Terezín concentration camp	148
The Story of Terezín	150
EJC's Monumental Tribute to Holocaust Survivors	152
Terezín Commemoration Ceremony	155
Zalud Musical Instruments & Poem	156
Testimony by Tomáš Kraus, Executive Director of the Federation of	
Jewish Communities of the Czech Republic	158
Recital by Sir Ben Kingsley: Excerpt from 'The Republic of Butterflies'	
by Matteo Corradini	162
Commemoration Ceremony	163
Testimony by Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Chairman of Yad Vashem Council	164
and Holocaust Survivor	168

VI. TEREZÍN TODAY

VII. SPECIAL THANKS

172
178



ARBEIT MACHT FREI

← Inscription above one of the entrance gates at the Terezín concentration camp that translates 'Work Makes You Free'.



↑ Photo apparently portrays prisoners from one of the evacuation transports to Theresienstadt. They are led by a young woman in a white coat

marked by the Jewish star. The picture is dated between 30 April and 05 May 1945. The star on the hospital attendant's coat indicates that the Nazis were still in the city.

→ The Theresienstadt Ghetto after its liberation shows former prisoners queueing for meals at the courtyard of the so-called Dresden Barracks.





↑ Road connecting the Theresienstadt Ghetto to the crematorium. The gate bar at the front marks the point up to which the prisoners were allowed to accompany the deceased relative at the funeral. The person in uniform standing behind the group is a member of the so-called Ghattowache.



← A sign warning of typhus infection in Theresienstadt. The photo was probably taken close to the hospital na Krétě during quarantine 14–28 May 1945.



↑ Former prisoners in Theresienstadt after liberation. The process of their repatriation took place from May until August 1945. Among the men and women in civilian clothes there are some in striped dress. Those were prisoners from other camps who arrived to Theresienstadt with evacuation transports.



← Corridor of the fortress Terezín. In cell one Gavriilo Princip was imprisoned in 1914.

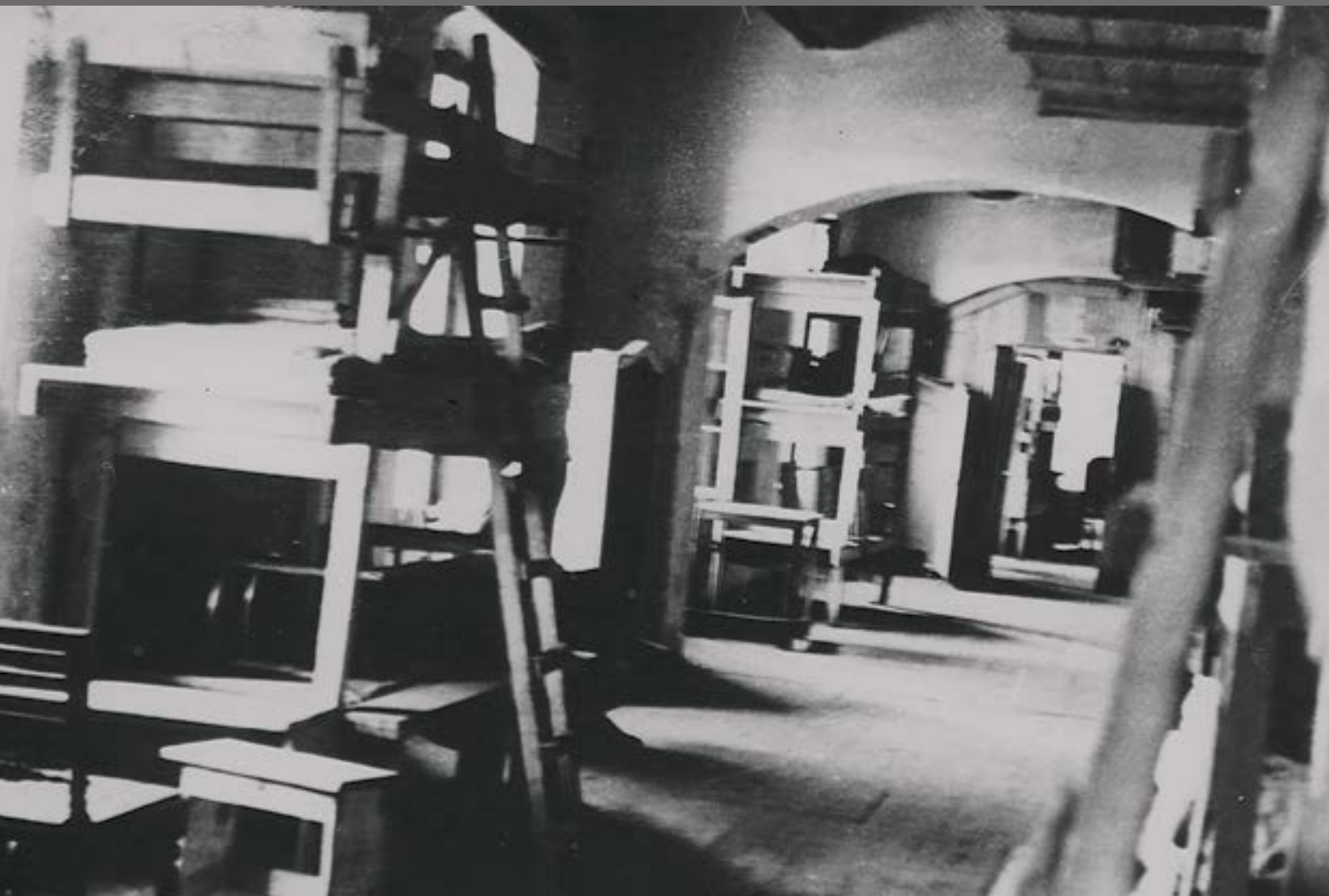


→ Interior of an 'evacuation' (transport) car (waggon). The picture shows prisoners in a devastated condition.



↑ A menu-board with meals typical for Ghetto, such as soup, groats and goulash. It is titled 'Order of meals'. The information is bilingual, Czech first and German second. The date 29 June in the upper left corner is followed by the part of the day 'morning, noon, evening' and the meals on the right.

↓ Photograph taken shortly after Theresienstadt's liberation. It shows the inside of the so-called Hannover Barracks equipped with three tier bunk beds with ladders.



→ Collection of marionettes made by prisoners in Theresienstadt Ghetto. There is a label with a Hebrew inscription above the marionettes. They were produced mostly

in ceramics and sculpture workshops – among others by Prof. Saudek or Mr. Engländer.



↑ Two Red Cross lorries and several passenger cars parking in the yard of the so-called Sudeten Barracks in Theresienstadt in May 1945. The nurse walking in front of the lorry was identified in 1988 as Mrs. Suchomelova.





Moshe Kantor

President,
European Jewish Congress

On behalf of the European Jewish Congress, federating all the national representative organizations of the Jewish communities on this continent, thank you for the commitment you have shown to our common values of peace, unity and tolerance by taking part in The Fourth International 'Let My People Live!' Forum here in the Czech Republic.

This year, we mark the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps. Few of those who directly encountered those horrors lived to share their experiences. And as the years pass by, sadly still fewer are here to personally impart the lessons of these terrible events. As memory fast becomes history, their experiences, Europe's own experience of Nazism, totalitarianism, intolerance, war and destruction, fades into the back of our minds. Direct transition of experience can apply at most from the first to the third generation, to the personal connection of grandchild and grandparent. The time has now come when we require other forms, such as education in society, modernization of legislations and direct governmental influence in order to be truly immune from repeating the mistakes of the past.

Seventy years, a lifetime later, we run the danger of forgetting where nationalism, chauvinism, racism and anti-Semitism can lead. But we also forget where misplaced tolerance towards those who would seek to destroy our societies also leads. More than anywhere else on this continent, here in the Czech Republic we saw what happened when there was a tolerance of extremism and a misplaced desire for a quiet life that caused us to deliberately avoid the real issues that plagued our societies. The failure to tackle Nazism and the appeasement that allowed it to swallow up the infant Czechoslovak democracy did not lead to peace, it led to war. And for many years afterwards, this continent remained divided.

Today, together, we have a unique chance to address some of the causes of our previous greatest tragedy in order to ensure that it will not be repeated. Our gatherings here of the most senior political decision-makers and our discussions among intellectuals, opinion-formers and leaders will address the most pressing issues facing all of our societies.

Each of you has a unique contribution to make to our collective Forum, based on your own experiences to the challenges we all share and from which none of us is immune.

In our 21st-century Europe, we face new challenges of globalization, economic uncertainty and depression, the positive – but also sometimes corrosive – nature of mass communications, and perhaps, our greatest current threat of all, religious extremism and fundamentalism.

We will not hide here from addressing these most sensitive subjects affecting the citizens of Europe, and neither will we push aside a real examination of their roots and causes as well as proposals for practical solutions. Indeed, Czech history, Europe's most recent history and the site of the Terezín death camp bear absolute testimony to why we cannot do otherwise.

May I take this opportunity to thank President Miloš Zeman, Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka and the government of the Czech Republic, as well as the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, for being our partners on this Forum and for understanding the absolute urgency to act now before it is too late.

Let all of the peoples of Europe live.



Miloš Zeman

President,
Czech Republic

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

Shalom.

I am deeply honoured to welcome you to this , the Fourth International Holocaust Forum, entitled 'Let My People Live!'. With the generous help of Dr Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress, Mr Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament and patron of the Forum, and in partnership with the European Union institutions, the Terezín Memorial and Yad Vashem we have put together a remarkable and stimulating programme.

The Czech Republic hopes to dedicate this Fourth International Holocaust Forum to the promotion of tolerance and education. It is therefore my greatest wish that the Forum will provide the crucial political impetus for teaching lessons of the past to young generations, as without such memory there cannot be a peaceful and tolerant tomorrow.

Throughout the Forum several discussion panels are going to be held focusing on the impact and how to combat the rise of anti-Semitism, racism and extremism in European civil society. Speakers at these panel discussions include renowned politicians such as Mr Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament and Mr Yuli-Yoël Edelstein, Speaker of the Knesset as well as distinguished professors such as Mr Alan Morten Dershowitz, Professor of Law at Harvard Law School and Mr Timothy David Snyder, Professor of History at Yale University. In addition, the Forum will be followed by a unique and unforgettable Commemoration Ceremony at the former concentration camp in Terezin.

Dearest guests, allow me to welcome you once again at the Prague Castle. As the patron of this significant event, I hope that together we will lay the foundations for a better future to honour our common past.



Martin Schulz

President,
European Parliament

In light of the commitment of the European Jewish Congress to promoting tolerance and combating racism, it was with great pleasure that I granted the high patronage of the European Parliament to this major European event.

The European Parliament has always been a fierce defender of democracy and respect for all human beings, regardless of their ethnicity, religions or beliefs, and highly values its cooperation with the European Jewish Congress in raising awareness of the atrocities committed during the Holocaust.

International Holocaust Remembrance Day has been established as an annual event, but there is still a need to stress that democratic standards, tolerance and the right of all people to be viewed and respected first and foremost as individuals should be common practice.

What we have learnt from the past – from the horrors committed in the name of a belief that one's race or nation is better than all others, and from the Holocaust more particularly – is that such ideas easily lead to monstrous crimes against humanity.

As a tribute to all the victims, it is our duty not to allow it ever to happen again.



Jean-Claude Juncker

President,
European Commission

Just a few weeks after Adolf Hitler came to power, the first state-organized attacks on opponents of the regime and on Jews were carried out across Germany. Less than two weeks later, Dachau, the first Nazi concentration camp, was opened.

The fortified city of Terezin was transformed in 1941 into a ghetto whose inhabitants were destined to be transferred to the gas chambers of Auschwitz. Terezin served the Nazis as a perversely titled 'model Jewish city' for propaganda purposes. The prisoners' determination to live, reflected by the cultural and educational activities in the ghetto amidst appalling circumstances, remains an impressive testimony to this day.

Today we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau as well as the many hundreds of camps created with the specific purpose of exterminating the Jewish people – a people that had enriched life in Europe for two millennia.

Europe has come a long way since those darkest of days. The creation of the European Community was inspired by the deep conviction of the founding-fathers, whose cry was 'Never again!'. Today, the European Union is an important guarantor for all citizens, including the Jewish people, fighting anti-Semitism wherever it rears its ugly head and promoting peace and tolerance among the peoples of Europe – a Union where we strive to ensure that Jews can live the lives they wish to live in security and contribute to the flourishing of our societies.

Against this backdrop of our commitment to the Jewish people of Europe, I have watched with growing unease the recent rise of anti-Semitic behaviour and statements in several European countries. Public incitement to violence or hatred, anti-Semitic hate speech and Holocaust denial must be strongly condemned. Such racism has no place in Europe; it is against our fundamental values and our firm belief in the protection of minorities. The European Commission will be rigorous in ensuring that all citizens are protected by the fundamental rights of freedom of thought, conviction and religion.

It is a blessing to have some of the survivors of the Holocaust among us today. It shall be our firm resolve that Europe's next generations of politicians, teachers and citizens will continue to honour and remember their lives and suffering, and those of the millions who perished at the hands of the Nazi regime. By remembering those who perished, through instituting proper education about the past and all that it means for us today, we will ensure that those who come after us can understand and cherish the eternal values of liberty, tolerance and respect for humanity.

‘Wherever men and women are
persecuted because of their race,
religion, or political views, that place
must – at that moment – become
the centre of the universe.’

Elie Wiesel

26th

**FORUM OF WORLD
CIVIL SOCIETY**
PRAGUE CASTLE,
SPANISH HALL



The first part of our Forum is held in the Prague Castle, today the seat of the President of the Czech Republic.

The buildings that make up the Prague Castle complex, the largest palace area in the world, stretch back to 880 AD. They have witnessed some of the most important as well as some of the most horrific events throughout European history. This Castle, this city and this country always played a crucial role in developments which shaped the continent. It has been the pride of several dynasties, a showcase of glorious flourishing times – as during the reign of emperors Charles IV and Rudolph II – as well as a site of tragedies which hit millions. In this city, under the watchful eye of this castle and within its walls, the events of an earlier pan-European conflagration began and ended the Thirty Years War, in the 17th century. But here too, the first and democratic Republic of Czechoslovakia was proclaimed in 1918; and here too, sat its symbol and president, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk.

But little more than a couple of generations ago, these buildings and the events and personalities present within it, symbolized the very beginnings of Nazi terror as the jackboot of Nazism came down upon Europe.

Here, the puppet regime was installed after the shameful Munich agreement of September 1938 in which democratic Czechoslovakia was dismantled and its border regions attached to the 'Third Reich', becoming later one of the victims of the so-called 'Kristallnacht'. That was only a beginning in the Nazi plan to rule the world. On 15 March 1939, a briefly appeased Adolf Hitler forced the puppet government to hand over the rest of the country and proclaimed the Nazi 'Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia' the prototype for his occupation of most of the continent.

And it was from here, from his fiefdom in the Prague Castle, that one of the major architects of the Shoah, Reinhard Heydrich, installed here as the 'Deputy

And again, as the circle of time revolves, in our own times democracy was restored to this Castle, this city and this country in 1989, lifting up to the highest state position the playwright and intellectual Václav Havel, once again symbolizing the victory of – as he has put it – ‘truth and love over lies and hate’, democracy over intolerance, light over darkness.



Protector', masterminded his plans to exterminate all Jews of Europe. From here came Heydrich's direct orders for the Einsatzgruppen units of the SS to rampage and murder the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe. And here he elaborated the systematic 'Final solution to the Jewish question', which he introduced at the infamous 1942 Wannsee Conference and which led to the Nazi death camps, whose liberation we commemorate today.

And it was from here that his coffin was set out when he received his rightful retaliation for all his deeds from the hands of Czechoslovak paratroopers.

This Prague Castle witnessed also the glorious liberation of the country in 1945, as well as only, a few months after, a take-over by another totalitarian regime, this time Communist, which brought to these noble premises people responsible for murders and sufferings of thousands.



In this office Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the Reich Main Security Office, drew up plans for the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question'.



The Opening Session of the
'Let my People Live!' Forum,
Spanish Hall, Prague Castle





Moshe Kantor
President,
European Jewish Congress

Honourable participants of this assembly, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the European Jewish Congress, I wish to express our deepest gratitude to President Zeman for hosting The Fourth International 'Let My People Live!' Forum the day before the 70th anniversary of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day. My sincere gratitude also goes to Prime Minister Sobotka, the Czech government and to President of the Parliament Hamaček for their tremendous assistance in organizing this event.

Let me start with a joke. During a heavy storm, one Jew remained very calm in a vessel. Everyone but him was nervous, rushing back and forth. A friend asked him, 'Moshe, why are you not worried?' And Moshe replied, 'Because this is not my boat.'

I would like to say to you today, 'We all are in the same European boat!' And it is facing the rising tides of radical Islam, neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism. Today we are witnessing the renaissance of Nazism, which we call neo-Nazism and the ultra-right. It is flourishing not only on the streets. Neo-Nazis have already entered national parliaments, the European Parliament and local governments. Soon they could lead national executive power. Do you think their behaviour will be much different from their predecessors?

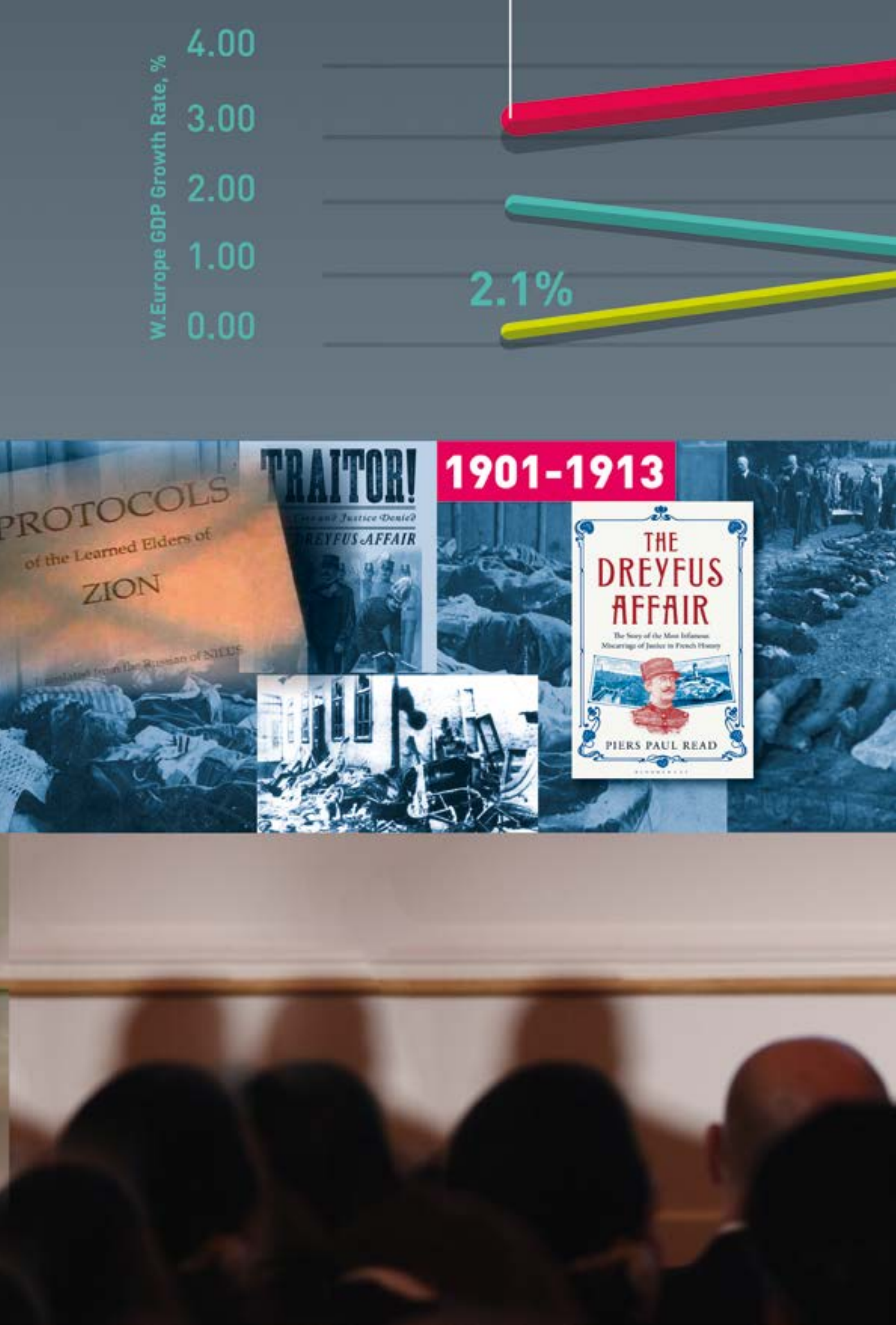
“ We are all in the same European boat. And it is getting through tides of radical Islam, neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism.

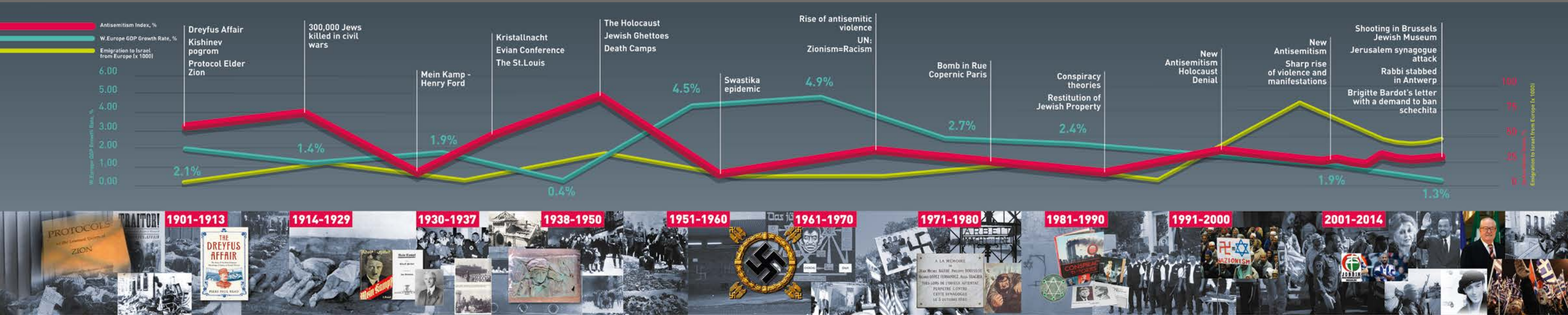
Who thought seriously that Herr Schicklgruber, a modest artist from Linz in Austria, would become the emperor of Europe in the middle of the last century? And respected world leaders were happy to appease him in every possible way.

Please, no political correctness today. We have many journalists with us here, and one would say that we need to be very careful and politically correct, and send simple messages. I think that today we need to speak in a very clear manner and discuss deep issues without thinking about political correctness and how it would sound. We see the same things on the horizon again. I am absolutely sure that tomorrow, when the ultra-right and neo-Nazis lead governments, they will immediately force us to forget about tolerance and political correctness just the day after tomorrow.

Now, about radical Islam, or jihadism. Neither Islam as a religion nor the global Muslim community, the Ummah, can be held responsible. Ninety-nine per cent of Muslims are normal, law-abiding people who never think of persecutions, pogroms or murder. Islam is their common denominator. It is more than a religion; it is a crucial factor of personal identity for more than a billion and a half people. Our Muslim neighbours have come to Europe to stay forever. Only our common enemies, neo-Nazis, can talk about finding a solution to make them leave Europe.

Radical Islam is the force to blame. The features of this phenomenon are well known. Arrogance, unshakable belief in your own righteousness, contempt for other faiths, creeds and ideals. Total rejection of such notions as freedom of thought and speech. Narrow and rigid fundamentalism, precluding any free discussion. And intolerance. Absolute lack of appreciation of the value of human life.







The background of Nazism is quite different. But if we try to feel the atmosphere, the spirit, if we compare the general approach to human values, we will be struck by a horrible similarity. Yes, in certain vital aspects jihadism is very close to Nazism. One could even say that they are two facets of the same evil.

Let us remember that Osama bin Laden created not only the infamous Al-Qaeda but also the World Islamic Front for the jihad against Jews and Christians. And if we analyse the content of Bin Laden's appeals, declarations and manifestos, it is quite easy to see the same intolerance, the same contempt for freedom and human rights. Is such intolerance and ruthlessness directed against Jews only? By no means.

“ If history is to teach us anything, it is this sad axiom: those who start with hunting down and killing Jews invariably continue with discriminating, suppressing, and finally murdering everybody who disagrees with tyranny, suffocation of freedom, oppression and humiliation.

About anti-Semitism itself. One of the dear fairy tales constantly repeated by anti-Semites is that Jews are too rich and too influential. Almost 75 years ago, Simon Dubnow, an outstanding historian who died in the Riga Ghetto, made a very potent observation: 'Those who hate Jews always love their money.' For me as a businessman, it is a very clear issue. We believe in creating jobs, paying taxes, making investments. Everything that makes an economy flourish.

But look at the chart behind me. We have compared the growth ratio of European economies with the level of anti-Semitism. The correlation is obvious. Only three times in history, GDP dipped below 1 per cent a year: before World War I, before World War II and just now. Economic recession leads to the increase in the harassment of Jews. The logic is trivial. Funds and assets are needed. And today these curves diverge once more. A threatful warning! Another fact. The current relative scale of Jewish emigration (the yellow curve) from Europe is close to the level of the mid-1930s! There are two reasons for this exodus: economic pressure (as in Hungary and Greece), and threats from radical Islam.

Of course, by confiscating money and businesses and by expelling Jews, one can give a short-term boost to any type of expansion, including the military one, as it was in Germany; but it also destroys the integrity of an economic system built up over centuries and based on the reliability of human capital at a very high level, because nobody can find more law-abiding people than the Jews living in Europe for the last 3,000 years. The law of the country is our law.

Today, Jews are the only European minority that is afraid of sending children to school. Interesting fact. The thickness of the iron door at my children's preparatory school is 25cm. Not every mother can open such a door without someone's help. In response to my complaint,

Federica Mogherini said, 'Europe, where parents are afraid to send their kids to school, is not Europe any longer.' But not everybody has such deep understanding.

Nothing can compensate for the lack of foresight demonstrated by democratic leaders. And what are many of them to blame for today? Short-sightedness, certainly. But not only that. The fear of being called an enemy of freedom, tolerance, political correctness and human rights. For some people, it is easier to turn a blind eye to violence and barbarity than to risk being accused of opposing multiculturalism.

Maybe because of that, we are a bit late. I have sensed the smell of violence in the air of European cities. I have heard slogans 'Hitler was right', and 'Jews go to ghetto!' I have read on

“ We believe that responsibility, democracy and law can prevent the unthinkable.

the walls, 'Close Guantanamo, reopen Auschwitz!' But Europeans remained in comfortable arrogance. And terrible tragedy happened in Paris. My heart is of course with those people who were marching against terrorism and violence. But my mind understands that solidarity alone is not enough. We need a strong action plan.

That is why we invited journalists here, as well as lawyers and, of course, our respected guests, legislators. We believe in these powerful representatives of civil society. We believe that responsibility, democracy and law can prevent the unthinkable. I very much appreciate your coming here and your willingness to discuss the issues in a concentrated manner and without political bias.

The tragedies in Paris, Brussels and Toulouse are visible implications of the deep structural problems embodied in European society:

- Radical Islam, imported into our democracies and spewing forth into violence and murder;
- A multiculturalism that is tragically giving birth to monocultural ghettos;
- An era of instant mass communications, and of mass migration and changing populations with very little or even no control;
- And finally, a media conditioned by sensation and instant profit rather than social responsibility.

I claim that Europe is at the edge of a 'new Middle Ages'. Today totalitarian doctrine is openly destroying the continent's Judeo-Christian values as it did seventy years ago.

That is why we have prepared the detailed and practical Azimuth Map, Model Law and Declaration, which, it is proposed to parliamentary speakers to sign. These three documents were drawn up by top experts and complement each other to counteract the threats of radical Islam, neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism in Europe. Please, support our mutual initiative by real, honest and concentrated discourse.

Thank you.



Stephen Sackur

Moderator

Stephen Sackur (born in 1963) is a TV presenter of HARDtalk and BBC World News. He graduated from Harvard and Cambridge universities, became a journalist in 1986, and from 1990 he was BBC Middle East correspondent in Cairo and Jerusalem covering the stories during the Gulf War, the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and the emergence of the Palestinian Authority under the late Yasser Arafat. As a witness of the Communist downfall and the Czechoslovakian Velvet Revolution he proposed a unique perspective on new democracy and stability in Eastern Europe. Between 1997 and 2002 he was BBC Washington correspondent covering U.S. President Clinton's sexual scandal and interviewing George W. Bush during the presidential election in 2000. He was the first to report Saddam Hussein's fall in 2003. He has

also worked as a correspondent for BBC national radio, as well as writing articles for *The London Review of Books*, *The New Stateman*, *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph*.

From 2004 he has been a presenter of HARDtalk. As a host, he has conducted interviews with such international personalities as Hugo Chavez, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Mexico's President Filipe Calderon, Shimon Peres, Mahmuod Abbas, Al Gore, Gore Vidal, Richard Dawkins and Naom Chomsky.

He was named International TV Personality of the Year by the Association for International Broadcasting in November 2010 and Speech Broadcaster of the Year at the Sony Radio Awards 2013. He participated at the 10th Yalta Annual Meeting of YES in 2013.



The role of the media and public figures

This panel focused on the use and manipulation of various forms of traditional and social media to promote extremist political ideologies. The speakers discussed the dangers of incitement and hate speech, what freedom of expression enables today. The responsibility among media professionals and journalists to ensure that their platforms do not condone intolerance, hate or demonization of minorities was also addressed.



↑ A supporter of controversial French comic Dieudonné holds a caricature of a Jew to protest against the possible banning of the comedian for inciting hatred.

→ French striker Nicolas Anelka gestures as he celebrates during an English Premier League football match. On 27 February 2014, Anelka was banned for five games for his 'quenelle' gesture.



↑ Samuel Eto'o of Cameroon poses with the #SayNoToRacism sign during the official FIFA World Cup 2014 portrait session in Vitoria, Brazil, 09 June 2014.

Panel 1 The role of the media and public figures

Moderator:
Stephen Sackur
BBC HARDtalk

Participants:
Bernard -Henri Lévy
Renowned French author and philosopher
Abraham Foxman
National Director of the Anti-Defamation League
Timothy Snyder
Professor at Yale University and historian
Vladimir Yakunin
President of the World Public Forum –
Dialogue of Civilizations



**Stephen Sackur**

- “Does anybody believe that if the European politicians and the European national parliaments put their minds to it they can contribute and come up with a pan-European set of laws and regulations which effectively criminalize hate language and incitement?”
- “Something very alarming is happening today, something which Moshe Kantor and other speakers have already suggested: the rise of a new level of hate, race hate and intolerance and extremism which all of us need to be extraordinarily worried about.”

Abraham Foxman

“The anonymity of the Internet permits people in nanoseconds to advocate violence. I believe that this is something we need to change. You want that freedom? You have to identify who you are!”



“I am a survivor of the Holocaust, of the Shoah. For me coming to Europe is always a difficult moment, this one included – but this one maybe even to a larger extent.”

Timothy Snyder

“It seems to me that free speech is something that is located in individuals. If you do not use your name and I do not use my name, when you write something anonymously, then I don't think we have the same right to free speech. The states have the right to free speech and if a state carries out speech which is dangerous to other individuals do we then say 'the state has the right to its opinion' ?



“We are living through a second globalisation. We think it's all new and different, but it's not. The same thing happened a century ago. With globalisation comes the temptation for a global explanation of things that go wrong.



“I am sorry to say in such a blunt way, the Jews are strong. They were weak in the thirties, they were vulnerable, they were alone and they were uninformed. Today they are strong in their wisdom, they are strong because of all they have learnt, they are also strong because of their positiveness and in their pride for their Jewishness, and this is completely different compared to the situation in the thirties.

Bernard-Henri Lévy

“Those who today practise the denial of the Holocaust repeat or continue, or perpetuate the crime.





Vladimir Yakunin

“ We should fight these [far right] elements; we should not permit them to grow to the scale where they start to pretend that they have their right to freedom of speech.





“The point I want to make is that there is no theoretical way to solve the equation of freedom of expression and incitement to violence. The only way is to approach it from the empirical background of every social structure, of every civil society, of every national state or every field of criminal law.

MEP Juan Fernando Lopez Aguillar

Chairman of the Working Group on Antisemitism
in the European Parliament

Moshe Kantor

“Seventy years, a lifetime later, we run the danger of forgetting where nationalism, chauvinism, racism and anti-Semitism can lead. But we also forget where misplaced tolerance towards those who would seek to destroy our societies also leads.



↑ Moshe Kantor handing a book on World War II to Bernard-Henri Lévy.

The role of legislation and law enforcement

Legislative measures are used by democratic societies to combat anti-Semitism, racism and hate speech. This panel discussed the efficiency of such legal tools and the difficult exercise of balancing rights, responsibilities and freedoms.

→ People hold placards and Israeli and Union flags outside the Royal Courts of Justice as Jewish groups rally in London calling for 'Zero Tolerance for Anti-Semitism', 31 August 2014.

→ A Jewish boy stands in front of the Jewish Museum in Brussels on 26 May 2014, two days after the shooting that killed four people.

→ A worshiper opens the door of a mosque where Nazi graffiti had been sprayed, in Décines-Charpieu, a neighbouring suburb of Lyon, France, 20 December 2011.



Panel 2

The role of legislation and law enforcement

Moderator:
Stephen Sackur
BBC HARDtalk

Participants:
Irwin Cotler
International Human Rights Lawyer
Alan Dershowitz
International Lawyer and Professor
Yoram Dinstein
Former President, Tel-Aviv University
Věra Jourová
European Union Commissioner of Justice





← (right-hand screen)
Irwin Cotler, International
Human Rights Lawyer



Irwin Cotler

- “Freedom of expression is subject to reasonable limitations described by law and can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.
- “If you tolerate the intolerable too much you will end up tolerating the intolerant.



Věra Jourová

“As a representative of the European Union I admit a lot of work has to be done, not only in combating xenophobia, radicalism, anti-Semitism and anti-Roma, but also by restoring the trust in EU citizens and asking for their help.

“We have to solve these issues of intolerance at the civil society level with close contact with the people.



Alan Dershowitz

“ We cannot ban ideas but what we have to do is defeat them in the market place of ideas! This is what we should be devoting our energy to, winning the hearts and minds of young people.



“ We live in a world of intolerance. The vast majority of people in the world today are intolerant. They do not understand why views different from theirs should ever be expressed.

← MEP Soraya Post
addressing the panel



Yoram Dinstein

“The person who denies the Holocaust is an anti-Semite that not only denies the fact that there were gas chambers but also wants to reproduce the gas chambers.



“We need a two-fold strategy:

- Strengthen Tolerance
- Clarify legitimate limitation on Tolerance

Every crime should be considered hate crime under certain circumstances. If hate is the cause of the crime, the punishment should be more severe. Just as there are laws against libel and slander against individuals, similarly within this framework there ought to be laws about group libel.



The role of politicians

Extremist political parties and movements have gained much popular support in the last few years. This panel focused on the responsibility of political leaders to combat the increasing representation of such parties and the spread of their ideologies.

→ Chairman of the far-right radical nationalist Jobbik party Gabor Vona delivers a speech during a rally to mark the 57th anniversary of the Hungarian revolution and war of independence against Communist rule and the Soviet Union in 1956 on 23 October 2013 in Budapest, Hungary.



← Greek far-right party Chryssi Avghi (Golden Dawn)'s deputies gesture during a swearing-in ceremony at the Greek parliament on 17 May 2012 in Athens, Greece.



← Controversial humorist Dieudonne M'Bala (left) arrives to meet the Front National's presidential candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen at their party's election site following the first round of the French Presidential elections on 22 April 2007 in Paris, France.

Panel 3

The role of politicians

Moderator:

Stephen Sackur

BBC HARDtalk

Participants:

Cemil Cicek

Speaker of the National Assembly in Turkey

Jan Hamáček

Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament

Yuli-Yoël Edelstein

Speaker of the Knesset

Ilyas Umakhanov

Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of Russia

Valeriu Ștefan Zgonea

President of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania





Yuli-Yoël Edelstein

“Some people in Europe, it seems, cannot or at least are seen not to be able to differentiate between anger with Israel and anger with Jews.

“I don’t know where these things develop, I do know for a fact that Holocaust did not start, as it was mentioned, here with Auschwitz or the mass extermination of the Jews or anyone else. It started with the exact same things you as a journalist and all your colleagues report about every day on the TV, in the newspapers: a Rabbi attacked, a stone thrown into the window, a synagogue being, whatever, painted with a swastika, you name it.



Jan Hamáček

“ We need politicians who lead because racism, anti-Semitism and extremism is something we have to tackle head-on. There is also this feeling of insecurity among the population in Europe. It does not have to be physical insecurity, it can be economical, social insecurity. When people are afraid and insecure, they tend to fall for the wrong people.

Cemil Cicek

“...If we develop a common opposition amongst ourselves to any manifestations of terror, separatism, radical Islamism, including the Holocaust as well, we will be able to have a corresponding impact on our people, the people living in our countries.



“ If our correct speeches aren't supported by correct efforts, all will go to emptiness.



“...media has an important role: to teach the young generation and people about what happened 70 years ago...”

Valeriu Ștefan Zgonea

“The future generation needs to see that the politicians of the 21st century are united and have the same tools and action plan. This is the reason why we gathered here: in order to reach the same action plan for whole of Europe.”



Ilyas Umakhanov

“Russia has a lot of shortcomings, and there are many issues we need to work on, but I think that in regard to memory, in regard to the Holocaust, Russia in many cases can serve as a model.”

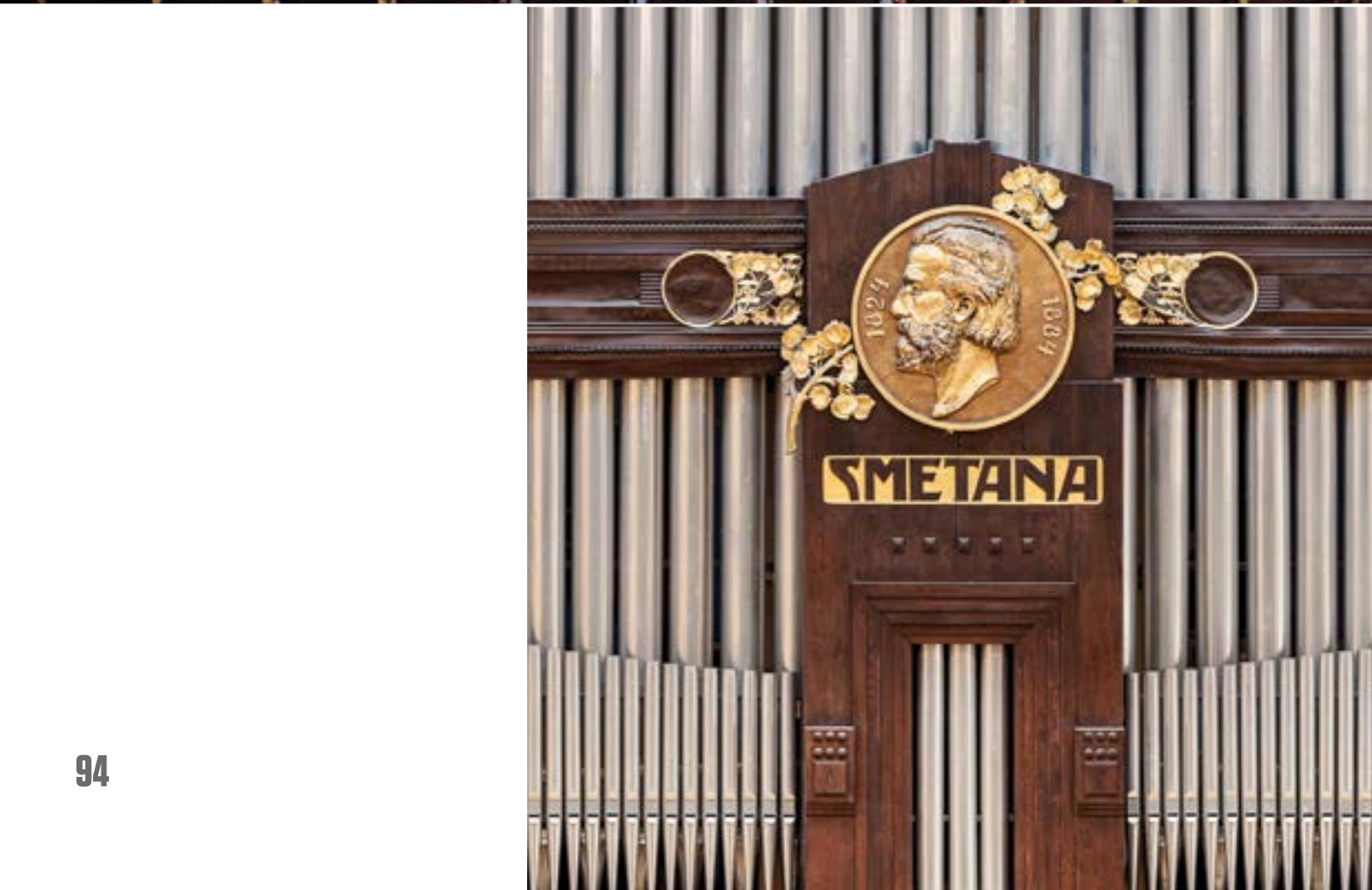


'I marvel at the resilience of the Jewish people. Their best characteristic is their desire to remember. No other people have such an obsession with memory.'

Elie Wiesel

26th

DINNER
MUNICIPAL HOUSE,
PRAGUE





**'Let My People Live!' Forum
Dinner at Municipal Hall**





Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress

“I would like to remember a special story about Petr Ginz, who was deported to the Terezín Concentration Camp and was later murdered in Auschwitz at the age of 16. Petr drew an astronaut’s view of the earth from the moon, at a time when man reaching the moon was only a dream. To dream was the only thing Petr could do during those dark times, innocent dreams which would never be realized. Sixty years later, the first Jewish and Israeli astronaut, Colonel Ilan Ramon, a child of Holocaust survivors, took Petr’s drawing in the Columbia space shuttle. Ilan Ramon decided to take Petr with him on his journey and fulfil his dream, by fulfilling his own dream, which unfortunately ended tragically. The ability to dream, and the possibility to fulfil dreams, are the most fundamental principles of humanity.



Miloš Zeman, President of the Czech Republic

‘ Kennedy said “Ich bin ein Berliner”. As you know, he wasn’t in fact a Berliner but rather believed we should all see ourselves as such. Today we are all Jews in Europe.

‘ Well, the purpose of our conference is not only remembrance; the main purpose of our conference is seeking for concrete and efficient measures we can take against the emergence of a new Holocaust.



↑ **Rosen Plevneliev**, President of the Republic of Bulgaria,
Miloš Zeman, President of the Czech Republic,
Moshe Kantor, EJC President

← **Frans Timmermans**, First Vice-President of the European Commission,
Yuli-Yoël Edelstein, Speaker of the Knesset,
Věra Jourová, European Union Commissioner of Justice



Lubomir Zaoralek, Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs

- “ Could somebody ever believe that Europe could have set the scene for the worst atrocities that a human can possibly conceive against other humans?
- “ Let us not be mistaken, Holocaust is not gone. It is still falling down on us like the ashes of the victims from the gas chambers.



Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament

- “ If you want to change the future for the better, you don't have the right to forget the atrocities of the past.
- “ It fills me with pride that today in Germany Jews can live and practise their religion, that they are protected by our country. But it fills me with worry that police forces have to protect once more synagogues, not only in Germany, but all over Europe.

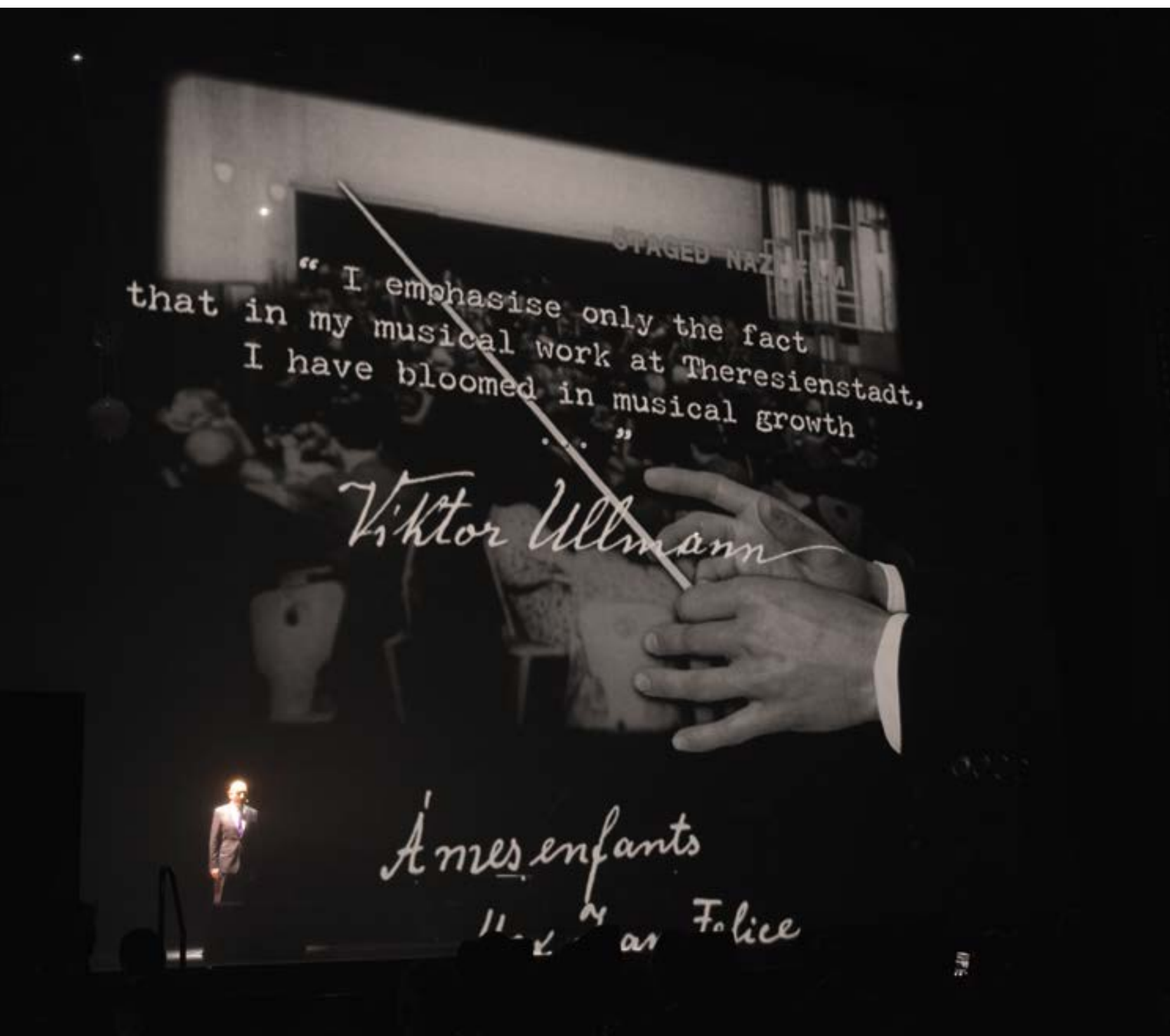




➤ **Andrej Kiska**,
President of Slovakia,
Rosen Plevneliev,
President of the Republic of
Bulgaria, and **Martin Schulz**,
President of the European
Parliament

➔ A souvenir for the
participants of the
Fourth 'Let My People
Live!' Forum. The word
'Hai', meaning 'life' in
Hebrew, is carved out in
Jerusalem stone.





“«Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt», “The Fuehrer gives the Jews a City”. In June 1944, a TV crew with lamps, cameras, film rolls, microphones and other film equipment arrived in Terezín to shoot a documentary film; the flowerbeds in the central square were adorned with roses, the bars were open. A platform for the orchestra was built, young people were instructed to stage football games in the abandoned military barracks. In other words, the aim was to represent absolute normality.

Sir Ben Kingsley

“I emphasize only the fact that in my musical work at Theresienstadt, I have bloomed in musical growth and not felt myself at all inhibited: we simply did not sit and lament on the shores of the rivers of Babylon that our will for culture was not sufficient to our will to exist. And I am convinced that all who have worked in life and art to wrestle content into its unyielding form will say that I was right...

Sir Ben Kingsley reciting an excerpt from Viktor Ullmann's essay entitled 'Goethe and Ghetto', written during the final months of his life.



Terezín, after 70 years

Marek Halter

No, I didn't know Auschwitz, nor Treblinka, Bergen—Belsen, Majdanek, or Sobibor. But throughout my life, everything I have been able to create, love or suffer has been marked with the imprint of those names.

As for myself, I experienced war, occupation, fear and escape. Though I didn't see hundreds of thousands of Jewish children die, children like myself, I did see them live. I can thus bear witness to how much their absence has left us forever impoverished, as if we have been stripped of all that they would have created.

Yes, I am a survivor. Not from the hell of the concentration camps but from a world which has disappeared. I was born in Warsaw. Of the one million inhabitants living there before the war, there were nearly 400,000 Jews. Today, what remains of them is a monument dedicated to the participants in the Ghetto Uprising and the new Jewish History Museum.

Of all the central European cities, only Prague has preserved its Jewish quarter, its synagogues, its rabbinical schools and even Kafka's house. Hitler and

“My friends of the European Jewish Congress were right to choose Prague and the Terezín camp to observe this grim anniversary. Those taking part in this event can now reach out to this past that had once been doomed to become ashes.

his friend Heydrich, then-governor of 'dismembered' Czechoslovakia, had wanted to transform Prague into an 'exotic museum for an extinct race', a kind of Jurassic Park. So that the generations that would be born into a world that was *judenrein*, or 'cleansed of Jews', could learn how this departed people had lived.

It's in this same spirit that they created the Terezín camp inside an ancient military fortress built by Vauban some 60 kilometers north of Prague. They wanted to prove that these 'subhumans' were capable of creativity while in captivity. And so they imprisoned most of the Jewish composers and musicians there, encouraging them to continue their work. The Germans even sold tickets to music lovers who wanted to

from the hatred of their neighbours. It was the subject of one of my novels, *The Kabbalist of Prague*.

I visited the Terezín camp for the first time in the company of the young and magnificent pianist Nathalia Romanenko. She was introduced to me by Mstislav Rostropovitch and she spoke to me one day about the musicians who worked there and whose music is in danger of being lost. 'We must give new life to their music,' she told me. 'We must play it. We can't grant Hitler a posthumous victory.' Nathalia Romanenko found the sheet music for Viktor Ullmann's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, which he had written for his fiancée, the pianist Juliette Aranyi. It was performed for the very first time in the camp.

“We must give new life to their music. We must play it. We can't grant Hitler a posthumous victory.

hear them. All were killed before the end of the war: Viktor Ullmann, Hans Krása, Gideon Klein, Rafael Schächter, Pavel Haas, Robert Dauber, Rudolf Karel and many others.

Here we are, seventy years after these events. Time enough for three generations to be born, and in the case of those who were there and survived, to die. Time enough for new atrocities to cover the horrors of the past. Time enough for memory to become history.

My friends of the European Jewish Congress were right to choose Prague and the Terezín camp to observe this grim anniversary. Those taking part in this event can now reach out to this past that had once been doomed to become ashes. In Prague's Old New Synagogue, they will still see the chair of Rabbi Maharal, the man who, in the middle of the 16th century, created the Golem, the first artificial being, in order to protect Jews

I trembled with emotion as I walked into the Terezín camp, where the Nazi slogan 'Arbeit Macht Frei', ('Work Makes You Free'), looms over the entrance. I was haunted by sounds, melodies, cries and chants. Kafka believed, as Homer did, that we might be able to survive the siren's song, but not its silence. It is our responsibility, gathered here together for this 70th anniversary of the liberation of the camps, to break the silence that still surrounds these composers. May their music resound anew, like the call for Zakhor, or the act of remembering — so important that it is repeated 169 times in the Bible.

→ Nathalia Romanenko performing an extract from Viktor Ullmann's Concerto Op. 25.



The Terezín musical project came to life after Nathalia Romanenko visited Terezín where the Nazis had imprisoned the best Jewish musicians and composers of that time. Only after visiting the site itself could Nathalia fully appreciate how truly meaningful the music composed at Terezín was: it is what you might call 'resistance by music'.

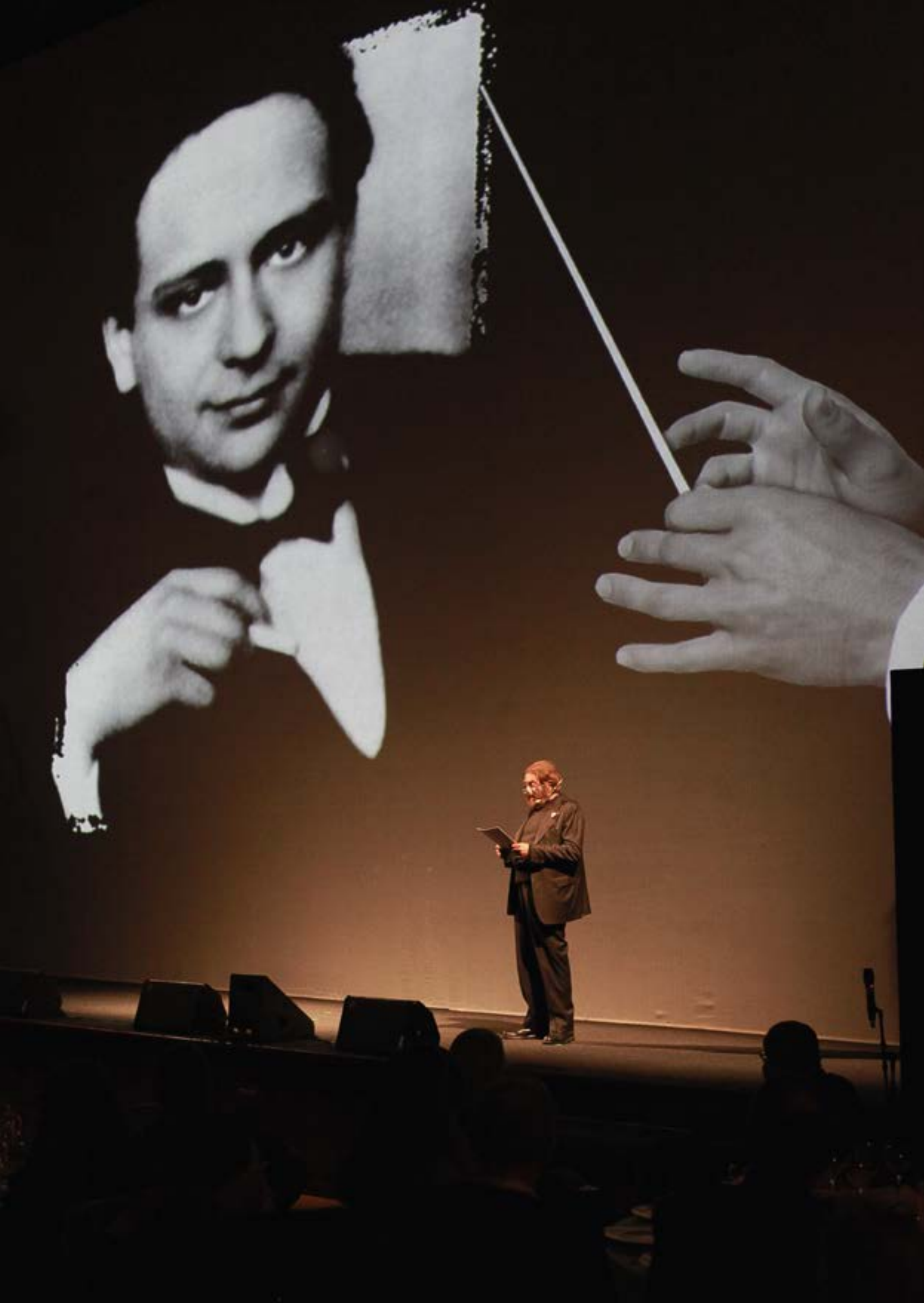
Today few people know or have listened to the works of Rudolf Karel, Pavel Hass, James Simon, Gideon Klein or Viktor Ullmann. Even in schools where the history of the Shoah is taught, these Terezín geniuses are hardly ever mentioned.

The Terezín musical project honours all Jewish composers from Theresienstadt who were imprisoned, murdered or could not make themselves known to the public.

Nathalia Romanenko stated the following with regard to the project: 'Resurrecting their works, having

them applauded by thousands of young music lovers... What a way of getting even with the Nazis, who wanted to wipe out this musical heritage in the "museum of an extinct race!"'

The Ullmann Concerto Op. 25 for piano and orchestra (reduction for piano, organ and timpani) was performed live, which was a very moving experience for all those present. The role of the piano soloist was supported by the solemn and ancestral sound of the organ, which was tasked to perform the part of the orchestra, reinforced by the powerful impact of the timpani.



Viktor Ullmann

Composer

Viktor Ullmann was born into a Jewish family, on 1 January 1898 in Teschen, modern Cieszyn. He attended a grammar school in Vienna and soon his musical talent and inclinations gave him access to Arnold Schönberg. Upon finishing school, he volunteered for military service. After deployment on the Italian Front at Isonzo, he was granted study leave, which he used to begin the study of law at Vienna University. In 1918 he was accepted into Arnold Schönberg's composition seminar. Ullmann was an excellent pianist, although he had no ambitions for a career as a soloist. In 1919 he left Vienna and dedicated himself fully to music in Prague.

He served as a conductor at the New German Theatre of Prague (now the Prague State Opera), then was appointed head of the opera company in Aussig an der Elbe (Ústí nad Labem) and won the Hertzka Prize for his work. In the meantime he had been appointed conductor in Zürich for two years. As a result of his interest in anthroposophy, a movement founded by Rudolf Steiner, he spent another two years as a bookseller in Stuttgart, but was forced to flee Germany in mid-1933 and returned to Prague as a music teacher and journalist.

On 8 September 1942 he was deported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp. Up to his deportation his list of works had reached 41 opus numbers and contained an additional three piano sonatas, song cycles on texts by various poets, operas, and the piano concerto Op. 25, which he finished in December 1939, nine months after

the entry of German troops into Prague. Most of these works are missing.

The particular nature of the camp at Theresienstadt enabled Ullmann to remain active musically: he was a piano accompanist, organized concerts ('Collegium musicum', 'Studio for New Music'), wrote critiques of musical events, and composed, as part of a cultural circle including Karel Ančerl, Rafael Schachter, Gideon Klein, Hans Krása, and other prominent musicians imprisoned there. He wrote: 'We simply did not sit and lament on the shores of the rivers of Babylon that our will for culture was not sufficient to our will to exist.'

The work he completed in Theresienstadt was mostly preserved and comprises, in addition to choral works, song cycles and a quantity of stage music, such significant works as the last three piano sonatas, the Third String Quartet, the melodrama based on Rilke's Cornet poem, and the chamber opera *The Emperor of Atlantis*, or *The Refusal of Death*, with a libretto by Peter Kien. Its premiere was planned for Theresienstadt in the autumn of 1944, conducted by Rafael Schachter, but the SS commander noticed similarities between the Emperor of Atlantis and Adolf Hitler and suppressed it.

On 16 October 1944 he was deported to the camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau, where on 18 October 1944 he was killed in the gas chambers.





‘The Holocaust illustrates the consequences of prejudice, racism and stereotyping on a society. It forces us to examine the responsibilities of citizenship and confront the powerful ramifications of indifference and inaction.’

Tim Holden

27th

CLOSING SESSION

PRAGUE CASTLE,
SPANISH HALL

PRAGUE DECLARATION ON COMBATING ANTI-SEMITISM AND HATE CRIMES PRAGUE, 27 JANUARY 2015

We, the Round Table of Speakers of Parliament gathered here today in Prague for the 70th commemoration ceremony of the Holocaust, express our grave concern about the rise in the verbal, digital and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism and hate crimes, predominately in Europe but also worldwide, directed towards Jewish individuals and communities, institutions and religious facilities.

Anti-Semitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity and is often used to blame them for 'why things go wrong'. It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms, social networks, demonstrations and actions. Anti-Semitism employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits. Contemporary examples of anti-Semitism in public life include the distortion or denial of the Holocaust with the intention of hurting Jews around the world and the State of Israel.

Indeed, many Jews experience an inability to express themselves in public as Jews without fearing verbal or bodily harm. These experiences are supported by findings of research recently undertaken by respectable international NGOs and intergovernmental bodies such as the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (2013).

As heads of parliaments, we wish to make it clear that anti-Semitism, as well as other hate crimes, constitute problems for every society in which they are allowed to manifest. History teaches us that for evil to prevail over good, all that is needed is for decent people to remain indifferent, silent and complacent while the immoral and hateful few gain power. This is why it is imperative that parliaments, governments, international organizations and civil societies around the world adopt a 'Zero-Tolerance' policy towards these phenomena.

We believe this can be achieved through a threefold approach: education, legislation and enforcement of laws against hate crimes.

The Round Table recommends, therefore, the establishment of an inter-parliamentarian Working Group to draft legal proposals strengthening tolerance and combating various forms of hatred and incitement to hatred in the spirit of this Declaration.

The President of the European Parliament is invited to make a call for such a meeting.





Miloš Zeman

President of the Czech Republic

Mr President of the European Parliament, Mr President of the European Jewish Congress, ladies and gentlemen,

I fully agree with the statement by Dr Moshe Kantor, who said on a different occasion that the purpose of our meeting is not only, or even first of all, a remembrance of the past, but also a consideration of the future, the quest to find paths to prevent a repetition of the Holocaust. I, too, want to focus on this issue; however, I would like to make several retrospective comments.

The condemnation of the Holocaust is something on which we all agree. We all agree that we must not allow it to happen again. But I fear that we do not pay enough attention to the deep causes of the emergence of the Holocaust. And that we sometimes perceive them as insignificant. Let me mention three small examples. One of the most prominent Czech journalists, Ferdinand Peroutka, wrote an article in the prestigious magazine *Přítomnost* ('The Presence') entitled 'Hitler is a Gentleman'. The same journalist wrote, after the Munich Agreement, 'If we cannot sing with the angels, we must howl with the wolves.' My beloved Winston Churchill wrote to Adolf Hitler in January 1939 that if Britain were hit by a catastrophe, he would wish it to be headed by a man with Hitler's strong will. And, finally, Nobel Prize winner Knut Hamsun – you may have read his *Hunger or Victoria* – wrote an obituary of Adolf Hitler in May 1945.

What makes intellectuals fascinated by an absolutely atrocious doctrine? What makes Dr Jekyll turn into Mr Hyde? It is the effort to overcome one's own frustration by ousting a minority, whatever it be, from society, and in this respect the Holocaust begins with the first park bench on which a Jew is forbidden to sit. A gas chamber is only the culmination, not the beginning of the Holocaust. And we must ask whether a relapse is possible, even one of bigger dimensions, which would not afflict six million Jews, but it would afflict the followers of a number of religions, atheists and even Muslims.

Because of this, I welcome the fact that moderate Arab countries have recently joined the war against the Islamic State. And this Islamic State, often underestimated, has a nature similar to that of the Nazi Germany of the early 1930s.

I believe that we are threatened with a super-holocaust, whose victims would be hundreds of millions of people. I would like to quote one of the Islamic State military commanders, who said: 'We will kill one hundred, two hundred or five hundred million people; we don't care.' And this threat of killing – I am repeating this once again – concerned Muslims as well.

I do not know how many of you saw the envisaged map of the Islamic caliphate by 2020. This map includes half of Europe, half of Africa and a large part of Asia. You may tell me that a lunatic made this map, and you will be right. But Adolf Hitler also was a lunatic, yet his vision of an enslaved and Judenrein Europe was nearly fulfilled.

I want to propose something that many of you will consider naïve, unfeasible or useless. Yesterday, I talked about the 200 dead children in Peshawar, and about 2,000 inhabitants of Nigeria who were murdered by the Boko Haram sect. And I could give more examples. We should have no illusions about international terrorism being only several poorly armed and trained groups. International terrorism is a worldwide, organized and expanding network, and one cannot fight international terrorism merely on the level of national states and merely by sometimes slightly hypocritical demonstrations and verbal protests.

If two British and two French divisions had reacted to the violation of the Treaty of Versailles during the occupation of the demilitarized zone in Rhineland in 1936 with military action, there would have been no Munich Agreement, no Holocaust and no World War II.

“ I fully agree with the statement by Dr. Moshe Kantor, who said on a different occasion that the purpose of our meeting is not only, or even first of all, a remembrance of the past, but also a consideration of the future, the quest to find paths to prevent a repetition of the Holocaust. ”

In order to prevent a super-holocaust and massive murdering of people today, we also need joint military action, an operation at an international level, held under the auspices of the United Nations Security Council; an operation, to whose international rapid reaction forces all permanent members of the Security Council should contribute, if possible; an operation that would eliminate the terrorist training camps as they spring up, that would not work with hopeless occupying of land, but use modern technologies such as drones; an operation in which the international community would unite against its arch enemy.

Ladies and gentlemen, some proposals are said to undergo three stages. In the first stage, they are labelled nonsense; in the second phase, they may be considered; and finally, in the third stage, some of these proposals are taken for granted. This had been the well-known dispute between the heliocentric and geocentric models, but I could of course name further examples.

We still lack courage and we still give in to what was called appeasement in the 1930s. We still believe that the terrorist movements can be educated. Yes, Hitler educated us with gas chambers, and this is why I fear that before we start seriously considering such an international rapid reaction force, a number of terrorist attacks still have to occur for the public to realize that one cannot negotiate with terrorists, that terrorists must be fought, and that terrorists cannot be fought only with surface legislative changes, but with armed forces, as it might have been in Rhineland in 1936.

Thank you for your attention.



Martin Schulz

President of the European Parliament

President of the Czech Republic, President of Bulgaria, dear colleagues, chairmen and presidents of the parliaments present here, dear President Kantor, dear colleague Edelstein, ladies and gentlemen,

My collaborators have prepared a wonderful speech for me, but I am not going to give that speech. I'm too deeply moved by the music, but also by the performance as a whole, by the pictures we saw.

As for me, as a high-ranking representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, I have the honour and the privilege to chair the multinational, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multicultural, unique parliament of the European Union.

I am deeply moved as a representative with that privilege to speak on behalf of the representatives of the 508 million European citizens who belong today to the European Union. I'm a German, let's be honest, and seventy years after the liberation of Auschwitz, Terezienstadt and the other extermination camps, this is historically a miracle and a gift, a precious gift for us all.

And therefore I am not going to give that speech, a speech that outlined many commitments. However, as my advisers have suggested, I do want to focus on a few of them here.

First of all, a commitment to the survivors who are here. I want to address you, the last witnesses of the horror we just saw. You can be assured that there will always be people fighting for your legacy, so that this can never happen again. This is our primary duty today, and we give you our guarantee.

I want to add another element to this: please permit me to tell two stories. During my time as President of the European Parliament, I have had the privilege to meet a Jewish man who lived with his family in Berlin before the War. As he told me, he and his family were booted out of the country in 1938 – in my constituency, Aachen. He was ten. The family were lucky: they could leave. But just his parents, his brothers and sisters, not the rest of the family. Only he and his immediate family could escape. Yet, at Aachen station, the SS stopped the train and forced them to open their suitcases, took their last precious possessions out of them, and then they kicked them out of the country. Ten years old...

But 28 years later that man, Justice Gabriel Bach, became the Deputy State Prosecutor of Israel. He brought the man (amongst others) who organized that crime, but who was also in a key position to organize the extermination, Adolf Eichmann, to justice. For me, this is evidence enough that justice exists in the world. That a ten-year-old boy from a Jewish family booted out of Germany could put that criminal in jail is proof that justice can still prevail.

The other story. I had the privilege of participating in the Commemoration of the Liberation of the Warsaw Ghetto, and met one of the survivors, Simcha Rotem, today living in Israel. One of the last heroes of the Warsaw ghetto resistance, he recounted in his speech a story I will never forget. He said, 'I escaped, through a tunnel, and at the end of the tunnel stood a Polish couple. They saw me, and for a second I thought, "What's going to happen now?"' And this couple, apparently Catholic, took him home with them, and hid him in their apartment, and so he survived. And Simcha Rotem, survivor, and hero of that incredible movement of resistance against the SS, raised in Warsaw two years ago the following question. He said, 'I have often asked myself whether I would have been as courageous as that couple was.' This was a wonderful moment for all of us. The man we all admired had raised the key question: are we so courageous? And that's my conclusion of the day, for all of us: we here, in this prestigious room, the high-ranking representatives of our parliaments, of our societies, of our parties, of our countries... the question we have to raise is not whether we are courageous enough to address such an audience as this – that's easy. It is the question the President of the Czech Republic wisely asked: are we courageous when we really need to be? Don't have any illusions about this, any of you here now in this room. If these Nazi gangs had power today, we would all end up in a concentration camp. That's for sure. Because we here are representing tolerance, mutual

“Wherever anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and whatever fascist manifestation arises and appears, we must stand up and say ‘Not on our watch!’

respect, freedom of speech, the fight against anti-Semitism, respect for other nations, religions and beliefs, and respect for the non-believers, the freedom of the press, and freedom of research in universities. This is what an open-minded society is representing, and we are its representatives. What we represent is the opposite of any criminal ideology.

Don't harbour any illusions. You would be a target, all of you, all of us. Like, for example, the former French Prime Minister Leon Blum, who was all those years in Buchenwald, as the famous writer Hoga N. Blum described in his books.

What does it all mean? It means that we are strong, we have power, we have influence, and this obliges us, with this power, with our possibilities, with our strength, with the force we have in daily life, to stand up every second when evil rears its head and to say 'Not on our watch'. This is our duty, not so much through ceremony and pronouncements, but through action. Every day in our parliaments, in our daily life, on the streets. Wherever anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and whatever fascist manifestation arises and appears, we must stand up and say 'Not on our watch'. This is the best way to give an example to our children and their children.

Thank you very much for the ceremony!



Rosen Plevneliev

President of the Republic of Bulgaria

President Zeman, President Schulz, parliamentary speakers, ministers, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends. After such a brilliant performance of world-class music and artists, words are needless. But we need to speak again and again. We need to repeat ourselves again and again. We need to come back to this place again and again, get together, share again and again our message as well as this brilliant music, but also need to share our feeling of unity, our message of

integrity and our message of tolerance, our message of humanity to the people of the world.

It is the responsibility of every one of us to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive. When we commemorate those who died, as we listen to the stories of those who were witnesses, we ask ourselves: 'How could this happen, how did the civilized world allow this to happen?' A tragedy of this scale cannot be explained by just pointing at those who initiated and executed all the repression and mass murder. What about those who have been indifferent, what about those who were afraid? What about those who thought, 'Well, this has nothing to do with me...'?

We should not forget the crimes of Nazism. We must not let the memory pass away with the last survivors, with the witnesses. We cannot have progress if we do not know our past, which will help us to measure the progress we have achieved seventy years later. If we cannot learn from history, if we make the same mistakes time after time, then Churchill will be right, history will repeat itself again and again. And as a president, I am strongly committed to this, I am engaged with the plight of the victims of totalitarian regimes. For me and for the Bulgarian people, it is a topic of the utmost importance.

Almost two years ago, in the European Parliament, the very heart of European democracy, we got together with a wise and much-respected President, who said: 'Better economic crisis than moral catastrophe, better economic problems than historic shame.' These words came from the President of the State of Israel, Shimon Peres, whom I consider a living legend.

President Peres and I opened an exhibition to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the rescue of the Bulgarian Jews. In his speech he described the Bulgarian people as humble, unobtrusive, and yet genuinely heroic. Against all odds, Bulgarians showed the world an unprecedented example of courage and humanity by making a moral choice in defiance of the greatest evil in history, the Nazis. In the dark years of the World War II, Bulgarians succeeded in saving the entire Jewish population within the country, nearly 50,000 people.

Unfortunately, Bulgaria was in a situation where it could not do the same for the Jewish people from Northern Greece and parts of Yugoslavia, as they weren't Bulgarian citizens. We deeply mourn the loss of their lives, as well as all the victims of Holocaust, whom we will always remember.

We must not forget that in every society there will be always someone who would prefer the sword, not the pen. There will always be fanatics and extremists who will try to kill innocent people in the name of God. But a brutal murder has nothing to do with God. Because God does not want anyone to dominate over others. Because God is telling us that we are all born equal and in peace. We should work for peace and should make sure that nobody dominates. God is teaching us that every life matters, regardless of faith – Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or any other. Every life is important.

“ It is the responsibility of every one of us to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive. We should not forget the crimes of Nazism. We must not let the memory pass away with the last survivors, with the witnesses.

The events that shocked Paris recently unleashed a wave of solidarity amongst those who share this belief. And together, united, the citizens of Europe openly stated that they would continue to defend human life, dignity and freedom for everyone. Let us support every initiative against fanaticism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism.

Tonight, in solidarity with the campaign of Jewish organizations such as the European Jewish Association, the lights of the presidential building in Sofia will remain on, in order to remind us that even today there are people in Europe who are fearful for their safety. This gesture has a symbolic meaning. It shows that sometimes even the smallest action, the smallest effort, is enough to drive out the darkness and bring back hope and light. Even the worst of evils will be stopped when people with different religions, with different ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds, just firmly say 'no' to hatred, when they think, 'It's up to me,' and when they act.

So we are all impressed by the words of a young Muslim man who risked his life to save other people during the hostage crisis in Paris recently. This young Muslim man said, 'We are brothers. It's not a question of Jews, Christians or Muslims. We are all in the same boat. And we have to help each other to get out of this crisis together.'

Today, just across the way from my office, in the very heart of city of Sofia, we have wonderful temples belonging to different religions. We have a well-preserved 9th-century Byzantine church, we have a mosque, we have a wonderful synagogue, we have a Catholic church. They have coexisted peacefully for centuries. And that's a great example of tolerance, of wisdom, and of respect for diversity. Let us all – politicians, activists and citizens alike – never forget that it is up to all of us to shape the world we live in. Let us not stop making it a better place.

Thank you.



Yuli-Yoël Edelstein

Speaker of the Knesset

Good afternoon. Mr President of the Czech Republic, Mr President of Bulgaria. I'm facing a positive problem here. We have so many distinguished guests in this audience that I can't mention them all, so, with your kind permission, I'll just mention those who made this event, this very important event, possible, and by that I mean the President of the Czech Republic, both speakers, my colleagues, the Speaker of the

Senate and the Chamber of Commerce, the Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic, the President of the European Parliament, and my dear friend Dr Moshe Kantor of the European Jewish Congress. My appreciation also goes to the leaders of the European Union, to my fellow speakers, heads of delegations, and all the distinguished guests here. Thank you all for being here.

I would dare to say that it's easier to be Jewish at events like this. I was mentioning to my colleague, the President of the European Parliament, that each year I'm amazed by the ability of people and leaders to stand up and confront the issue of the Holocaust not from the Jewish perspective, but from their own personal perspective. In total honesty, I don't know how I would have behaved in that situation. Whether I wouldn't try to sweep the issue under the table, or to say, 'Sorry, I'm a different generation, I have nothing to do with that. You talk about history, I've nothing to do with that.' So I think this is a truly estimable quality of prominent leaders — to be able to stand up and say, 'Yes, we still have something to do with that, and we are going to confront it.'

It is a very common Jewish tradition to start any event or any speech by addressing — in Hebrew we call it the 'akhsania' — the place that is hosting us. And I think it's also very proper to say a few words about where we are today. Because I don't think that it's mere coincidence that we are here in Prague, in the Czech Republic. It's not as if someone spoke to someone, they just happened to be around, and we decided to have this event here.

I think that if we are looking for an optimistic message, the example of the Czech Republic demonstrates that with persistent effort, anti-Semitism (which includes those who leap in head-first when an opportunity presents itself to denounce the State of Israel or to join this or that anti-Israel resolution), along with any other form of hatred, can be combated and you can achieve the results. And you bring reality to the streets of Prague: Jews shouldn't be warned not to wear kippa or not to wear signs of their faith when they walk down the street. It sounds very obvious, but unfortunately this is not the case in many other places in Europe and in other continents.

President Zeman, when you addressed us last night, you said that you would just make some remarks, but the radical speech, in your words, you would deliver today. So I was actually full of expectation. And when you were finishing, I said to myself, 'Oh, here is a president that knows how to keep his promise.' And then I felt I was turning red. What was so radical about the messages? Is it radical in the modern world to say that we are weak when we are combating evil? Is it radical to say that we shouldn't appease terrorists but rather fight them? Yes, I suppose, in the modern world, these messages sound radical. But as far as I'm concerned, I'm normal, and I think that these messages are normal. And I promise not to deliver a radical speech. I'll just share a couple of thoughts with you, with my colleagues present here along with everyone else. And if something sounds politically incorrect or bitter, you'll have to bear with me. I'm a son of Holocaust survivors, so I get a little bit emotional at events like this.

We just adopted a resolution here — heads of parliaments, presidents, speakers, chairmen of different parliaments — a resolution to combat anti-Semitism. Not the first one, as some people mentioned. And even some said, 'Why another resolution?' And they have a point. If it's just another resolution, then why have it? But I hope there is a chance, I still hope there is a chance, of doing something and not just adopting a resolution. But there are certain conditions that come with that. And

“I'm amazed by the ability of people and leaders to stand up and confront the issue of the Holocaust not from the Jewish perspective, but from their personal perspective.”

calling a spade a spade is one of the conditions. We managed, at least on this continent, to reach the position where a mainstream politician, a mainstream journalist, a mainstream professor, can't be openly anti-Semitic, can't deliver speeches about filthy Jews, or Jewish power, or things of that kind. This is definitely different from what happened in the '30s. This is a different situation.

Having said that, do we always notice new anti-Semitism? Don't we so easily give in to this idea that you shouldn't say bad things about Jews? The Holocaust happened. About Israelis, that's different.

No, don't misunderstand me. I'm not in the business of calling an anti-Semite everyone who criticizes this or that Israeli policy or this or that Israeli government. Don't misunderstand me for a second. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about journalists and elected officials seriously asking whether the IDF, when they are in Haiti, are not there to harvest organs. Because this idea that the IDF are there to help, after the terrible disaster in Haiti, is something that you have to deal with. How come? Probably they are there to harvest organs.

I'm talking about the reality where elected officials, journalists and public figures seriously say that probably the world and the Middle East would be better off without the State of Israel. Now, you don't have to love Israel — I'm not here to beg for love. But how come these things are not being said about any other country in the world? How come the idea of having a national state is not entirely appropriate in the 21st century? And this is a serious statement, which comes from many in this world.



Now, there is an issue of geography, too, which was raised during the panel discussions. We are so forgiving towards certain regions. Yesterday we talked about whether this idea of combating anti-Semitism should be defined as 'in Europe', or whether we should talk worldwide – even today, during the adoption of the resolution.

During the last soccer tournament, a Lebanese minister, a former Lebanese minister, was interviewed on Lebanese TV. He was asked, nonchalantly, whether that night he would support the Brazilian team or the German team. And he replied, very nonchalantly, with a nice smile: 'I don't know, I'm really torn from inside. I love how the Brazilians are playing soccer, but the Germans killed so many Jews, probably I should support them.' Did you hear about that? Did any foreign minister – please, don't jump – call the Lebanese ambassador to the foreign ministry to say that things like that are not acceptable in the modern world? No, it's not happening in Europe, it's over there. 'What can you expect?' they say to us. 'These countries are not really democracies. What can you expect?'

Borders are very easy to cross in the modern world. These ideas will infiltrate Toulouse, and Paris, and Belgium, and all over. There are no hermetic borders in the modern world anymore. So, please, let's not think that it's not happening on our shift, here, in my country, and it won't come to

me. It will. If we don't put all those who allow themselves to make statements of that kind in their place. Just seventy years after the Holocaust.

The role of parliaments here – especially apropos the discussion we had about just legislating or creating the public atmosphere – is great. I, by the way, don't see that there is any serious contradiction in this discussion. There are those who understand only legislation, or even, probably, just trial and imprisonment. But the public atmosphere is also very important, because, thank God, the majority of people in any country are not like that. And parliaments legislate – it's obvious, it's motherhood and apple pie – but they also create public atmosphere. And speakers are here. And I always say, at least in my parliament, in the Knesset, that we should treat ourselves seriously. And when we say something when we take the floor, it could be, shall I say, misunderstood by some person in the street and not be taken as a legitimate democratic parliamentary criticism, but rather as a call for action, violent action. And this is about creating the public atmosphere in our countries.

By the way, many parliaments, including parliaments represented here... well, shall I say, never had any discussion about anti-Semitism, or, shall I say, for many years didn't have a discussion on the floor about the state of anti-Semitism?

“ Borders are very easy to cross in the modern world. These ideas (extremist ideas) will infiltrate Toulouse, and Paris, and Belgium, and all over. There are no hermetic borders in the modern world anymore. So, please, let's not think that it's not happening on our shift, here.

But I'm still optimistic. Because the turnout is great here and because people stay on the right lines when they speak, mostly. And they address the real issues. When I started speaking, I said that they even confront the issues concerning themselves.

And I'll conclude with the story that we usually tell about that rabbi who was very annoying. Children didn't like him, because he knew everything. That's terrible. And one of them decided that he knew how to prove that this rabbi doesn't know everything. The kid caught a butterfly, and brought it to the rabbi, and said, 'What do I have in my hand?' Well, the rabbi definitely didn't have any problem with saying, 'You have a butterfly, my son.' And then came the real question, the well-prepared question. That kid said to the rabbi, 'Yeah, but is it alive or dead?' The rabbi looked him in the eyes and said, 'It's all in your hand, my son. It's all in your hand.'

I still believe it's in our hands. Not forever, but it's still in our hands.

Thank you.

‘Yellow Stars’, or ‘Purim spiel’, is a seven-part concerto for orchestra. The Concerto was written in the memory of the victims of the Holocaust in a language of sound that is powerful, beautiful, comprehensible and touching. The Concerto is a lyrical hymn and a tribute to the courage, wisdom, dignity and sense of unity of the people who overcame their fear of death.

The Concerto was first performed in 1998 and the ‘Neva time’ Newspaper wrote this critique after the premiere: ‘We have not heard in the Philharmonic new music of such poignant sincerity and beauty.’ The work owes its genesis to Isaac Schwartz as it is a rendition in reflection upon his life during the War in the Kovno ghetto in Lithuania. It is especially moving in the composer’s description of Purim – a ‘fun’ holiday that has become inhumane in deadly conditions. Schwartz’s work is dedicated jointly to Raoul Wallenberg and to Vladimir Spivakov.

Opening with a morning prayer we find gravity and serenity fused: a stetl dance, clarinet klezmer, strong shofar horns as the music sweeps up and then – once more – relaxation into reflective intimacy led by a theme for the cello solo. Again the juxtapositions ramify with the return of the dance, augmented by violin and trumpet solos. The whole concerto forms a kaleidoscopic world, Mahlerian with elements of Shostakovich as well.

The second movement is a Chorale with variations, lit up by the clarinet dance and by an outsize violin solo. There are the slight hints of Sibelius in the writing that cleaves strongly to an early twentieth-century tonal muse throughout. In the central Dance – a kind of scherzo – there’s a riot of colour with bassoon, bass clarinet and other winds festively celebrating with unbridled freedom. This is followed by the reflective, refractive Nocturne – lyrical, maybe filmic, Mahlerian, sometimes ambiguous.

The fifth movement is almost parodically Jewish – thick portamenti – whilst the sixth embraces desolate trumpet calls, a hint of Rachmaninov’s Second Symphony

abruptly cut short. The Finale opens with a forlorn clarinet, increasing melancholy, until tense brass drives the writing onwards. Slow, sombre, though seemingly ultimately uplifting, the return of the klezmer tune presages a fast dance and the music gets quicker and quicker.

Highly accomplished, this performance not only presents Schwartz’s music with warmth, rhythmic tautness and bite, but it will also take you on a journey of adrenaline, fear and hope.



Isaac Schwartz

Composer

Isaac Schwartz was born in 1923 and suffered the brutal realities of life in the Soviet Union. His father was arrested and died in one of Stalin’s camps, and the family was sent to Kyrgystan. There he met Shostakovich’s sister, Maria Dmitrievna, similarly banished, and it was she who arranged accommodation for the family in Leningrad when they were allowed to return to Russia after the War. It was her brother who recommended he study with Boris Arapov – and secretly financed those studies. Schwartz refused to denounce Shostakovich in 1948, despite provocation, and managed to produce a stream of works following his graduation in 1951. He later moved towards film music, writing a raft of scores for a succession of films, many of them very well known, and only returned to symphonic music in his seventies.



The National Philharmonic of Russia with the participation of international musicians

The National Philharmonic of Russia (NPR) was founded in January 2003. The Orchestra united top orchestral musicians and gifted youth. During the eleven years of its activities, the NPR has succeeded in becoming one of the best symphonic orchestras of Russia and in gaining admiration from the audience and recognition from the professionals.

The most important objective of the NPR is the continuation of the legacy and traditions of three great Russian conductors: Evgeny Mravinsky, Kirill Kondrashin and Evgeny Svetlanov. The Orchestra aspires to preserve this invaluable heritage while forming its own style, which combines great traditions and new technologies.

The Orchestra is headed by Maestro Vladimir Spivakov, a world-renowned violinist and conductor. Prominent conductors are collaborating and regularly performing with the NPR. Along with Vladimir Spivakov,

the National Philharmonic of Russia has been collaborating with such sought-after maestros as James Conlon, Alexander Lazarev, Krzysztof Penderecki, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Otto Tausk, Ken-David Masur, Alexander Vedernikov, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Tugan Sokhiev, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Jan Latham-Koenig, John Nelson, Michel Plasson and many others.

The NPR's repertoire covers the period from early classical symphonies to the newest works of modern composers. In the course of eleven years the Orchestra has presented many exceptional projects, world premieres, unique transcription series and concert cycles.



Vladimir Spivakov

Conductor

Outstanding violinist and conductor Vladimir Spivakov has fully realized his multifaceted talent in music and in many spheres of public life. As a violinist, Vladimir Spivakov received a brilliant education from a famous teacher, Moscow Conservatory Professor Yuri Yankelevich.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Vladimir Spivakov won several prestigious international competitions: the Long-Thibaud Competition in Paris, the Paganini Competition in Genoa, the Montreal Competition, and the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. In 1979, a group of like-minded musicians created the chamber orchestra 'Moscow Virtuos' and Vladimir Spivakov became its permanent artistic director, conductor and soloist. Spivakov learned the art of conducting from Professor Israel Gusman in Russia, and he also took lessons from Leonard Bernstein and Lorin Maazel in the United States.

As a sign of friendship and faith in his bright future, Bernstein presented Spivakov with his very own baton; the maestro does not part with to this day.

Maestro Spivakov is one of our most famous contemporary violinists. He has performed with such conductors as Claudio Abbado, Leonard Bernstein, Colin Davis, Lorin Maazel, Carlo Maria Giulini, Evgeny Svetlanov, Kirill Kondrashin, Yuri Temirkanov and others.

For many years now, Vladimir Spivakov has been involved with civil society organizations and engaged in charitable activities. In 1994, he founded the Vladimir Spivakov International Charity Foundation, which focuses on finding and providing full support to young talents.

In 2003, Vladimir Spivakov became the artistic director and chief conductor of the National Philharmonic of Russia, which he himself had founded, as well as the President of the Moscow International Performing Arts Centre. Since 2011, Vladimir Spivakov has been a member of the Council for Culture and Arts under the President of the Russian Federation.

Vladimir Spivakov was awarded the title of People's Artist of the USSR (1989), the USSR State Prize (1989), the Order of Friendship of Peoples (1993), the Order of Merit to the Fatherland in the 2nd degree (2009), Ukrainian Order of Merit in the 3rd degree, the two top awards in France – the Order of Arts and Letters (Officer) and the Order of the Legion of Honour (Chevalier – 2000, Officer – 2010), the Order of the Star of Italy (Commander, 2012), an international award, 'Person of the Year 2012', the Order of the Holy Prince Daniil of Moscow in the 1st degree (2014), as well as many other honours and titles.



"IT'S HERE, WHERE ABSOLUTE EVIL WAS PERPETRATED,
THAT THE WILL MUST RESURFACE FOR A FRATERNAL WORLD,
A WORLD BASED ON RESPECT OF MAN AND HIS DIGNITY"

Simone Veil





Moshe Kantor

President of the European Jewish Congress

Ladies and Gentlemen,
In concluding our Forum I promise I'll be brief, because everything has already been said. It was very profound and I don't want to intrude upon the intensity of feeling we all now share in this room. But I do want just to remind you of some facts.

First of all, we have here in this room one hundred survivors and one liberator of Auschwitz. Please let's applaud them.

Thank you!

Let's remind ourselves of what the Holocaust was in reality. It was 1,100 death and

concentration camps that imprisoned 10 million slaves, where millions of Jews died, or were eventually liberated by the Allied Forces of the United States, Great Britain, France and, of course, the Soviet Union, which played the leading role. And I will strongly support a move by such a union as that, the liberators of Auschwitz, Terezín, Buchenwald and Drancy, to take again a leading position in the fight against radical Islam, neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism. Such a power would be the strongest, but of course today we have another power, which could be a forceful ally in this fight. That is the European Union.

I want to remind you of another historical fact. During the liberation of Auschwitz the man who opened the gates – with his own hands – was a Jewish guy. And that's very symbolic. He was Anatoly Shapiro, a major in the Red Army. I knew him. Eleven years ago I met him in New York, and he amazed me. He was 93 years old, and had written a book of poetry. Of course, I immediately helped him to publicize this book. Its title was *Terrible Marathon*, about the non-stop wars of the 20th and 21st centuries. And I asked him, 'Anatoly, please tell me. What is your message to future generations?' When he replied, he was crying. 'Please, tell all people, you are responsible for your future.' And he repeated it few times. Responsible, responsible!... It is very important to understand just now that we are responsible for our future.

Exactly as it is said, God nurtures the seeds of salvation only in one case: if we people put these seeds in the soil. We only have one chance. And I want to conclude with words of appreciation to President Zeman, who is our host today. Staging such sharp debates as we witnessed yesterday is a courageous undertaking. Thank you very much!

But my special words of appreciation go to you, my dear friend Martin Schulz. For years and years, every year, you have supported our events and, more importantly, you support us between these events, all the time.

“ Holocaust started not in this building where Heydrich's office was, not even during Kristallnacht and not even during the experiment with the St. Louis, a special vessel organized by Hitler to dispatch one thousand Jews to America and the rest of Europe. Nobody helped them, and this experiment demonstrated to him that crimes against Jews would not be punished. No. The Holocaust started with Nuremberg legislation, as we all know.

You know, the Holocaust started not in this building where Heydrich's office was, not even during Kristallnacht and not even during the experiment with the St. Louis, a special vessel organized by Hitler to dispatch one thousand Jews to America and the rest of Europe. Nobody helped them, and this experiment demonstrated to him that crimes against Jews would not be punished. No. The Holocaust started with Nuremberg legislation, as we all know. That's why, you parliamentarians, I beg you, please, start legislative procedures to protect all of us, not only Jews but all of us, and I have no objection to this being called the Prague Legislation.

This brings us to the conclusion of our programme, after the minute of silence. Then we are going to Terezín, to the Ceremony of Commemoration. I want to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to all of you who came today. Thank you very, very much!



← European Parliament,
Brussels, Belgium

↓ Human rights memorial
in front of the Council of
Europe, Strasbourg, France

January 27th, 2015 marked the 70th anniversary of the victory over Nazism and the liberation of Nazi death and concentration camps. In view of this historical moment the European Jewish Congress (EJC) launched a unique project entitled the European Minute of Silence.

This project was meant to unify citizens across Europe at a moment that requires in-depth thought and reflection, standing side-by-side in harmony whilst looking forward towards a peaceful and secure future for all.

The EJC worked closely with the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS) to ensure that the European Minute of Silence would also serve as an educational opening for all the participants. Gathering young Europeans for a moment's meditation in five different crucial sites in the name of all those who lost their lives in the tragedy that was the Holocaust.

These five places are the Auschwitz–Birkenau camp, the Buchenwald camp, the Bergen–Belsen camp, the European Parliament in Brussels and the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

We are very appreciative and grateful to the EUJS for having taken a leading role in the organization of this European Minute of Silence.

The European Minute of Silence was recorded and retransmitted live on a giant screen in Prague at the end of the Closing Session of the Fourth International 'Let My People Live!' Forum.

Sadly, young people tend to know less and less about the Holocaust, and denial and distortion is currently on the rise. It is therefore important for young people from several European countries to have the opportunity to visit these places, reflect on this unique tragedy and remember that the European Union was built on the ashes of the Holocaust with the message of 'Never Again'.

The European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS) is a non-partisan umbrella organization, which supports Jewish student unions throughout Europe. It wishes, among other things, to strengthen European society through activism and advocacy.





‘The Holocaust teaches us that nature,
even in its cruellest moments, is benign
in comparison with man when he loses
his moral compass and his reason.’

Samuel Pisar

27th

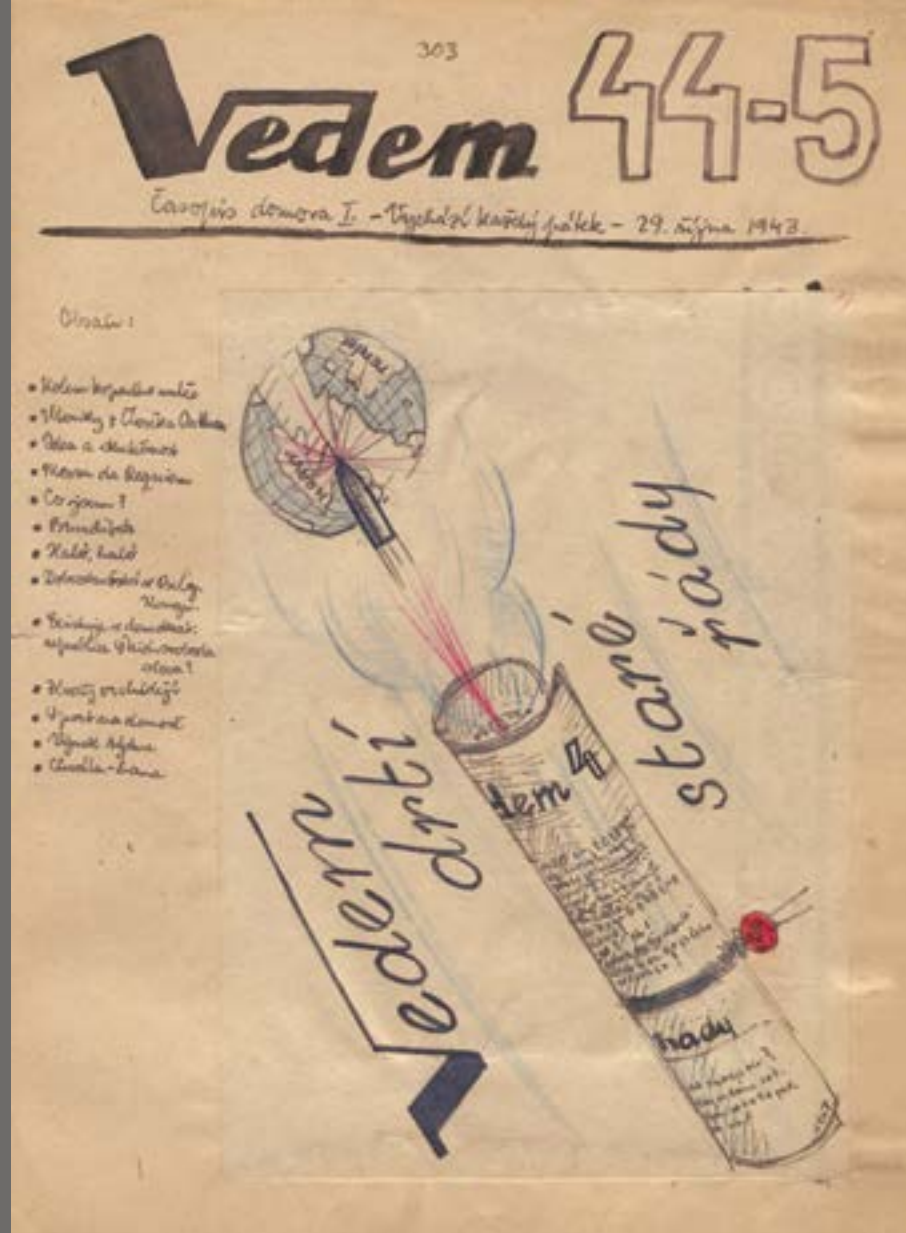
**TEREZIN
COMMEMORATION
CEREMONY**
TEREZIN

The 'Art Alley' took the participants on a journey through the eyes of those who endured immense persecution but despite this suffering found hope. As the guests made their way to the commemoration place, they followed a path and explored the incredible works of art, poetry and *Vedem* newspaper extracts by those who gave their physicality but didn't give up in their souls.

After having been segregated from adults and forced to live in large dormitories in Block L417, the Terezín children experienced years of hardship, fear and pain. A group of them, however, were encouraged by a young teacher, Valtr Eisinger, to regularly write articles for an underground newspaper called *Vedem* (in English: 'In the Lead'). This was a hand-copied Czech language literary magazine that existed from 1942 to 1944 in the Terezín concentration camp, during the Holocaust. The magazine was written, edited, and illustrated entirely by young boys, aged twelve to fifteen, who lived in Barracks L417, or Home One, which the boys referred to as the Republic of Shkid. Only about 800 pages survived.

The content of *Vedem* included poems, essays, jokes, dialogues, literary reviews, stories and drawings. Artwork filled with extraordinary compassion, wisdom, and humour even in the face of their dire circumstances. The issues were then copied manually and read around the barracks on Friday night. For some time, it was also posted on the barracks bulletin board, but it was decided to discontinue this practice because it was deemed dangerous in case of SS inspections.

“Of the one hundred boys who participated in the effort to produce *Vedem*, only about fifteen survived. Only one of them, Zdeněk Taussig, remained in Terezín until its liberation in May 1945. He had hidden it (the *Vedem* newspaper) in a blacksmith's shop where his father had worked, and brought it back with him to Prague after he was liberated.



Petr Ginz (1928–1944), who at 14 was editor-in-chief of the magazine, was deported to Auschwitz where he was gassed. A drawing by him of planet Earth as seen from the moon was taken by Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon onto the Space Shuttle Columbia, which disintegrated upon its re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere.

Whilst walking through the Alley the guests were accompanied by the Pavel Zalud Quartet. After the ceremony, guests were given the opportunity to select a page from the Art Alley installation and take it home so that through the artwork those persecuted continue to ignite hope and change.

← Petr Ginz's drawing
↓ Art Alley installation



Terezín has a relatively short but unusual history. Built in the 18th century as a fortress to defend the northern access routes to Bohemia, it actually never served this purpose. However, since the beginning of the 19th century the Small Fortress casemates were used as a garrison prison and a prison for political opponents of the Habsburg monarchy.

The most tragic chapter in Terezín's history was the time of Nazi occupation during World War II. In 1940, the Small Fortress was converted into a Gestapo police prison through which 32,000 prisoners had passed by the end of the war, nine tenths of them coming from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. A year later, the town itself was turned into a Jewish ghetto and concentration camp to which 140,000 Jewish prisoners were deported during the war. About half of them were from Bohemia and Moravia, another large group were Jews from Germany, followed by Austrian, Dutch, Danish, Slovak and Hungarian Jews. Over 33,000 victims of the 'Endlösung der Judenfrage' ('Final Solution to the Jewish Question') perished in Terezín. More than 84,000 were taken from Terezín to be murdered in extermination camps, namely at Auschwitz–Birkenau, or tortured to death under the 'Vernichtung durch Arbeit' ('Extermination through Labour') slave labour system. At the very end of the war, Terezín camp took in an additional 15,400 prisoners evacuated from various other concentration camps near the front. This last wave of inmates brought with them epidemic typhus and other infections that claimed more than 1,500 additional lives in the last days of the war and first days of peace.

Already during the war and occupation, Terezín came to symbolize the persecution of opponents of Nazism and above all the suffering of the victims of the Final Solution. Since the end of the war, people from all over the world have been coming to the site to honour



the memory of the victims. This tragic chapter in the history of Terezín, and namely the role the Terezín Ghetto played in the history of the genocide of European Jews, never ceases to overwhelm visitors. Terezín is a real place of historic memory, a reminder of the suffering, heroism and death of people from many European countries.

The sculpture is a construction that essentially symbolizes the Jewish experience from biblical times through the ages. It focuses on the persecutions endured by the Jewish people throughout history and the Jewish response of responsibility to make sure this history and its lessons for the wider society is never forgotten. Technically, the stone is placed upside-down on a framed construction so that it emotionally falls down and allows the visitor to empathize with this message. The sculpture also identifies symbolically with many other meanings, such as the biblical quotation: 'If you make an altar of stone for Me, you shall not build it of cut stones, for if you wield your tool on it, you will profane it', the message

implying a contradiction between the violence and tools of war and the service of the Divine. It is for this reason that the immensity of the stone is maintained and not broken down – to truly captivate the magnitude, the weight and the density of the burden.

The sculpture is made by Aleš Veselý, the prominent Czech artist whose art works are represented in collections in many museums around the world. He is interested in definition of space, and looks for a relationship between its inside dimension and the outside world. He is allured by these relationships and their disproportions. Professor Veselý frequently draws inspiration from Judaism.



Monument presented by the European Jewish Congress on behalf of the Jewish communities of Europe in memory of those incarcerated and murdered in the Terezín Jewish ghetto and all the six million victims of the Shoah on the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps.





Since the spring of 2009, the Italian writer Matteo Corradini has collected seven Zalud musical instruments, built and played at Terezín before or during the ghetto period: two clarinets, a piccolo, a bass tuba, an oboe, a violin and a mandolin.

The Zalud family was a small but very active family who ran an instrument factory founded at the end of the nineteenth century, which had over the years specialized in the production of small, easy-to-carry instruments, in particular, woodwinds (clarinets, oboes), brasses (horns, bass tubas) and strings (violins, but also guitars and mandolins). These were intended to be played by itinerant bands, not just by professionals. The choice to produce instruments pitched in c rather than b flat shows that this type of instrument was mainly designed for village bands or small bands playing during festivals, funerals or weddings.

Built in Terezín between the early years of the 20th century and the early 1930s, Zalud instruments were also sold in Prague to the members of the Jewish community who devoted themselves to music. They were perfect for Jewish folk music, but also, in a few cases, classical music.

With the advent of Nazism and the beginning of deportations, Jewish musicians were arrested and forced to move to Terezín, where they also continued to play Zalud instruments. Nazi diktats prevented the Jews from transporting more than twenty kilograms per person. Many musicians chose to carry a musical instrument in their weak cases.

The journeys of Zalud clarinets, piccolos and other instruments were consequently 'return trips'. From Terezín, they spent their lives in freedom in Prague, to then return to Terezín in the throes of the Holocaust. By the end of World War II, almost all instruments had outlived their owners, who had instead been deported to concentration and death camps, Auschwitz in particular.



Since the summer of 2013, Matteo Corradini undertook a delicate and passionate restoration project, through which one of the two clarinets and the piccolo from his collection were restored to their playing condition after seventy years of silence. Restoration merely consisted in conservation rather than improvement work. In other words, care was taken for instruments to sound exactly as – rather than 'better than' – they did at the time of the ghetto. What we can hear when they play is the exact sound of Terezín. The Pavel Zalud Trio performed during the Commemoration Ceremony of 27 January 2015, with these recovered and restored instruments that allowed the sound of Terezín to be heard again, for the first time after World War II. Perhaps this is the highest form of respect for a musical instrument: to allow its 'voice' to be heard.

Terezín

Michael Flack, 1944

The heaviest wheel rolls across our foreheads
To bury itself deep somewhere inside our memories.

We've suffered here more than enough,
Here in this clot of grief and shame,
Wanting a badge of blindness
To be a proof for their own children.

A fourth year of waiting, like standing above a swamp
From which any moment might gush forth a spring.

Meanwhile, the rivers flow another way,
Another way,
Not letting you die, not letting you live.

And the cannons don't scream and the guns don't bark
And you don't see blood here.
Nothing, only silent hunger.
Children steal the bread here and ask and ask and ask
And all would wish to sleep, keep silent and just to go
to sleep again...

The heaviest wheel rolls across our foreheads
To bury itself deep somewhere inside our memories.

↓ 'Flowers and Butterfly'
by Margit Koretzova
(08 April 1933 – 04 October
1944), Terezín, 1940s.



The Story of Frantisek R. Kraus

Tomáš Kraus

Executive Director of the Federation of Jewish Communities of the Czech Republic

My father, Frantisek R. Kraus, was born in 1903 in Prague, into a travelling salesman's family. As he himself once wrote, he lived a relatively idyllic childhood, on demolition lots of the Prague Jewish Town in the early years of the 20th century. However, his parents later divorced; he stayed with his mother and had to begin to contribute financially to the household. For a long time this meant the end of an academic career, but it did lead him towards becoming a journalist. He began as a local reporter in a few papers, the famous *Prager Tagblatt*, later *Prager Presse*, and others. He had contacts in Czech as well as German-Jewish intellectual circles and he knew personally all the famous figures of the time, Franz Kafka, Max Brod, Franz Werfel, etc. His literary paragon, family friend and lifelong teacher was the 'fierce reporter' Egon Erwin Kisch.

My father was there when the Czechoslovak Radio was founded. He broadcasted in foreign languages: in German, in English, in French; for a long time he also worked for the Czechoslovak News Agency. He soon became a foreign correspondent which took him abroad. But in those days Nazism was already assuming power and he took a stand against its nascence in Czechoslovakia. In his regular radio reportages and broadcasts he openly criticized the Nazi 'Sudeten-German Party', which was represented in the Czechoslovak Parliament and soon elicited its anger.

Therefore, shortly after the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia, my father found himself on the black list, and was interrogated a few times by the Gestapo. They didn't imprison him but instead put him on the very first transport that went to Terezin in October of 1941. That transport had a number AK1, which stood for 'Aufbaukommando' and had one goal – to convert the town of Terezin into a Jewish ghetto.

The horrendous experience of my father – newly wed to my mother whose family had to escape to

Prague from the occupied 'Sudetenland' already after the shameful Munich appeasement of 1938 – being put on the very first transportation was, however, one of the stones in a mosaic that saved his life. AK1 had special status, thanks to which my father was able to protect his mother, my grandmother, from further transport. He was able also to protect his wife and most of her family from deportations from Terezin to the 'East'. Only until 1944, however, and then most of Terezin prisoners who witnessed the fraud with the Red Cross visit had to go.

My father and my mother were transported together on 17 March 1944. After their arrival at Auschwitz they were separated. My father commuted daily from Auschwitz to work at IG Farben and to Buna, where they made synthetic gasoline. One day blacksmiths and carpenters were supposed to apply – my father, who had never held a hammer in his hand in his life, applied. So he was assigned to a branch labour camp in Gleiwitz where they were repairing railway wagons, and sometime on the cusp of 1944 and 1945 they transferred my father to another factory in Blechhammer (Blachovnia). Early in 1945 the Nazis began to

liquidate the branch labour camps and were organizing death marches, also from Blechhammer, but my father and a couple of other people managed to escape.

Thanks to the partisans, via Poland and Subcarpathia, my father got to Budapest, which had already been liberated. But there he witnessed the last pogrom on the shores of the Danube river and was shocked. Through his career as a journalist he knew a few people in Budapest and he contacted them. They found some basic assistance for him, rented a small apartment for him. In Budapest he sat down, and wrote down all the experiences that were still fresh inside of him. So when he arrived in Prague in the May of 1945, he already had a whole book finished. As he was a reporter, he wrote a reportage. This book, *Gas, Gas...Then Fire*, was published in September 1945 and it was the very first reportage about the camps that was published in Czechoslovakia, maybe even in central Europe.

When my father returned to Prague from Budapest, he had nowhere to go and he went then to the apartment of his father. My grandfather survived the war in Terezin, as he had been in a mixed marriage. His aunt, who wasn't

Jewish, had been able to hold on to his apartment on Maislova Street the entire time. Right after the liberation she went to Terezin for my grandfather, and brought him back. When my mother returned from the concentration camps – like my father she survived only because she was sent to slave-labour camps in Merzdorf and later Kudowa – she also had no place to go. And she had the same idea – to go to the apartment of my grandfather on Maiselova Street. And this is where they all met!

After the war my father went back to his beloved work as a journalist and writer – he published several books describing the horrors which only much later were named 'the Holocaust'. However, in the 1950s another totalitarian regime started to rule the country, persecuting everybody and everything Jewish. That meant a real end of his journalist career. My father was fired from the Czechoslovak Radio and from the Czechoslovak Nes Agenca ČTK and earned his living only by occasional writing for papers and magazines, some of them foreign. He remembered in his articles the idyllic atmosphere of old Prague and his friendship with so many people who became so famous. He died in 1967.





← Felix Kolmer,
Holocaust Survivor

↓ Chief Cantor Joseph
Malovany with Choir



Sir Ben Kingsley reciting an excerpt from 'The Republic of Butterflies' by Matteo Corradini

Now everyone is asleep. I slowly emerge from my blanket like a butterfly that is pushing its way through its cocoon to be reborn.

I have the face of a butterfly, the thinness of a butterfly, the desire of a butterfly.

I carry my colours in my hands, not on my skin, I have the beauty of a butterfly but it is all in my palm. My wings are those leaves of paper that I hide under my mattress.

I softly lift the weight, draw out the blank pages and the notes.

I walk barefoot. I am a butterfly.

(Matteo Corradini, 'The Republic of Butterflies')

Terezin is attempting to fill us with its stories and, in a mysterious while, if we know how to listen to them, we will no longer be presidents, personalities or famous actors. We will only be humans, fragile humans.

Ilse Weber was a Czech Jew deported to Terezin with her husband and her younger son. ... 'The moon is a lantern and looks at the world from above.' Who knows what the moon now sees in our world, and what it thinks about it?

In this cold twilight that wraps us little by little, our mind goes to the nights when Ilse put children to bed, as if those nights were also those of all Jews who had suffered in the ghetto.

Let's think of it now, tonight. Let's try to be close to history. As close as butterflies skimming the ground.

The Nazis' violence here in Terezin also expressed itself in the form of a devilish lie, which changed names and things.

Do you remember Madagascar? Of course this was not true, no such project had ever existed because words for them always meant something else and Madagascar



meant deportation, Madagascar meant Terezin. Terezin meant Auschwitz. And Auschwitz meant death.

Petr Ginz: 'Each object coming into contact with humankind is like a curse.' Petr knew the evil generated by the Nazis only too well, an evil that penetrated things, that stood on and even resisted the defeat of the Third Reich.



It is crucial to wonder what remains among us of this evil, to open our eyes to the present; the Nazis lost the war, OK, but has their evil really been defeated?

We are the ghetto; if the ghetto survives, we will all survive.

Salvation is achieved through unity, and culture in the ghetto allowed the Jews to join forces and find their own identity.

The Terezin children had to react against the violent fiction created by the Nazis with a very nice but fragile lie: art.

Culture here in Terezin was the last fragile link with the human condition, like a thread that was courageously left uncut.





Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Chairman of Yad Vashem Council and Holocaust Survivor

I think that this picture with the children lighting King David's star here in Terezin, 70 years after the Holocaust, is the best truth and the evidence about the eternity and the immortality of the Jewish people. What we call 'Am Israel hai'. If you see the faces of the children, how serious they are, knowing that they are going to commemorate children who passed away brutally here and in many other camps, death camps and concentration camps, this is the best evidence that there is hope; there is a chance for a better life in the future.

There is one thing you can never change – the past. What happened happened. But we may change the present

“ So there were 24,000 Righteous Among The Nations. It's a big number, but it's very little over the millions above millions of European people who died. We were the physicians, we saved their lives, we were educators, we brought them up, we were industrialists, we gave them food...

for the future so that life will be much better, full of optimism, friendship and love to mankind. My testimony here must be very short today, it cannot be any longer. When I see the faces of the children and I saw the paintings when we entered Theresienstadt, I can remember some of the voices and some of the pictures from my childhood.

When I was liberated from Buchenwald I was less than 8 years old. WWII started when I was born in Poland two years earlier. From 2 to 8 I had many memories, pictures and even voices in my mind. For me WWII was about 3 items: Gestapo boots, dogs with their officers and trains. Trains, trains, trains... not knowing where we are going to or what will happen. They said a new settlement. A new settlement, so far no one ever came back. The voices I

can hear in my head are those in the train stations where they made the selections. Not only did Mengele make the selection in Auschwitz-Birkenau, but also at every train station: 'Fast, fast. Schnell, schnell. Men on this side, they are productive, they can work. Women and children on the other side and elderly people as well.'

The last words I heard in my ears were cries to the children saying: '*Remember that you are Jewish, don't forget who you are.*' 'Tate, mame' – these were the last words. The children cried, screamed out, and the fathers or the mothers were already in the wagon before it was closed in their faces. '*Remember you are Jewish.*' That I

can promise you for sure is the testimony. The last voice I heard, I remember, was myself asking if not for the last 6 years or at least the last 3 years a word in Polish, '*Dlaczego?*' which means 'Why?' What did I do to you? Why do you beat me? Why am I starving? Why am I freezing? Why did you take away my father and later my mother? What did I do to you? *Dlaczego? Lama? Why?* No answer. I don't have the answer until this very last day. Do you have an answer? Read the books, no answer.

Mankind can be so low, so bitter, so bad, and so brutal. And going into that dark tunnel for 6 years and without seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, I was still able to see some stars. *The Righteous Among the Nations*. From all the nations. You know about Sugihara from Japan



“Think about everything we donated and contributed to mankind in the countries we lived in. When it happened, this horror, the Holocaust, where were they? Where were our neighbours, the patients, the students, and the workers in the textile and wood industry? Where were they? Disappeared. Gone with the wind. And the World?”

more than anyone from Poland. You know the name of Raoul Wallenberg from Sweden or Oskar Schindler from Germany because of the film.

So there were 24,000 Righteous Among The Nations. It's a big number, but it's very little over the millions above millions of European people who died. We were the physicians, we saved their lives, we were educators, we brought them up, we were industrialists, we gave them food...

Consider the contributions given by 3.5 million Jews only from Polish Jewry over 1,000 years. And Germany! Not only the Rothschilds and Albert Einsteins.

Think about everything we donated and contributed to mankind in the countries we lived in. When it happened, this horror, the Holocaust, where were they? Where were our neighbours, the patients, the students, and the workers in the textile and wood industry? Where were they? Disappeared. Gone with the wind. And the World? The leadership of the World?

While we were in the concentration camps, the names of Stalin and Roosevelt, and Churchill and De Gaulle were upon every lip. Waiting for them like for the Messiah. When did they arrive? When did they come?

Around a year or two ago... I talked about this with President Obama. I came to Seattle for a weekend. The edge of the United States, north-west. An old man stood in front of the small Holocaust museum there in Seattle, he shook my hand and said: 'I'm Leo Heiness, brigadier general in the division of General Patton. I was one of the

liberators of Buchenwald concentration camp. I know that you were one of the survivors there, the youngest. I saw in the newspapers that you would be arriving in Seattle. I asked the Jewish community to tell me when and where I could meet you. I need you for 5 minutes. When I saw what happened to you in the camps, when I saw the tortured people, the suffering, I saw the bodies, I saw the corpses, I saw the crematoria and from all of that I understood that we came too late. And before I give back my soul to the Lord Almighty, to the Master of the Universe, me, General Leo Heiness, asks you as a representative of the survivors, please forgive me for being so late.' I cried. I said to him: 'For almost seventy years you have borne this guilt yourself. You must be a great man, General Leo Heiness. I salute you.'

But General Leo Heiness does not represent all mankind. Where were they? Even that march in Paris two weeks ago never happened in the 1940s. Never have leaders of national states marched against terror, against violence, against bloodshed. Where was such a march? Look at the history books, you will not find it. So today we must learn! The past you cannot change, but the future can be made better. Don't be too late. Don't be late, be on time! Be aware because terror and violence are still threatening mankind's continuity. Because we want to be eternal, we ought to be immortal, we must hope for a better future for all mankind, for all five continents. The Lord Almighty will bring peace upon us, upon the Jewish people, upon all the world. All mankind, as soon as possible, and let us say Amen.



↑ Aerial photograph of Terezín, the 'Big Fortress' that used to be the Jewish Ghetto and concentration camp.

→ The Star of David at the National Cemetery in Terezín, sculpture by Aleš Veselý.



↑ The Museum of the Ghetto. The statue of the young girl is a symbol of life being triumphant over death. The work, by Emilio Greco, has been dedicated to Terezín and all of its former Jewish prisoners by 96 Italian towns.



↑ The crematorium

→ Remnants of a railroad siding built by prisoners for transportation to and from Terezín.



↑ The Museum of the Ghetto



↖ The 'Hidden Synagogue'

↖ ↑ The Columbarium

Special Thanks

Sincere gratitude to **Mr Miloš Zeman**, President of the Czech Republic, **Mr Milan Štěch**, President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic and **Mr Jan Hamáček**, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, **Mr Bohuslav Sobotka**, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic and **Mr Lubomír Zaorálek**, Czech Foreign Minister for hosting this two-day event as well as for their honourable presence and personal involvement.

Our deepest appreciation to our longstanding partner, **Mr Martin Schulz**, President of the European Parliament, for his sincere commitment, honourable presence and patronage for this two-day event.

We are very grateful to the Czech Foreign Ministry and especially to **Mr Rudolph Jindrak**, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister and his team for their support and excellent collaboration throughout the preparation of this event.

With great thankfulness to our dear friend, **Dr Tomas Kraus**, Executive Director of the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic and Executive member of the European Jewish Congress for all his precious help and advice during the preparation of this Forum.

Our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to **Mr Marek Halter** for his guidance and wisdom.

We are grateful to **Yad Vashem** and the **Terezín Memorial** for keeping the memory of the Shoah alive and for their kind assistance.

A special mention for the **European Union of Jewish Students** for their project management and close collaboration.

We would like to pay a special tribute to all survivors of the Theresienstadt concentration camp who joined us for this landmark event.

