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Preserving the Memory of the Holocaust

Key Activities 2020-2021

Holocaust Legacy

As the number of those who bore witness to the atrocities of the Holocaust (Shoah) diminishes, it is increasingly important for the WJC to safeguard the memory of the Shoah.

Ever since the WJC was founded in 1936, the Nazi persecution of the Jewish people – culminating in the Holocaust during World War II – has been an integral dimension of the organization's *raison d'être*. During the pre-WWII years, the WJC fought the Nazi regime diplomatically, followed by rescue efforts and alerting the world to the horrific reality of the so called "Final Solution."

After Holocaust, the WJC was the foremost advocate for its survivors, and ever since, the preservation and perpetuation of Holocaust memory has been a central part of its core mission.

Today, the WJC legitimately speaks on behalf of its affiliated Jewish communities worldwide, with the knowledge of and sensitivity to, global and domestic aspects and considerations. Thus, the WJC can target problems specific to a given country by working with the Jewish community of that country to enhance Holocaust education there.

As the survivors of the Shoah sadly fade from the scene, the WJC continues to ensure that the memory of the Shoah will remain at the forefront of the consciousness of the Jewish people and the international community. The WJC understands that it is up to the post-Holocaust generations to transmit the memories of the survivors, together with their moral legacies, into the future.

In order to ensure the transmittal of Holocaust memory – and the commitment to Holocaust remembrance – into the future, it is imperative to gear the WJC's programming and activities in this regard to younger generations, and to involve all parts of civil society. The WJC's annual #WeRemember campaign, which reaches hundreds of millions of people around the globe, is an example of how Holocaust remembrance can be made relevant to all aspects of society.

At the same time, while the WJC will never allow the Holocaust to be universalized so as to diminish its Jewish essence, the WJC is also committed to fight all forms of racism, bigotry and xenophobia directed against other national, religious, ethnic, or racial groups. As the late Nobel Peace Prize laureate Elie Wiesel stated eloquently, "the Holocaust was a unique Jewish tragedy with universal implications."

In order to make Holocaust education a central element of the study of modern history in the 21st century, the WJC has joined with UNESCO to create a multi-lingual Holocaust education website, geared at providing students, young adults, and others with essential information about the history of the Holocaust and its legacy. This interactive website, aboutholocaust.org, is specifically dedicated to providing frequently asked questions and common misconceptions about the Holocaust, including must-know facts, and video testimonials of survivors. The goal of this initiative is to reach out to those with limited knowledge of the Holocaust and make the historical facts easily accessible and navigable. As WJC President Ronald S. Lauder declared at the launch of the website at UNESCO headquarters in Paris in November 2018, "As we face a world without survivors or witnesses, it becomes more critical than ever to ensure that the greatest atrocity the world has ever seen never be forgotten, lest history

repeat itself. We must pass this knowledge on to our children, and their children, because by knowing the past, we can protect our future.”

We will continue to build upon these core projects to ensure that the legacy of the Holocaust is never forgotten.

Honoring the Past

27 January 2020

WJC President Ronald S. Lauder honors Holocaust survivors at site of Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp

WJC President Ambassador Ronald S. Lauder delivered a [keynote address](#) on 27 January 2020, on the site of the former Nazi German death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, at the official ceremony commemorating the [75th anniversary](#) of the camp's liberation by the Soviet Red Army. In his address, President Lauder sounded the alarm bell on the rise of antisemitism and appealing to world leaders to advance Holocaust education before it's too late.



WJC President Lauder delivers keynote remarks at the official commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, held at Birkenau on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 27 January 2020.

As part of the commemoration events, the [Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Foundation](#)— under President Lauder's leadership — organized a delegation of more than 100 Auschwitz-Birkenau survivors and their families from Australia, Canada, Israel, and the United States, as well as from several European and Latin American countries.

President Lauder delivered his remarks on behalf of the Pillars of Remembrance, a group of private donors who support the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation and its mission to preserve the authenticity of the memorial site. President Lauder emphasized that it was the scourge of antisemitism combined with

world indifference which led to the Holocaust and urged citizens and government leaders everywhere to speak out against intolerance and hatred.

Addressing dignitaries from dozens of countries, President Lauder took a stern tone, repeating his call to use education and legislation as tools to combat antisemitism: “Words are not enough. Political speeches are not enough. Laws must be passed. Severe, tough, real laws that will put these hatemongers away in prison for a long, long time. Children must be educated and know where the hatred of Jews leads.”

In addition the main commemoration ceremony, the World Jewish Congress also hosted a number of panel discussions and other events in the days before and after. Among them was a dinner in Krakow hosted in partnership with the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Foundation with special guest and speaker President H.E. Mr. Volodymyr Zelensky.

Members of the World Jewish Congress delegation also attended panel discussions where they heard from leading voices in efforts to preserve the memory of the Holocaust including European Commission Coordinator on Combating Antisemitism Katharina von Schnurbein, community leaders, and Holocaust survivors Mordecai Paldiel, Colette Avital, and Rachmil ‘Ralph’ Hakman. The panel discussions were hosted by members of WJC’s Jewish Diplomatic Corps program.

Commemoration events culminated on 28 January with a visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau site for a memorial service at Crematoria IV, with remarks delivered by WJC General Counsel and Associate Executive Vice President Menachem Z. Rosensaft and the El Maleh Rachamim prayer for the departed chanted by Reuven Rennert of the WJC JD Corps.



WJC President Lauder greets a group of survivors of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp in front of the site's infamous gate marked Arbeit Macht Frei, 26 January 2020. Credit: Shahar Azran / WJC



Commemorating the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Credit: Shahar Azran / WJC

WJC President Ronald S. Lauder joins German Chancellor Angela Merkel at Auschwitz for announcement of € 60 million dedication to preservation of site, December 2019

WJC President Lauder met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the site of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp to thank the German Federal Government following its announcement that it would be committing [€ 60 million to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation](#) to support preservation of the memorial site. Chancellor Merkel's visit was the first in her 14-year tenure; it was also the first time a German chancellor has visited the site since 1977, and the third time a German chancellor or head of government has visited since World War II. The visit came in advance of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and amid rising levels of antisemitism in Europe and around the world.

WJC President Lauder accompanied Chancellor Merkel during her visit at the museum's Conservation Laboratories, which preserve every shoe, document, and building that remain at the site. President Lauder has been involved in the preservation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau site for decades, raising tens of millions of dollars internationally to fund conservation efforts, including the establishment in 2003 of the laboratories. Chancellor Merkel also visited the Central Sauna building at the former Birkenau camp, where prisoners were subjected to "disinfection" before being forced into slave labor.



German Chancellor Merkel and WJC President Lauder visit the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial. Credit: Shahar Azran

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DURING COVID-19

International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2021

Observance of International Holocaust Remembrance Day in 2021 was unlike that of any year prior. Where normally Jewish communities gather in person with friends, family, and those survivors who escaped the Nazi's horrors, this year nearly all of us were forced into relative solitude as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing lockdowns.

This sad development meant that acts of commemoration had to be carried out in a way that would engage online audiences or attract the attention of those socially-distancing around the world. These factors, combined with the World Jewish Congress' annual #WeRemember Campaign led to many moving, meaningful, and creative acts of collective memory.

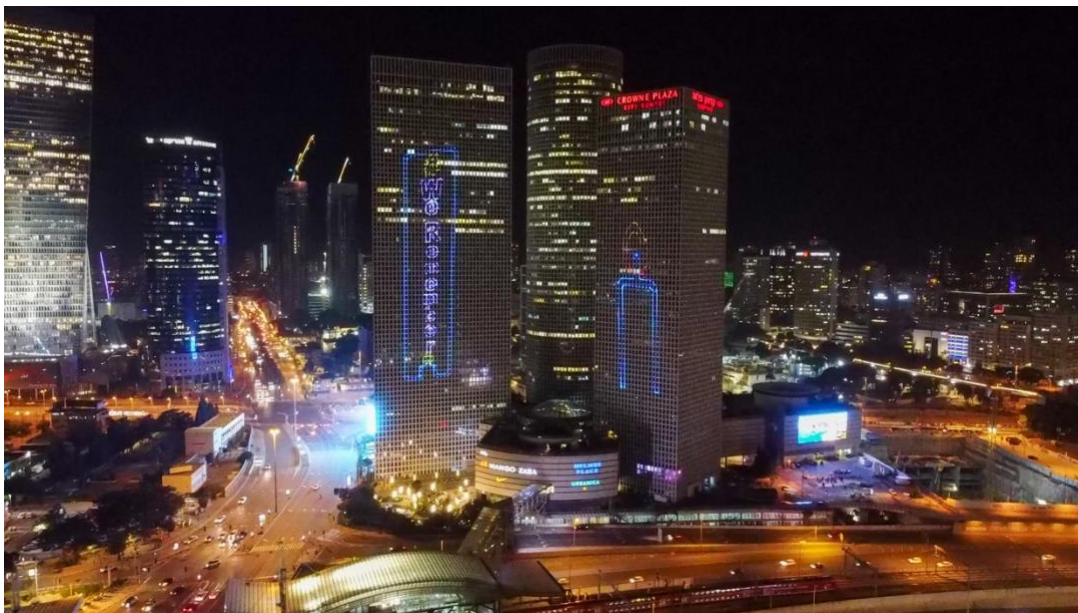
The #WeRemember Campaign



Chelsea Football Club participates in the #WeRemember Campaign (Credit: Chelsea FC)

The entirety of WJC's Holocaust remembrance activities occurred under the banner of the fifth annual #WeRemember Campaign. Once again, we asked people to take to social media and use the hashtag to collectively share messages of reflection and voice support for expanded Holocaust education worldwide. Now in its fifth year, it has become the largest online Holocaust remembrance initiative around the world.

The outpouring of heartfelt and meaningful messages from nearly every continent was driven in large part by support from Jewish communities around the world as well as key institutional partners such as UNESCO. Jewish leaders, government officials, sporting clubs, and diverse faith and cultural groups led the way.



Azrieli Center in Tel Aviv (Credit: Shahar Azran / WJC)

Across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter #WeRemember was one of the leading topics online in France, Canada, Sweden, Argentina, the United States, and more. While in places of particular importance on this day, including Germany, Austria, and Israel, it was the most talked about topic.

We also began to explore the power of TikTok, a platform increasingly popular among young people today.

The World Jewish Congress is proud to partner with UNESCO through our #WeRemember Campaign and as well as our Holocaust education website www.aboutholocaust.org.

Shining lights around the world

This year, we saw prominent locations illuminated with the #WeRemember logo and hashtag. Ensuring our message of remembrance was nearly impossible to miss.

In Thessaloniki, a city that was home to a large Jewish community for more than two thousand years until it was all but destroyed during the Holocaust, the historic White Tower displayed a message of remembrance for those who were lost.

In Tel Aviv, Israel's cultural capital, citizens were reminded of the importance of the day with light shows at the city's port and on the towers of Azrieli Center.

Despite the challenges facing air travelers this year, *Israel's national airline, El Al* lent their support to this year's campaign by affixing our logo to an aircraft traveling the Tel Aviv to Berlin route, and it will remain there for at least the next year.

In Vienna, Austria's Parliament initiated a moving display on the façade of the building which was occupied by the Nazis following the Anschluss.

In Berlin, once the center of the Nazi Reich under Adolph Hitler, the displays were hard to miss and incredibly meaningful. The headquarters of Germany's Foreign Ministry bore the campaign tag at unbelievable scale.

At the city's central train station – a meaningful site given the Nazis use of rail networks to deport Jewish populations – the Deutsche Bahn showed their support.

And across the city Wall GmbH contributed thousands of digital advertising panels for the day.

#WeRemember in Germany

The displays of remembrance across Germany were especially moving.



In addition to the public displays in Berlin, nearly every member of the cabinet as well as the Prime Ministers of the 16 federal states joined the campaign, accompanied by numerous MPs from the federal and state parliaments across all party aisles and even regular employees or trainees for government agencies showed support. German justice Minister Lambrecht motivated many of her European colleagues in a personal letter to take part. On local level, mayors and city council members of large cities and small towns took part, often including staff. Schools, teachers and classes engaged across the country.

Together with the German Jewish community, top leaders of both churches as well as Islamic organisations took part in the campaign. Board members from biggest Employers like Volkswagen or Deutsche Bahn as well as bosses of labour unions joined, with the Deutsche Bahn even illuminating the capital's Main station at Berlin on the evening of January 27. Billboard company Wall GmbH contributed thousands of digital advertising panels for the day.

Top football teams across the Bundesliga and lower levels showed solidarity and posting #WeRemember signs on Social Media channels, with the Borussia Dortmund and Borussia

Mönchengladbach taking a pre-match photo and displaying the hashtag on the illuminated message board during their live broadcast to millions of viewers.

Notable entertainers and Influencers of all kind, covering diverse issues from politics to beauty, also lent a voice for #WeRemember. Broad media coverage included an Op-ed by WJC-President Ronald S. Lauder in reputable Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and an extensive Interview in biggest tabloid BILD, moreover a strong statement by WJCs Maram Stern in the capital's most renowned newsletter for politics and media made the campaign an event, nobody could overlook in Germany.

Featured Initiatives and Events

The WJC, together with partners, was also involved in a series of other events in the run up to and on International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Marking 76 years since the liberation of Auschwitz -- Virtual Commemoration Event 27 January 2021

To mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 76th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the World Jewish Congress (WJC), in partnership with the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, [hosted a virtual commemoration ceremony](#) emphasizing the importance of remembering the victims and combating modern antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and all other forms of hatred. The online gathering was held on the final day of the WJC's fifth annual global Holocaust education initiative, the [#WeRemember Campaign](#).

"People must see what happened to the Jews during the Holocaust," said WJC President Ronald S. Lauder. "The world needs a reminder. We must make sure future generations know the lessons of this terrible event. It is vital that 'we remember'."

Lauder warned that "the same old lies have resurfaced," adding, "that is why education about the Holocaust is so important, especially when so many young people have never even been told about what happened. The world needs reminding." Last year, Lauder delivered a [keynote address](#) at the official 75th anniversary of the commemoration of the liberation, appealing to world leaders to advance Holocaust education before it's too late.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic making an in-person gathering impossible, speakers acknowledged the importance of convening virtually to remember the horrors of the past and ensure the atrocities of the Holocaust are never forgotten.

Speaking from the grounds of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp, Piotr Cywinski, Director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, called the former Nazi extermination camp "the very core of hatred, the core of the Holocaust." "The remembrance of the Holocaust is not devoted only to the past. Our memory must change our world today and our future." Noting the rise of xenophobia and antisemitism, Cywinski opined that the world is suffering from "our own incapacity to react. We are the bystanders of our time. This why we need to remember."

Holocaust survivor Tova Friedman, who participated in the WJC partner organization the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Foundation's delegation last year of survivors and family members to the

75th anniversary of the liberation, reflected on her experience last year. She said, "We shared our stories, our memories and our pain. We mourned the dead and we remembered them, and we celebrated the survivors and renewed our pledge to educate the young and old of the dangers of prejudice." Friedman added that just as "scientists around the world are battling the deadly COVID-19 virus, we have to battle the virus of racism, the virus of hatred and the virus of prejudice."

She recalled the horrors of being taken to Auschwitz as a five-year-old. "I was no longer a child – I was no longer a person."

"As antisemitism is rearing its ugly head again, the voices of protests are not many and not loud enough," she said. She urged her fellow Holocaust survivors to "rededicate our mission and intensify our effort to educate people everywhere by speaking out, by writing, by protesting, demonstrating, everywhere. To ignore it is to open the gate to it to happen again." On behalf of fellow survivors, Friedman thanked Lauder calling him "our mentor, our champion, our supporter and visionary."

Speaking from Frankfurt's Holocaust memorial, Micky Furhmann, a member of WJC's Jewish Diplomatic Corps, quoted the late Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel saying, "The opposite of love is not hate, it is indifference." Furhmann urged all to be active in the fight against antisemitism and racism, saying, "We are all responsible to learn from history and to act accordingly. We cannot change the past, but we can create a better and safer future."

President of the Republic of Poland Andrzej Duda noted that while this year's commemoration ceremony "looks different," it is a reminder "that we must always, whatever the circumstances, fulfill our duty as witnesses to memory and guardians of the truth about the Holocaust." Duda concluded, "We the contemporary ones will carry on and convey to future generations the message from this place: no more Auschwitz, no more genocide, hatred and racism!"

Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, spoke about the need to "learn from the past, protect the future." Steinmeier noted that we "remember the victims, but also our future," adding "the greatest danger for all of us begins with forgetting." Concluding, Steinmeier said: "I want to assure you that we will not waver, we will continue to fight against antisemitism, racism and all other forms of hatred. Looking to the future, remembering the victims of the Shoah means saying 'never again.' That is the essence of our enduring responsibility."

Added Reuven Rivlin, President of the State of Israel, "Our duty is not only to remember the past but to remind the whole world the lessons of history in order to build a better future."

The ceremony closed with a recitation of the El Malei Rachamim prayer by Cantor Avner Fisch from Edmond J. Safra Synagogue in Modi'in, Israel.

Lest We Forget exhibition launch at UNESCO

25 January 2021

Ahead of the 76th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination and concentration camp, UNESCO, in partnership with the WJC, leaders from across the world, and other

institutions, [hosted a virtual commemoration event](#) honoring the victims and survivors of the Holocaust.

The ceremony also marked the opening of the “Lest We Forget” photo exhibition, the largest display of portraits documenting the stories of survivors of the Holocaust and other Nazi crimes around the world. The exhibition, located within the UNESCO building in Paris as well as all around the exterior fence, was created by photographer Luigi Toscano, and supported by the Permanent Delegations of Austria, France, Germany, and the European Union to UNESCO, as well as the World Jewish Congress, the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions of France (CRIF), and several other institutions.

The forum, hosted by Karel Fracapane of UNESCO, featured remarks by leaders from across the world, including a closing address by WJC President Ronald S. Lauder, who underscored that that “vigilance and remembrance, along with education are the best way for the world never to forget this crime.”

Lauder added that he was proud of the WJC’s partnership with UNESCO creating [AboutHolocaust.org](#), a website dedicated to educating the public about the Holocaust. Lauder also spoke of the heroism of the survivors, saying, “After everything that happened to them, after everything taken from them, their families murdered, these people displayed the most amazing courage the world has ever seen. They never sought vengeance. They walked out of those gates, they married and had children, creating families. Creating life! in the face of death they created life.”

Director-General of UNESCO Audrey Azoulay said in her opening remarks that it is a “deeply moving experience to welcome the exhibition,” and thanking the World Jewish Congress for being one of UNESCO’s “most steadfast partners.” Speaking of the necessity to remember the horrors of the Holocaust, Azoulay said, “It is our individual and collective responsibility to remember. To remember all those whose faces never grew old, to remember them each, everyone one of them,” adding that “though the faces of Survivors we can see the faces of the millions who were murdered.”

German Minister of Foreign Affairs Heiko Maas spoke of the beauty of the exhibit, saying that “the eyes look at us. Nothing is said, but we could almost hear the voices of the women and men portrayed in the pictures. They appeal to us not to look away, not to be indifferent.” He added that the exhibit is “much more than art. It is a reminder never to bury the past and the investment in a more peaceful future.”

Maas urged the audience to prepare for a world without Holocaust survivors, saying, “their testimony lives on in these images. It is our responsibility as democrats as fellow human beings to preserve it. We owe that to the victims to whose eyes we are looking at today, and we owe that to our children for whom the memory of our dark past holds the promise of a brighter future.”

Karoline Edtstadler, Austrian Federal Minister for the European Union, said that the “devastating legacy” of the destruction of European Jewry, “obliges us to remember and to make every attempt to prevent such horrible crimes from ever happening again.” Edtstadler praised the exhibit saying, it “allows the broader public to engage with survivors in a personal, emotional and tangible and thus relate directly to the terrible suffering of the victims of the Holocaust.”

Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, French State Secretary to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, also praised the exhibit saying it “sends a powerful message” and “illustrates the very tangible dimension of Nazi barbarity, which was not executed abstractly but targeted men, women and children, each with their own story and singularity.” Lemoyne noted that exhibit creation comes at an ominous time when more and more survivors are passing away, making Holocaust remembrance even more difficult. He concluded his remarks by saying that “we owe it to all the victims to work towards this remembrance.”

Eamon Gilmore, EU Special Representative for Human Rights, spoke about the rise of antisemitism and hatred during the coronavirus pandemic and the attempts to delegitimize the Holocaust. Speaking on behalf of the EU, Gilmore condemned Holocaust denial, calling it “insulting to the memory of the millions of people who died in the Holocaust. We are committed to fulfill our collective responsibility to ensure that “never again” are not just words but are actions.” Concluding his remarks, Gilmore pledged that the EU “will continue to work with all UN member states within the UN forum, including UNESCO to maintain effective remembrance policies, to combat violent extremism, to protect historic religious sites and to promote education, documentation and research about the Holocaust.”

Peter Kurtz, Mayor of Mannheim, Germany, spoke about the need to defend democracy from the rise of right-wing extremist parties, as well as against the emboldened anti-democratic, anti-liberal, and anti-European forces taking root in society. He also noted the importance of preserving a culture of remembrance in our countries and in our cities. Kurtz noted that before the Nazi regime came to power in Mannheim, the city was home to one of the liveliest and strongest Jewish communities in Germany, and concluded his remarks calling for the world to remember the victims of the Holocaust as their “neighbors, colleagues, friends and family.”

Luigi Toscano, the photographer who created the exhibit, also took part in the ceremony, repeating a message from a Holocaust survivor named Suzanne, who told him “if we forget the past, we are damaged to repeat it.” Toscano called for unity, saying “In these days it is necessary for us to stand up together against antisemitism, racism, and any kind of hatred.”

Keeping the Memory Alive -- UN Geneva

25 January 2021

On 25 January, in partnership with the USC Shoah Foundation and the EU Delegation to the UN, Israel’s Mission in Geneva, the United Nations Office at Geneva, and the city’s Jewish community, the WJC co-sponsored an innovative video project entitled ‘[Keeping the Memory Alive](#)’. The video exhibit remained on the walls of the “Beth Yaacov” Great Synagogue of Geneva from 25-31, enabling those passing by pause, reflect and ask questions that prompt real-time responses from pre-recorded video interviews with Holocaust survivors

Message from European Commission Vice President Margaritis Schinas

The European Commission together with the World Jewish Congress and the USC Shoah Foundation launched a video ‘Stronger than hate - Holocaust Remembrance 2021’, part of the #WeRemember campaign. The video features interviews and testimonies of hidden children from Belgium and other Holocaust Survivors addressing antisemitism today, the danger of rise of conspiracy theories amidst COVID 19, and the Shoah remembrance.



[Click here to watch European Commission Vice President Margaritis Schinas message for international Holocaust Remembrance Day - YouTube](#)

WJC & NATO Remember the Holocaust

27 January 2021

The World Jewish Congress in partnership with the delegations of Italy and Poland to NATO held an event at NATO headquarters in Brussels to unveil an art-installation “Dandelions” by Carla Chiusano, and a selection of art of former Auschwitz prisoners (“The experience of Auschwitz in the art of prisoners”), lent by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum in Poland. The flags of all 30 NATO Allies rested at half-mast today.

Holocaust Remembrance ToolKit for Students

As part of the annual #WeRemember campaign for International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the World Jewish Congress, in partnership with the European Union of Jewish Students and the World Union of Jewish Students, have released a new Holocaust education toolkit for students around the world.

The toolkit includes a wide array of information, educational material, and practical guidance for hosting remembrance commemorations. While launched alongside the #WeRemember campaign, the toolkit will serve as a useful resource for any student who plans on hosting a commemoration event throughout the year.

On the launching of the toolkit, Daniel Radomski, Head of WJC Strategy and Programs said, “Amidst a disturbing global trend of Holocaust denial and distortion, as well as an increasing number of young

people today who do not have even a basic understanding of the atrocities of the Holocaust, this toolkit will be an invaluable tool for all who seek it.”

“Together with our partners in EUJS and WUJS, we will continue to stand on the forefront of preserving the memory of the Holocaust and ensuring that future generations continued to learn and remember.”

In a letter introducing the toolkit, EUJS President Bini Guttman wrote: “‘Never Again’ has to begin with ‘We Remember’. Only those who remember can learn from history. ‘Never Again’ is a mission for the future. ‘Never Again’ means action. This guide is meant to provide assistance in doing just that. It contains ideas and best practices on how to organize commemorations, both virtual and in-person. It provides tools to transmit the memory of the Shoah and draw lessons for today.”

“It is the responsibility of young people to remember and protect. To fight for the promise of ‘Never Again.’ We hope this toolkit can successfully aid in this mission.”

View the [#WeRemember toolkit: A guideline for informal Holocaust education -](#)

Bergen Belsen virtual commemoration – 75 years since liberation, April 2020

The WJC had initially planned to mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany by bringing a delegation of over 50 of the more than 2,000 children who were born in the adjacent Bergen-Belsen Displaced Persons camp back to their birthplace.

With the [postponement](#) of this [initiative](#), the WJC produced an original video about Bergen-Belsen before and after its liberation. [Bergen-Belsen: The End and The Beginning](#) tells the story of the unique identity of the children born in the DP camp’s Glyn Hughes Hospital. The approximately ten-minute clip features interviews and perspectives from “Belsen-babies”, as those born at the camp are known.

Yom HaShoah, April 2020

In lieu of in-person Yom HaShoah commemoration events in 2021, the WJC hosted an [online ceremony](#), with opening remarks by WJC President Ronald S. Lauder. The commemorative ceremony included reflections by WJC Commissioner for Holocaust Memory Dr. Charlotte Knobloch and WJC Executive Committee Member Amb. Colette Avital, both Holocaust survivors, as well an intervention by The Rt. Hon Lord Eric Pickles, UK Special Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues.

WJC also produced [a selection of videos and films](#) to help people [across the world](#) observe Yom HaShoah. The compilation is part of [AboutHolocaust.org](#), a site WJC created in partnership with UNESCO to provide young people with basic facts about the Holocaust.

Video materials included the final testimony of Auschwitz-Birkenau survivor Rachmil (Ralph) Hakman, who died shortly after joining the WJC in Poland in January for the [75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau](#); the [address](#) by WJC President Lauder at the Death Gate of Birkenau during the

2020 commemorative ceremony; a CBS Sunday Morning feature about the significance of the Auschwitz site to its survivors, and the ongoing effort to preserve Auschwitz-Birkenau and its artifacts; an HBO film, *The Number of My Grandfathers Arm*, about a 10-year-old boy learning his family's history through conversations with his great-grandfather; and a WJC-produced video featuring photographs of daughters of Auschwitz survivors taken by Israeli photographer Debbie Morag.

The WJC's resources are available to Jewish communities, congregations, schools, youth groups, community centers, and the general public at [Yomhashoah.aboutholocaust.org](https://yomhashoah.aboutholocaust.org)

Protecting the Truth

AboutHolocaust.org: The Facts You Need to Know

The World Jewish Congress (WJC) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established aboutholocaust.org with the goal of providing the widest possible audience of young people and future generations with essential information about the history of the Holocaust and its legacy. The online tool, with content currently available in 19 languages, includes easy to read facts about the Holocaust and survivor testimonies reviewed by leading experts in the field of Holocaust studies designed to address gaps in knowledge and to counter the misinformation that circulates across social media and other online forums.

AboutHolocaust.org is made possible thanks to the support of Roman Abramovich and Chelsea Football Club's "Say No to Antisemitism" campaign.

Now when Facebook users search for content associated with the Holocaust, they will be prompted to learn more about the Holocaust at aboutholocaust.org.

The Facts

The website contains 100 'Facts About the Holocaust' and its implications. These facts are organized in a question and answer style format, and cover a range of topics from basic inquiries, such as Who was Adolf Hitler? and Were all Jews forced to wear a yellow star?, to more complex and introspective aspects including, Did any governments attempt to save Jews from persecution before the outbreak of World War II? and Were perpetrators forced to kill?. Other facts also cover the subject of genocide more generally.

Each fact is written in a concise format ensuring users gain the essential information for each point. Fact pages also include external links to the USHMM for further information.

Testimonies

Included within www.aboutholocaust.org is a selection of written and recorded survivor testimonies to allow page viewers to understand the human cost of the Holocaust.

[Visit the AboutHolocaust.org website](https://www.aboutholocaust.org)

WJC partners with Facebook to provide comprehensive Holocaust education resource to Facebook users

[Together with Facebook](#), the World Jewish Congress (WJC) announced today that it is working with the social media platform to connect Facebook users to authoritative information about the Holocaust on the website [AboutHolocaust.org](https://www.aboutholocaust.org). The WJC jointly developed this comprehensive online

resource with [UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization](#), as an accessible means to provide essential information about the history of the Holocaust and its legacy.

Starting International Holocaust Remembrance Day, when Facebook users search for terms associated with the Holocaust or denial of it, the social media platform will prompt them to visit AboutHolocaust.org, where they will be able to learn the facts about the genocide of European Jewry and the mass killings of other national, ethnic, and political groups by Nazi Germany and its accomplices during World War II.

Facebook's Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg said, "I am grateful for all that the World Jewish Congress and UNESCO do to honor the six million people who were murdered just for being Jewish, the countless more who were killed for who they were, and those who survived this horrendous chapter in human history. This International Holocaust

Facebook

Connecting People to Credible Information about the Holocaust off Facebook

January 27, 2021

By Guy Rosen, VP of Integrity

Today, on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, we remember the lives of the six million Jews who were systematically persecuted and killed, alongside members of other minority groups, by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Holocaust.

Connecting People to Credible Information about the Holocaust off Facebook - About Facebook (fb.com)

Remembrance Day we are proud to partner with them to help people learn the facts about the Holocaust and hear the stories of those who survived. At a time of rising hate and intolerance, taking time to read and reflect on what happened to Jews and others in Europe is more important than ever."

Directing users to this reliable resource is the social media company's latest effort to combat antisemitism and Holocaust denial on its platform. It follows on the heels of [Facebook's expanded hate speech policy](#) announced in October, committing to remove content related to Holocaust denial and antisemitism.

“Holocaust denial, Holocaust distortion, and the spreading of conspiracy myths about the Holocaust generally have become cornerstones in the vicious incitement of antisemitic hatred on the part of white supremacists, neo-Nazis, and other extremist forces,” said **WJC President Ronald S. Lauder**. “Learning the facts of the Holocaust is crucial to combating all those who deliberately desecrate the memory of the millions who were murdered by Nazi Germany and its multinational accomplices in order to promote their reprehensible agenda. The Holocaust is the ultimate example of what can happen when hatred and malicious lies rooted in deliberate misinformation are allowed to thrive.

“The World Jewish Congress is deeply gratified to work with UNESCO and Facebook to ensure that Facebook’s 2.7 billion users are provided with accurate, comprehensive information about the Holocaust. Connecting Facebook users to [AboutHolocaust.org](https://www.aboutholocaust.org) will contribute greatly to promoting tolerance and empathy as the antidote to resurgent antisemitism, xenophobia, bigotry, and hate.

“I commend Facebook for this development and encourage other social media platforms to follow this example of how to use their technology to ensure that their immense platforms can be used for good.”

This move by Facebook is the product of a long period of cooperation with the WJC as well as Facebook’s receptiveness to using its massive platform as the world’s largest social media company to ensure that its users don’t fall victim to the purveyors of hate and ignorance. The feature is now available in English-speaking countries including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, and will be rolled out in additional languages and countries at the next stage.

Added **Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director-General**, “Transmitting the history of the Holocaust is key to combating denial and conspiracy theories today – it is key to equipping people with the skills they need to refuse the hateful logic of antisemitism, racism and hatred, and to challenging those who seek to exploit ignorance. We must join forces to share factual and reliable information on social media platforms, and this partnership is a clear step in the right direction.”