



Remembrance and action

Education and the Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

On the 27th of January 1945, in the final stage of the Second World War, the Red Army liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest complex of concentration and extermination camps built by the nazi regime.

With the criminal support of fascist governments in Italy, Spain and all the collaborationist forces in occupied territories of WWII, the nazi German government organised an industrialized system of extermination and genocide, that targeted Jews and other communities considered inferior for the new society idealised by the regime.

The nazis and their collaborators killed:

6,000,000 Jewish people

7,000,000 Soviet non-combatants

3,000,000 Soviet war prisoners

1,800,000 Polish non-combatants

312,000 Non-combatants of Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovna

250,000 People with handicap

220,000 - 500,000 Roma people

1,900 Jehovah's Witnesses

70,000 People accused of illegal or antisocial behaviour¹

As well as an undetermined number of communists, socialists, resistance members, other opposition members and homosexuals.

An incomprehensible number of human lives were destroyed, countless people were tortured, and systematically murdered by a state-led

¹ [Holocaust Encyclopedia](#)



de-humanising machine specifically designed by Nazi leaders and implemented by the military and bureaucracy under industrial support.

"It's the product of a conception of the world that is driven towards its own consequences in a strong and coherent way: until this conception survives, its consequences endanger us."²

Primo Levi was an Italian Jew and Partisan that survived the Auschwitz concentration, his words are clear about the roots of the Holocaust and they show a terrible threat for the future. Antisemitism flourished in the pre-war context after centuries of persecution against Jewish communities in Europe, and the nazi, and with that the fascist, ideology made it a core element of their future societal project. This inhuman vision was always accompanied by a clear rejection of democratic values and human rights in the creation of authoritarian regimes. The repression of dissent and the attempt of creating a society without pluralism were represented by book burning and censorship, while opposers were enslaved and killed, both inside and outside of concentration camps.

Seventy-six years later, we can see a dangerous revival of neo-nazi and fascist narratives. Antisemitism and xenophobia is on the rise again, and clearly xenophobic leaders ascended to positions of political power in some democracies, sometimes even concretely talking about ethnic cleansing or religious based discrimination and persecution. Students should unite and act against anitsemtism and xenophobia, and no fertile ground should be left for hate and discrimination, because we know how these narratives can be the dangerous seeds for future suffering, and even genocide.

² Primo Levi, *Se questo è un uomo* (If this is a man) - Preface, Turin 1958



In remembering the victims of the Holocaust, the Global Student Forum, the World Union of Jewish Students and the European Union of Jewish Students therefore resolve to:

- Encourage students, teachers and educational workers to counter any form of antisemitism in learning spaces and to keep fascist and neo-Nazi propaganda out of schools and universities, while creating an environment of understanding of these phenomena as dangers for peace, democracy and inclusion;
- Strengthen international institutions for the enforcement of Human Rights, supporting the action of the International Criminal Court and other specialised international courts with the aim of punishing the perpetrators of genocide, ethnic cleansing and other crimes against humanity;
- Enhance the coordination of student organisations and movements to coordinate with wider actors such as Trade Unions, NGOs and Foundations involved in the fight against antisemitic and xenophobic narratives, to build coalitions with the aim of limiting the spread of intolerant ideas in our societies and their impact on policy;
- Encourage Youth organisations to be the watchdog of policies of their national governments, being ready to denounce human rights violations and to act in Solidarity with endangered populations or minorities at home and in other parts of the world;
- Establish curricula in schools and universities that tackle widespread forms of Antisemitism and any other racist stereotypes, to strengthen the respect for human dignity of all peoples.

The Global Student Forum

The World Union of Jewish Students

The European Union of Jewish Students