



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on International Holocaust Remembrance Day

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
January 31, 2013

The United States commemorated International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which occurred on Sunday, January 27. The date marks the anniversary of the 1945 liberation of the largest Nazi death camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau where Jews, Roma, Sinti, gay persons, and others were exterminated by the Nazis.

In the last year, many participating States have demonstrated their commitment to Holocaust Education and Remembrance. At the OSCE, the commemoration of the centenary of Raoul Wallenberg's birth served as an important opportunity for the United States, Sweden, Israel, and Hungary to honor his contributions to humanity and the courageous efforts of others who rescued would-be Holocaust victims. Germany unveiled a landmark memorial to promote remembrance and reflection on the Roma and Sinti victims of the Holocaust in October.

Inherent in the effort of Holocaust Remembrance is the message 'Never Again.' 'Never Again' is a challenge to reject hatred in all its forms – including anti-Semitism, which has no place in a civilized world. 'Never Again' is a challenge to defend the fundamental right of free people and free nations to exist in peace and security. 'Never Again' is a challenge to societies to remain outspoken against all forms of bigotry and hatred.

As we consider the OSCE's work on tolerance and nondiscrimination in 2013, we must not underestimate the fact that anti-Semitism remains a serious problem across our region. Recently, there has been an upsurge in anti-Semitic acts, including hateful graffiti, cemetery desecrations, verbal and physical assaults on Jews, incitement to violence, and cartoons demonizing Jews. In March of last year, an attack on a Jewish school in Toulouse left three children and a rabbi dead. In August, teenagers attacked a rabbi and verbally abused him in Berlin. There have been a number of anti-Semitic incidents in Malmö, Sweden, including at a Jewish Community Center. We welcome the rejection of anti-Semitic incidents and language by Sweden's Minister of Integration and other cabinet-level ministers. Tragically, today we face not only the duty of Remembrance and examining the role our nations played in the Holocaust, but with the acute issues of continued bias-motivated violence in the region. Therefore, we support the Personal Representative on Combating Anti-Semitism Rabbi Baker's intentions to hold an event on the Security of Jewish Communities in the OSCE Region this year.

We urge governments, civil society leaders, clerics, human rights groups, and all people of conscience in all nations to speak out against this kind of hatred. The United States will work with all of those who are committed to a world free of anti-Semitism and all other forms of ethnic or religious intolerance.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.