

# 27 January: Reaching out to the Youth of Europe

by Richelle Budd-Caplan and Mati Senkman

## The International Youth Congress – One Year On

■ A year has passed since Yad Vashem hosted its first-ever International Youth Congress. For three days, 116 youths from 62 countries gathered at the International School for Holocaust Studies for a packed schedule of lectures, workshops, tours and memorial services. Over the past year, most of the International Youth Congress participants organized and participated in commemorative and educational events within their own communities.

To encourage this initiative and ensure its continued success, the International School for Holocaust Studies is now running a project to provide the young leaders with additional knowledge and tools. As part of the “Youth Leading Youth” program, each congress participant received a copy of *Are the Trees in Bloom Over There?*, a book of memoirs written by two Holocaust survivors, the brothers Menachem Mayer and Frederick Raymes. After reading the book, the participants accessed, via a specially-created website, a lecture by Shulamit Imber, the

International School’s Pedagogical Director, in which she presented a model workshop based on the book. They also took part in online discussions, with questions addressed to Imber through the website forum. In the coming year, the project’s participants will be running the workshop for younger groups in their schools and communities in order further to disseminate Holocaust education in their countries.

## Student Diary Targets Racism and Xenophobia

■ For the first time, Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights have cooperated in the creation of “S’Cool Agenda,” an awareness-raising school diary (datebook) for young people. As part of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, “S’Cool Agenda,” available in English, French and German, was produced to raise awareness among students about racism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination. In addition to providing information about resources for



■ Postcard from the Yad Vashem and Wizo Haifa Academy joint exhibition, “Sign Posts: Postcards from the Edge” included in the “S’Cool Agenda” student diary

International Holocaust Remembrance Day, two special postcards related to Holocaust remembrance have been included in each of the diaries. These postcards are part of *Sign Posts: Postcards from the Edge*, a project coordinated last year by the International School for Holocaust Studies together with the Graphics Design and Visual Communication Department of the Neri Bloomfield WIZO Haifa Academy of Design and Education in Haifa.

*Richelle Budd-Caplan is Head of the International Relations Section and Mati Senkman is Teacher-Training Coordinator at the International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## International Seminar: The Holocaust and Human Rights

by Dr. Irit Abramski and Galit Avitan

■ On 8–10 November, Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies held its International Graduate Seminar in Vienna, as part of a joint initiative with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Participating in the seminar were 23 educators from EU member states, graduates of Yad Vashem seminars held within the framework of the ICHEIC (International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims) program.

The intensive two-day seminar, held over the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Kristallnacht* pogrom, aimed to establish a link between teaching about human rights and Holocaust education. In addition to presentations and discussions, the participants held group dialogues to prepare annual programs. Most popular were national and multi-national projects, part of the European struggle against antisemitism and violations of human rights.



■ Yad Vashem booth at “Diversity Day” in Vienna, attended by 2,000 European youth

“Studying history is essential,” said Italian seminar participant Laura Fontana. “The ‘Night of Broken Glass’ was a turning point leading to the Nazi genocide of European Jewry. We have to remember the victims and the perpetrators, and also the bystanders, and should consider if we are also bystanders in our daily lives.”

On the final day of the seminar, the International School took part in “Diversity Day,” a special day organized by the FRA, the Vienna municipality and Vienna’s School

Council. The aim of the day was to increase understanding of human rights among the youth, and deepen their awareness of different minorities in Europe.

Over 45 NGOs took part in the event, under the slogan “Respect Unlimited.” Some 2,000 youth from Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia visited the information booths, including that of the International School, which displayed educational resources about the Holocaust.

“The participation of the International School in this event is an important step towards strengthening our ties with the FRA,” said Richelle Budd-Caplan, Head of the International Relations Section at the School. “It has opened up another avenue to build new programs in the field of Holocaust education in Europe.”

*Dr. Irit Abramski is Head of the Russian Desk and Galit Avitan works at the Hungarian and Romanian Desk, European Department at the International School for Holocaust Studies.*