

Slovenia

Mr. President,  
Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have gathered here in order to pay tribute to the millions of innocent victims, to remember the horrors they suffered, and to reaffirm our commitment to the struggle against intolerance and anti-Semitism. The Shoah is not just another sad part of history. It is a negation of our civilization and of humanity.

It is our duty to remember and to educate. Remembering the past is the only way of ensuring that its horrors never recur. Education is the best preventive tool at our disposal; it is important not only to learn about the past, but also to promote tolerance and respect.

Out of a small Slovene pre-war Jewish community, all but a few perished in the death camps, along with thousands of other Slovenes. There were many who were ready to help and save the lives of Jews. We are proud of our "righteous among nations", whose names are written on the walls of Yad Vashem never to be forgotten.

Also making part of our common history were many Slovenes who during and after the Second World War helped - hand in hand with Shaike Dan - the Jewish refugees to reach Israel.

The Jewish Community of Slovenia, though numbering only a few hundred, has been active in safeguarding the Jewish culture and promoting religious tolerance. Their efforts are complemented by those of the recently established Center for Hebrew and Jewish Studies in Ljubljana.

Following its independence, Slovenia's Constitution and legal framework provided a model of regulating the status of ethnic and religious communities that has been recognized and appreciated by various international fora. The Government of Slovenia pays due attention in

its educational process to tolerance and peaceful coexistence among different religious and ethnic groups.

Our public school books present the holocaust adequately. We have included the contents of holocaust in our national curricula, in the primary and secondary school, generally as a part of history teaching of II. World War. Holocaust is defined as a Nazi way of “final solution” of a Jewish question, as genocide.

We are proud that no anti-Semitic acts by authorities or by the media have been reported in Slovenia. No cases of negation of the holocaust are detectable in our public discourses.

Nevertheless, being aware of the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and elsewhere, we don't pretend to be immune to this phenomenon.

As OSCE chairing country, Slovenia attaches considerable attention to combating all forms of intolerance and discrimination.

Each country and international organization has a moral and legal obligation to promote values of tolerance and non-discrimination, to protect human rights and freedoms, and to strive for endorsing methods of peaceful resolution of conflicts. We all have to endeavor to achieve the ultimate goal - a world where holocaust can never recur.

Thank you.