



The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme

United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/7 on Holocaust remembrance called for the establishment a programme of outreach on the subject of the “Holocaust and the United Nations” and measures to mobilize civil society for Holocaust remembrance and education in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide. Since its establishment by the Department of Public Information in January 2006, the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme has developed an international network of civil society groups and a multi-faceted programme that includes: online educational products, DVDs, students’ study guides, seminars and training programmes, a film series, book signings, a permanent exhibit at United Nations Headquarters in New York, and the annual worldwide observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. Each year, the annual commemoration ceremony highlights a different theme of Holocaust remembrance.

The Programme has worked closely with Holocaust survivors to ensure that their stories are heard and heeded as a warning of the consequences of anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination. It also continues to combat Holocaust Denial also called for in General Assembly resolution 61/255. In all of its activities, with students around the world in particular, the Holocaust Programme draws essential links between the underlying causes of genocide, the lessons to be learned from the Holocaust and the promotion of human rights and democratic values today.

I. International Partnerships

The Programme has developed partnerships with civil society, Governments and Holocaust institutions, which provide substantive support and expertise. Two of the most recent initiatives which illustrate the results of such partnerships include: the Twitter campaign cosponsored by the Anne Frank Centre USA, in which students were invited to send “tweet” messages of support to Anne Frank and share their thoughts about what they have learned from her life; and a traveling exhibition on the Holocaust in Europe which was made available in English, French, Spanish and Russian, and was hosted with local partners by the United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) in Bujumbura, Dakar, Manila, Mexico City, Moscow and the United Nations Information Service (UNIS) in Vienna. A third example is the United Nations’ co-sponsorship of the recent international conference on Antisemitism and Holocaust denial organized by the Holocaust Education Trust in Ireland on 18-19 November 2010.

II. Holocaust Educational Materials

The Programme has developed a wide variety of educational tools in cooperation with leading institutions to support the development of educational curricula by Member States. Its very first teaching aid was the Electronic Notes for Speakers, an online

pedagogical tool that uses survivor testimony, other primary source material and lesson plans to tell the human experience of the Holocaust, and is available in English, French and Spanish. Its latest product, an educational study guide and a companion DVD with survivor testimonies for high school students, titled *Women and the Holocaust: Courage and Compassion*, helps youth to better understand how the Holocaust affected women. Other products include the *Discussion Papers Journal* for university students, a journal containing position papers representing a variety of perspectives on this history and genocide prevention, drafted by scholars from around the world. For younger students, we provide a short educational film titled *Footprints: Discovering the Holocaust through Historical Artefacts* and lesson plan. Our next product will be a study guide companion to a new animated film on *The Last Flight of Petr Ginz*, which will be published prior to the 2012 Holocaust Remembrance week. The Programme is also utilizing social media outlets to expand its outreach to youth. In addition, the Programme's gateway website (www.un.org/holocaustremembrance) offers a number of innovative products and teaching resources on the Holocaust, including materials on the Roma and Sinti and others produced by our partners.

III. Support to United Nations Information Centres

The Outreach Programme, through partnership with four renowned Holocaust institutions, organized four regional training programmes to support the outreach efforts of UNICs. The training programmes were designed to better equip the information officers in the field to raise public awareness about the relevance of the Holocaust today, and apply the principles they learn to outreach activities to combat Holocaust denial and promote respect for diversity and human rights. Seminars were held in May 2007 at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., in October 2007 at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, in November 2007 at Le Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris and in April 2008 at the House of the Wannsee Conference Memorial and Educational Site in Berlin. As a follow up to these trainings, the Programme has organized video conferences with a Holocaust survivor and students in Asia, Africa and Latin America to further their understanding of the dangers of hatred and racism, and thus contribute to building human rights defenders.

The Programme also provides UNICs with copies of documentary films that it screens at United Nations Headquarters in New York, as well as guidance and information materials for their events.

The Holocaust Programme has also held seven educational seminars on the Holocaust and the relevance of its lessons today, which are available as a webcast on the Programme's website www.un.org/holocaustremembrance.

Educational materials can be downloaded from the programme's website at www.un.org/holocaustremembrance. Contact: Kimberly Mann, Manager at holocaustremembrance@un.org.