

**Holocaust Memorial Ceremony marking
the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust**

**United Nations Headquarters, New York
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Lock(er) of Memory

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I never met my grandparents, Moses Frostig and Beile Samuely Frostig. Two small passport photos were on display in our home, hanging prominently on a wall in our living room. No one ever talked about these photos. They hung in silence as an open wound.

My father Dr. Benjamin Wolf Frostig was a young Viennese lawyer. He was arrested by the gestapo in an early roundup of intelligentsia. Holding an asylum visa to Mexico, my father was expelled from Vienna on June 29, 1938. He was assigned the daunting task to rescue his parents. He did not succeed.

Silenced by trauma and shame, my father died in 1971. He never spoke about his heroic journey, gaining asylum for seven Austrian Jews in Cuba, or his pain. Twenty years after his death, I found a small box in my mother's basement. The box held legal documents detailing my father's expulsion from Vienna, multiple deportations, and delayed entry into the United States. In 2004 I received a packet of letters from my cousin, written by my grandparents to my father between 1938 and 1941. Their letters tell a story of love, hope, and persecution.

I made numerous trips to Vienna and Riga to recover my family's history. Riga was especially profound. I stood on a neglected patch of land strewn with rubble. This was the unmarked site of the Jungfernhof concentration camp. This ground contained my grandparents' bodies somewhere in an unmarked mass grave. It was a chilling moment. And it was also a moment filled with love and a yearning to be close to my grandparents, to protect them with my memory.

Since 2010, I have worked closely with the Latvian Jewish community and Latvian officials committed to Holocaust research and remembrance. We have identified information on the 3,985 German and Austrian Jews who were killed at Jungfernhof or at other nearby sites after being deported to the Jungfernhof concentration camp in occupied Latvia.

We are committed to creating a permanent memorial at Jungfernhof. I envision the memorial as a meeting ground, bringing survivors, descendants, leaders, and community members together to grieve, while considering hope grounded in memory, as a means of transforming this unremembered site into a heartfelt place of remembrance.