



DPI/NGO Relations invites you to the
Briefing

"Untold Stories: How Bulgarian Jews Survived the Holocaust"
*(In observance of the International Day of Commemoration in Memory
of the Victims of the Holocaust - 27 January)*

Date: Thursday, 26 January 2012

Time: 10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Location: Conference Room 4 (NLB), United Nations

Background Information

For the past several years, DPI/NGO Relations has observed the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust by examining the untold stories of countless brave men and women who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. This week's briefing will focus on the little-known role of the Bulgarian people in saving Bulgarian Jews during this tragic time in our history.

As an ally of Germany during World War II, Bulgaria faced intense pressure to follow Nazi dictates, including those which called for the deportation of Bulgarian Jews to death camps in Poland. When it became evident that plans were being drawn up to comply with these demands, fierce opposition erupted from Bulgarian church leaders, ordinary citizens, and public figures, most notably, Dimitar Peshev, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament. In the face of overwhelming pressure, the Bulgarian government rescinded the deportation order and ultimately not a single Bulgarian Jew was sent to the Nazi death camps.

The survival of the entire Bulgarian Jewish population of almost 50,000 in a country which was an ally of Germany during this time was a unique phenomenon. It was, however, consistent with Bulgaria's long history of co-existence with the Jews who for centuries had been an integral part of their society.

This briefing will look at the series of events which led to the cancellation of the deportation order of Bulgarian Jews. It will also look at the heroic individuals, who in the face of extreme danger, took actions which enabled the entire Jewish community in Bulgaria to survive the Holocaust intact.

All Briefings begin promptly at 10:15 a.m. and we ask that our audience be seated by 10:00 a.m. sharp.

MODERATOR

Maria-Luisa Chavez, Chief, NGO Relations, Department of Public Information (DPI)

SPECIAL TRIBUTE

In commemoration of the centenary of the birth of Swedish diplomat, Raoul Wallenberg, who saved tens of thousands of Jews during the Holocaust, this briefing will begin with a special tribute to his heroism and legendary work.

Gunnar Aldén, Counsellor and Coordinator of Political Affairs, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations

SPEAKERS

Joseph Benatov, Professor of Hebrew, University of Pennsylvania

Misha Avramoff, Bulgarian child Holocaust survivor and Co-director of Project Ezra

Briah Cahana, Student at McGill University, Montreal

The venue for the weekly Briefings will be provided as soon as the information is available. United Nations-produced videos relevant to the theme of the Briefing are sometimes screened during the session. For Briefing information please call the DPI/NGO Resource Centre at +1-212-963-7232 / 7233 / 7234 or e-mail dpingo.briefings@un.org. To receive the Briefing information electronically, please email dpingo.briefings@un.org. You may also visit the DPI/NGO Relations Cluster website at www.un.org/dpi/ngosection, where archived web casts and audio (both, when available) of the Briefing may also be accessed

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