

Address by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Knut Ostby, at
the event to commemorate the International Day of Commemoration
in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.
Yangon University Arts Hall, 24th January 2018

Excellency U Naing Ngan Lin, Minister for Social Affairs, Yangon Region
Rector of Yangon University, Prof. Dr. Pho Kaung
Ambassador of Israel, Excellency Mr. Daniel Zonshine,
Ambassador of Germany, Excellency Mrs. Dorothee Janerzke- Wenzel
Honored guests, Professors and students from Yangon University, Mingalarbar.

*Holocaust - Auk May Bweh - akhann annaar –goh - tet yauk thaw -gonthayay shii
- lujee minn myar aalon, Mingalarbar.*

*(Mingalarbar to all the distinguished guests attending the Holocaust memorial
ceremony.)*

Allow me to first thank the Ministry of Education and Yangon University for
hosting this event and the Embassy of Israel, the Embassy of the Federal Republic
of Germany and the Goethe Institute for your kind support in organizing the
event today.

At the Sixtieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Member States
adopted a resolution to commemorate memory of the victims of the Holocaust.
United Nations therefore designated 27 January as an annual International Day
of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

The theme of the Holocaust memorial ceremony this year, is “Holocaust
Remembrance and Education: Our Shared Responsibility”. The theme highlights
the universal dimension of the Holocaust and encourages education on this
tragedy so that future generations will firmly reject all forms of racism, violence
and anti-Semitism.

As we all know, the Holocaust did not happen in a vacuum. Laws that enshrined
discrimination were adopted. Propaganda poisoned millions of minds. Step by
step, social order broke down and people were drawn in – as perpetrators, as
passive supporters, as victims, with genocide as the end result. We have an
obligation to never lose sight of what went wrong and how it happened.

In the lobby to this hall, you will see a set of prize-winning posters from the International Poster Competition, a joint project of Yad Vashem and The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme and endorsed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

Students of Art and Design from participating countries were invited to submit original posters on the theme "Keeping the Memory Alive - Our Shared Responsibility" in keeping with the designated theme of the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme in 2018.

I would like to end with quoting what the UN Secretary-General said in his video message for this Day of Commemoration of the Holocaust:

(And I quote)

We must stand together against the normalization of hate.

Whenever and wherever humanity's values are abandoned, we are all at risk.

All of us have a responsibility to quickly, clearly and decisively resist racism and violence.

Through education and understanding, we can build a future of dignity, human rights and peaceful coexistence for all. (End of quote)

Thank you very much.