

# THE HOLOCAUST

## and the United Nations Outreach Programme

The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme strives to remind the world of the lessons to be learned from the Holocaust so as to help prevent future acts of genocide.

Since its establishment in 2005 with United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/7, the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme has developed an international network of partners and a multifaceted programme that includes online and print educational products, DVDs, study guides for students, seminars, professional development programmes for teachers, a film series and a permanent exhibit at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Programme's work culminates each year with the worldwide observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust on 27 January.

The Holocaust Programme works closely with Holocaust survivors to ensure their stories are heard and heeded as a warning against the consequences of antisemitism and other forms of discrimination.

In all of its activities, particularly with students and educators around the globe, the Programme draws crucial links between the underlying causes of genocide, the lessons to be learned from the Holocaust and the promotion of human rights today. The global network of United Nations information centres have helped to ensure that the Programme has made a global impact.

*"For the past decade, the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme has mobilized students and educators around the world to help us achieve these goals. We are grateful to our many partners – including Holocaust survivors – who have contributed to this work, which spanned 42 countries in the past year alone."*

**SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON**



The Holocaust and  
the United Nations  
Outreach Programme

10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY





# Pre-War Europe

In 1919 the League of Nations was founded  
after the First World War.



A Jewish family enjoys an outing in pre-war Berlin, Germany, 1929. PHOTO CREDIT: Peter Goldberg. Courtesy of the Museum of Jewish Heritage — A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, New York

**T**he League's goals included disarmament, preventing war through collective security, settling disputes between countries through dialogue and improving global human welfare. The League ultimately proved incapable of preventing the Second World War and it was succeeded by the "United Nations" in 1945, with a stronger mandate and collective support from Member States. The principle of human rights for all was enshrined in both the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), reflecting how deeply the Organization was shaped by the experience of the Second World War and the Holocaust.

Despite the antisemitism prevalent throughout Europe before Hitler's rise to power in Germany in 1933, Jews actively participated in social, political and economic life. Jewish artists, writers, jurists and scientists made important contributions in pre-war Germany. As soon as the Nazis gained power, life for German Jews changed. The Nazis were driven by a racist ideology that determined that the German "race" was superior. They considered the Jews to be an inferior race that had to be eliminated.







# Kristallnacht: A Turning Point in History

The passage of the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, which defined Jews based on race, provided the legal underpinning for ongoing discrimination.



Boemestrasse Synagogue burning on Kristallnacht, Frankfurt, Germany 1938. PHOTO CREDIT: Courtesy of Yad Vashem Photo Archive

**D**isabled persons, whose lives were seen as not worth living, were also targeted for forced sterilization and later mass murder. Anyone who opposed the Nazi regime risked arrest and incarceration for an indefinite period without due process. Many Jews responded by leaving Germany. In the months following 9 November 1938 (Kristallnacht), when widespread violence against the Jewish

community resulting in arrests, killings and damage and destruction to Jewish synagogues, homes and businesses was organized by the Nazi Party, tens of thousands of German and Austrian Jews emigrated. Tens of thousands more could not leave because they were stripped of their property and because immigration to most countries in the world was severely restricted.







# Persecution and Resistance

As more countries came under the control of Nazi Germany, Jews in German-occupied Eastern Europe were confined to extremely crowded urban ghettos.



Nazis arrest and deport Jews from the Warsaw ghetto in German-occupied Poland, following the uprising in April 1943. PHOTO CREDIT: Courtesy of United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

As more countries came under the control of Nazi Germany following the outbreak of war, Jews in German-occupied Eastern Europe were confined to extremely crowded urban ghettos and issued scant food rations, resulting in starvation and disease. German occupation authorities established local Jewish councils to administer the ghettos. Jewish council officials often did their best to help the ghetto inhabitants, but later, under duress,

some assisted with deportations. Although armed resistance against the German occupation authorities and their collaborators meant almost certain death, many Jews risked their lives to fight back. In many ghettos and camps, Jewish residents or prisoners rose against the Germans despite overwhelming odds against them. Resistance also took many other forms, from flight and hiding, to attempts to retain human dignity in inhumane circumstances.







# The Final Solution

Nazi Germany began its policy of systematic physical annihilation of the Jews with the invasion of the former Soviet Union in 1941.



Deportees are separated from their families and belongings upon arrival at the extermination camp, Auschwitz-Birkenau. Some were murdered immediately, while others were condemned to forced labour. PHOTO CREDIT: Courtesy of Yad Vashem Photo Archive

171

- 6 -

Land	Zahl
A. Altreich	131.800
Ostmark	43.700
Ostgebiete	420.000
Generalgouvernement	2.284.000
Bialystok	400.000
Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren	74.200
Estland - judenfrei -	
Lettland	3.500
Litauen	34.000
Belgien	43.000
Dänemark	5.600
Frankreich / Besetztes Gebiet	165.000
Unbesetztes Gebiet	700.000
Griechenland	69.600
Niederlande	160.800
Norwegen	1.500
B. Bulgarien	48.000
England	330.000
Finnland	2.300
Irland	4.000
Italien einschl. Sardinien	58.000
Albanien	200
Kroatien	40.000
Portugal	3.000
Rumänien einschl. Bessarabien	342.000
Schweden	8.000
Schweiz	18.000
Serbien	10.000
Slowakei	88.000
Spanien	6.000
Türkei (europ. Teil)	55.500
Ungarn	742.800
UdSSR	5.000.000
Ukraine	2.994.684
Weißrußland aus- schl. Bialystok	446.484
Zusammen: über	11.000.000

K210405 372029

Chart of Jewish populations targeted for Hitler's "Final Solution", from the Protocol of the Wannsee Conference, 20 January 1942. PHOTO CREDIT: Courtesy of Politische Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (PAAA Berlin)

In the occupied former Soviet Union, the Germans and their collaborators generally massacred the Jewish population and other targeted victims in shooting operations. In January 1942, Nazi officials met in Berlin at the Wannsee Conference to coordinate the "Final Solution", the systematic annihilation of all European Jews. Already in December 1941, at Chelmno in German-occupied Poland, the SS\* had begun to use poison gas, a method that

industrialized mass murder and killed large numbers of people more efficiently. In the spring of 1942, the SS and German police units began liquidating the ghettos of Eastern Europe. They deported Jews from many countries of Europe to Chelmno and other extermination camps in German-occupied Poland such as Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Majdanek and Auschwitz.

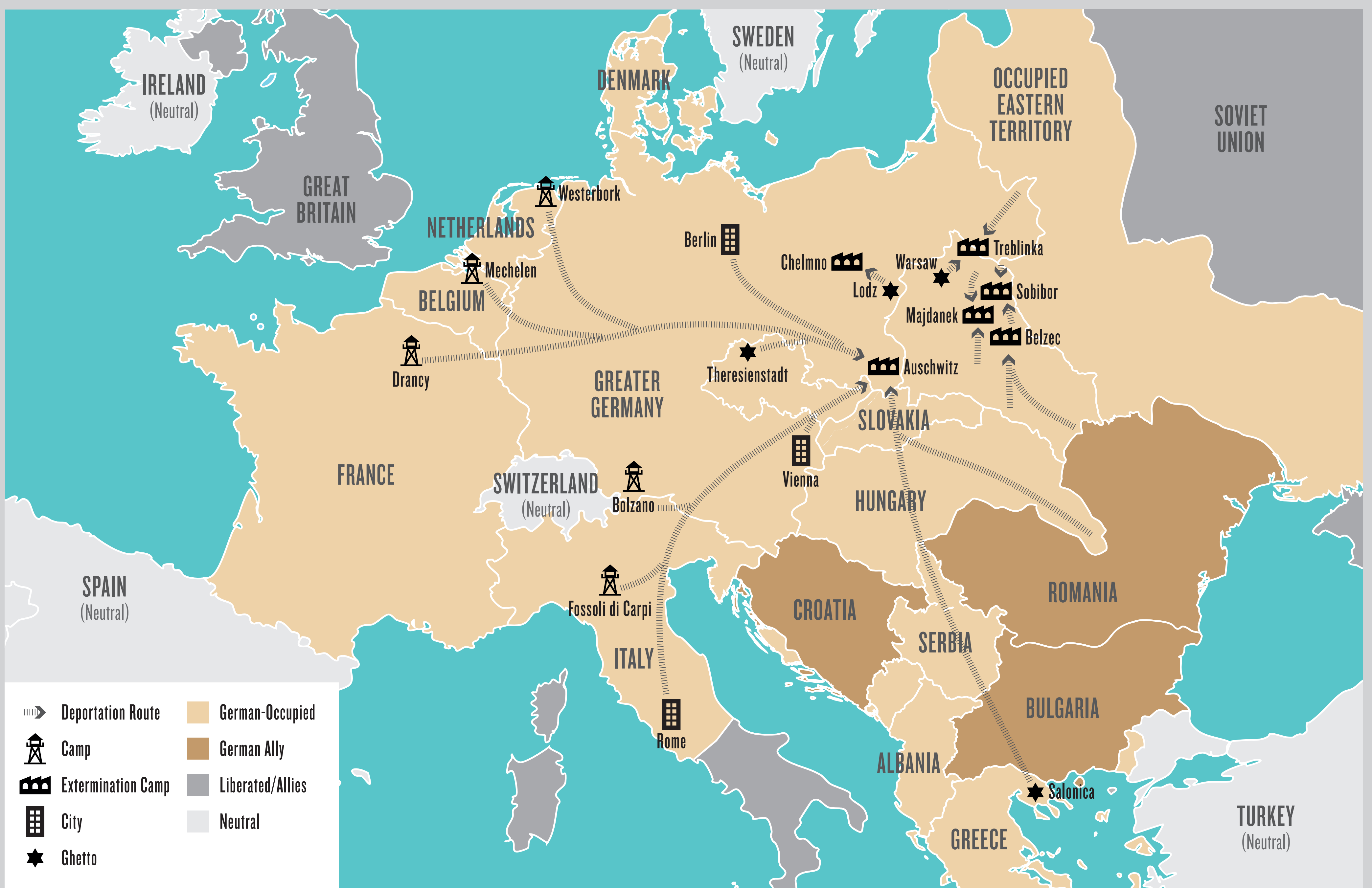
\*SS: This elitist paramilitary organization within the Nazi party tasked with implementing the security and population policies of the Third Reich, and in particular the mass systematic murder of Jews, known as the Final Solution. Its main modes of operation were repression, terror and murder.





# Deportation and Rescue

By late summer 1944, the Germans and their collaborators had transported nearly 3 million Jews to extermination camps, and had killed at least 2.5 million more in shooting operations and by other means.



Major Deportations to Extermination Camps, 1942-1944. PHOTO CREDIT: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

When Jews arrived by train to the “ramp” at Auschwitz-Birkenau\*\*, camp officials selected those who would be condemned to forced labour and those who would be sent immediately to their deaths in the gas chambers. Most Jews did not know of their fate until they reached the camps, despite rumours and periodic news reports.

While mass murder and genocide against the Jewish people were underway, some people hid Jews and their children or

helped them to escape. On the territory of Germany’s Axis partners some diplomats, representing neutral nations, issued visas to Jews seeking to evade deportation. Among them was Raoul Wallenberg (Sweden), who is credited with saving thousands of Jews by issuing Swedish protective documents in Budapest in July 1944. Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, has recognized more than 25,000 non-Jews as “Righteous Among the Nations” for their courageous efforts to rescue Jews.

\*\*Auschwitz-Birkenau: German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945). The World Heritage Committee agreed to change the name of the camp on UNESCO’s World Heritage List in June 2007.





# The Impact on European Jewry

Approximately six million Jews, including more than one million children, were cruelly murdered or died as a result of unbearable conditions in the ghettos and camps.



Allied forces liberated Buchenwald Concentration Camp in Germany on 16 April 1945. Elie Wiesel, the Nobel Prize winner, is on the second bunk from bottom, seventh from the left.  
PHOTO CREDIT: Photograph by Pvt. H. Miller. Courtesy of Corbis-Bettmann

**T**hroughout Europe, Jews were deported to concentration and extermination camps located mostly in Central and Eastern Europe.

European and North African Jews were also incarcerated under brutal conditions in camps in Europe and North Africa. Common to all camps was the lack of food, water, sanitation and medical care.



A woman with a baby begging in the Warsaw ghetto, Poland, 1941.

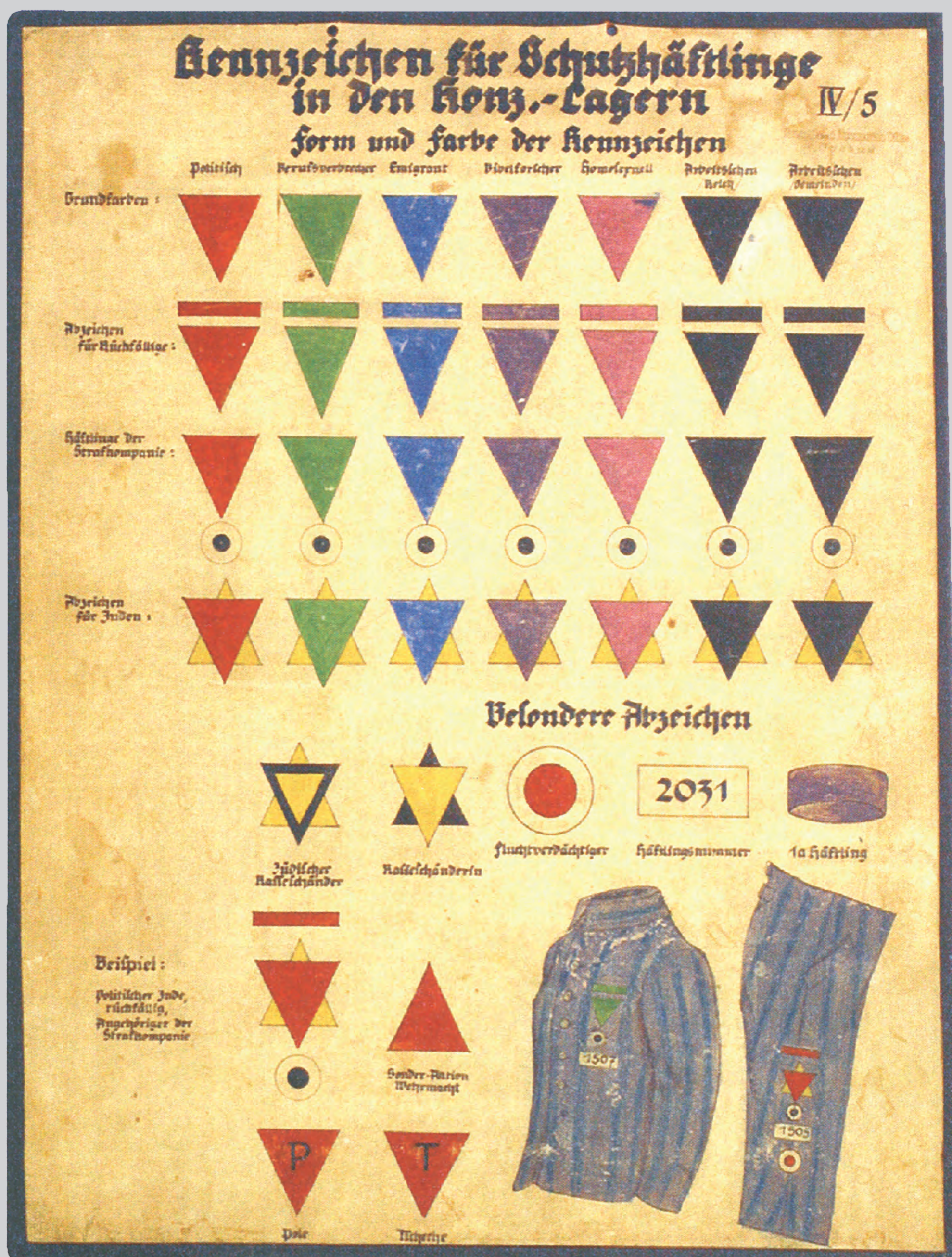
PHOTO CREDIT: Courtesy of Yad Vashem Photo Archive





# Countless Victims

In addition to Jews, the SS authorities incarcerated criminals, homosexuals, Jehovah's witnesses, members of national resistance movements, Poles, political dissidents, Roma and Sinti and Soviet POWs in the camps.



This chart depicts the types of colour-coded badges that camp prisoners were required to wear on their uniforms, identifying them by classifications stemming from Nazi racial ideology. PHOTO CREDIT: Gift of the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial. Courtesy of the International Tracing Service

In many European countries Roma and Sinti were issued "Gypsy" identification cards, which facilitated their arrest and deportation to forced labour and concentration camps. PHOTO CREDIT: Courtesy of Archive of Vas County, Hungary

The Roma and Sinti were also targeted for extermination and suffered losses estimated up to 500,000. German authorities, many of them physicians and healthcare professionals, also murdered approximately 200,000 persons with disabilities living in institutions in Germany, and tens of thousands more in institutions located in occupied Poland and occupied former Soviet Union. Millions of non-Jewish Poles, Soviet POWs and

other Europeans were killed by SS authorities by direct means such as shooting, hanging, and gassing, or indirectly, from brutal treatment and criminal neglect of the basic necessities: food, shelter and medical care sufficient for survival. The SS officials attempted to cover up their deeds by hiding or destroying evidence. Upon liberation of the camps in 1945, the Allied forces documented some of these shocking crimes through confiscated documents, photographs and film.





# Recovery from the War

The United Nations was founded in 1945 following the devastation of the Holocaust and the Second World War.



A little boy and his sister are immunized against diphtheria at the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration displaced persons assembly centre at Pirmasens, Germany (circa 1945-1947).  
PHOTO CREDIT: United Nations, Archives and Records Management Section

Its Charter aims to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” and to “reaffirm faith and dignity in fundamental human rights”. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), created by 44 nations in 1943 to help the victims of the war recover, preceded the establishment of the United Nations. On 1 February 1946, the newly formed United Nations General Assembly established a Committee to encourage Member States which were not signatories to join the UNRRA agreement and to make contributions to this humanitarian effort (Resolution 6 (I)). UNRRA distributed relief supplies, such as food, clothing, fuel and medicines, and provided shelter,

medical care and vocational training to refugees and survivors. It also helped to repatriate millions of displaced persons.

On 14 December 1946, the United Nations General Assembly passed resolution 58 (I), which transferred the advisory social welfare functions of UNRRA to the United Nations. During its resumed first session, the General Assembly assigned these responsibilities to the newly established United Nations entities, chiefly the United Nations Children’s Fund (resolution 57 (I) 11 December 1946), the World Health Organization (resolution 61 (I) 14 December 1946) and the International Refugee Organization (resolution 62 (I) 15 December 1946).







# United Nations and Genocide Prevention

After the war, the United Nations took an important step to help prevent genocide in adopting the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.



Adama Dieng, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, addresses the media during a press conference in Geneva, Switzerland, March 2014.  
PHOTO CREDIT: UN Photo / Jean-Marc Ferre

After the war, the United Nations took an important step to help prevent genocide in adopting the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide by General Assembly resolution 260 (III) A on 9 December 1948. This document bans acts committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group and declares genocide a crime under international law. At its fifty-second session in 1997, the United Nations General Assembly decided to convene the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court, subsequently held from 15 June to 17 July 1998 in Rome. The Rome Statute

creating the International Criminal Court (ICC) entered into force on 1 July 2002. The ICC, as the centerpiece of a system of international justice, is the only permanent court to try persons responsible for the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Further action was taken to help prevent genocide when the United Nations Secretary-General appointed a Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide in 2004 and a Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect in 2008. They have distinct but complementary mandates and work together to advance national and international efforts to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, as well as their incitement.







# United Nations Holocaust Remembrance and Education

The horrible crimes committed by the German Nazis and their collaborators are not to be forgotten.



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visits the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland, where over a million Jews and members of other minorities perished during the Second World War.  
PHOTO CREDIT: UN Photo / Evan Schneider

**O**n 24 January 2005, the United Nations General Assembly marked the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps with a Special Session. Then on 1 November 2005, the General Assembly passed an historic resolution on Holocaust Remembrance (60/7), which established an annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust and called for an outreach programme on the Holocaust and the United Nations to warn against the dangers of hatred, bigotry, prejudice and racism in order to help prevent genocide. The

theme of the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme is "Remembrance and Beyond", which highlights the two main elements of the Programme: honouring the memory of the victims and helping to prevent future acts of genocide. The Programme helps to ensure that the history of the Holocaust and its lessons are passed on to future generations. A second resolution (61/255) condemning Holocaust denial was adopted by the General Assembly on 26 January 2007. The Programme marked its tenth anniversary in 2015.







# Timeline of Events

30 January 1933	Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany	16 December 1942	German police authorities ordered mass roundup and deportation of Roma and Sinti
19 August 1934	A nationwide vote held in Germany to affirm Hitler's new position as an absolute leader (Führer)	19 April 1943	Warsaw Ghetto uprising began
15 September 1935	Nuremberg Race Laws enacted in Germany, depriving Jews of civil rights	2 August 1944	Murder of nearly 3,000 prisoners of the "Gypsy family camp" at Auschwitz-Birkenau
July 1936	The establishment of the first "Gypsy camp" (Zigeunerlager) at Marzahn, outside Berlin	7 October 1944	Jewish inmates blow up crematorium IV at Auschwitz-Birkenau
6-15 July 1938	Conference on Jewish refugees held in Evian-Les-Bains, France	27 January 1945	Soviets liberated Auschwitz camps
17 August 1938	All people in Germany whom the Nazis defined as Jews were required to carry identity cards marked with the letter "J" for Jew (Jude)	7-9 May 1945	Nazi Germany surrendered unconditionally
9 November 1938	"Kristallnacht" – widespread violence in Germany against the Jews	24 October 1945	United Nations Charter comes into force
15 November 1938	Jewish children expelled from German schools	20 November 1945	Nuremberg Trials of Nazi war criminals began
1 September 1939	Germany invaded Poland, beginning the Second World War	9 December 1948	United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
October 1939	Hitler authorized murder of people with physical and mental disabilities living in institutions in Germany	10 December 1948	United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
20 May 1940	Auschwitz I camp opened (in German-occupied Poland)	1 July 2002	Rome Statute entered into force creating the International Criminal Court
22 June 1941	SS and German police-manned killing squads invaded the former Soviet Union	12 July 2004	United Nations Secretary-General appointed the first Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide
15 September 1941	Yellow badge identifying Jews introduced in Germany	1 November 2005	United Nations General Assembly passed the Holocaust remembrance resolution (60/7)
29-30 September 1941	Tens of thousands of Jews killed at Babi Yar outside Kiev, Ukraine	27 January 2006	First International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust
8 October 1941	Auschwitz II (Birkenau) camp opened (in German-occupied Poland)	3 May 2006	United Nations Secretary-General appointed an Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention
15 October 1941	Systematic deportation of Jews from "Greater Germany" began	26 January 2007	United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution condemning Holocaust denial (61/255)
20 January 1942	Wannsee Conference held in Berlin	21 February 2008	United Nations Secretary-General appointed a Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

