

International Holocaust Remembrance Day Commemoration  
Cairo and Abu Dhabi (selected remarks)

Cairo, Egypt | January 24, 2022

Ambassador Jonathan R. Cohen, United States Ambassador to Egypt

Excellencies and distinguished guests. Today we commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day, honoring the lives and memories of millions of victims – six million Jews, in addition to Slavs, Roma, homosexuals, persons with disabilities, and countless others – who were murdered during the Holocaust. It is also an occasion to honor those individuals who helped protect human life in a dark and dangerous hour.

Today in far too many places around the world, complicity and silence have allowed intolerance and hatred to perpetuate. And it's a reminder of our duty to counter the tide of anti-Semitism and other bigotry that threatens the values that we hold dear: pluralism, tolerance, inclusion, and the freedoms of religion and expression.

We are pleased to partner with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on this event. The Museum has helped a new generation to bear witness to genocide, ensuring that we will continue to learn from the victims and the survivors of the Holocaust long into the future.

Teaching and learning about the full historic reality of the Holocaust is an important factor in combatting anti-Semitism and promoting religious freedom. Additionally, an understanding of the Holocaust reinforces the message that individuals can play a significant role in confronting persecution wherever it arises.

Many of those who survived the Holocaust were spared because of the courage of those who risked their lives to rescue Jews. The film screening today commemorates Arab heroes from North Africa who saved the lives of their Jewish neighbors. Although the noble acts by these individuals took many forms, their inspirational heroism resulted in incredible gratitude from those they saved, and their descendants. Their stories remind us that we're never powerless in confronting intolerance and hatred.

The film highlights a number of heroes. One of these courageous people was Dr. Mohamed Helmy, an Egyptian doctor living in Nazi Berlin during the 1940s. Dr. Helmy

secretly sheltered a Jewish teenager who was hunted by the Gestapo, saving her at a time of maximum danger, and putting himself at great risk. Thanks to Dr. Helmy's bravery, the young woman survived and immigrated to the United States after the war.

The U.S. government seeks to foster respect for religious pluralism and diversity of belief around the world. Religious freedom is one of our most cherished principles in the United States and it has played a pivotal role in our success as a nation, and we strive each day to live up to this ideal.

Egypt's historic multiculturalism and heritage of religious diversity have lent strength to Egyptian society. I commend the Government of Egypt for demonstrating its commitment to religious tolerance by preserving places of worship, and encourage its efforts to safeguard the religious freedom of its diverse religious communities.

International Holocaust Remembrance Day, established by the United Nations in 2005, was one of many actions born of the world's disgust with the horrors of the Holocaust. I have had the privilege to be involved in that work for decades now, from speeches that I gave at the UN while I was posted there to my work helping to found the International Task Force for Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research in 1998, which became The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, it started with three countries and now has over 35 member nations.

Last week, representatives from the United Nations, including a representative from Egypt, adopted a resolution condemning Holocaust denial and urging the development of educational programs to prevent genocidal acts in the future. This will help ensure that the history of the Holocaust remains an important reference point of global conscience.

We should strive to learn from the tragic lessons of history, and from the remarkable stories of courage that emerged in humanity's darkest periods. Today is also a call to action. The United States will continue to work with other countries and partners around the globe to fight bigotry and anti-Semitism, and to promote respect for the rights and dignity of every human being. We invite and encourage others to join us.

Thank you for your attention, and for attending today's event.

*Remarks provided by U.S. Embassy in Egypt ([link](#))*

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Mrs. Magda Haroun, Head of the Cairo Jewish community

### The Jews of Egypt and the Holocaust

Many may think that there is no relationship between the Jews of Egypt and the Holocaust, but this is not true. It is historically proven that although the Jews of the East in general and the Jews of Egypt, in particular, did not witness the same treatment that the Jews of Eastern Europe witnessed, whether in the late nineteenth century, in what was known as ethnic cleansing campaigns carried out by Tsarist Russia and called a pogrom, and later the Nazi extermination camps.

Because of these events, there were large migrations of Ashkenazi Jews from Eastern Europe heading to Palestine and Egypt, and the majority concentrated specifically in the cities of Cairo and Alexandria, which were known to be the cities of Cosmopolitans, in which Ashkenazi Jews, and before them Sephardi Jews, found a safe haven to live away from persecution and extermination.

This made family ties between many of the Jews of Egypt and those who remained with their families in Europe or those who emigrated to complete their studies..

Of course, I was not born during the outbreak of the Second World War, and therefore I cannot describe the condition of the Jews of Egypt, but I relied on the account of an eyewitness who is a member of the Jewish community in Cairo, who was like a father to me; Albert Arie, who unfortunately passed away several months ago, but left us with his memoirs which will be published soon. Allow me to read to you some lines of his memoir that may succeed in painting a picture of the situation back then.

“The cloud of war began to pass over Egypt in 1936, and all indications were that a war would take place, represented in the Spanish war, in addition to the Ethiopia war, in which Italy occupied Ethiopia and before it, Libya, so the interests of England from southern Sudan to Egypt became threatened, in addition to the alliance; the one between Mussolini and Hitler.

“The British began to develop the Egyptian army, and Egyptians began to enter the army.

“The Egyptian army at the time was not required to fight, but rather to protect the English army camps. During that period in 1938, an active campaign was launched by young Jews, calling for a boycott of German goods, and I remember that my sister and her friends were

going around the stationery shops to ask the merchants to stop selling and trading them. Germany threatened to stop the import of Egyptian cotton, but the boycott continued.

“My family was interested in the political events in Europe. I used to hear them talking in whispers about my mother’s cousin named Robert Goldenberg, who was expelled from Egypt in 1924 because of his joining the Egyptian Communist Party, and was deported to France after he was arrested. In 1942 he was exiled to Poland, and the train that took him there drove all its Jewish passengers to the gas chambers at Auschwitz.

“The first concern that there was a war was my parent’s concern for their families, who are in France, England, and Italy. From the beginning of September 1939, martial law was declared in Egypt, and orders were issued to reduce the lighting at night and to put a blue paper on windows and car headlights, and the streets were darkened.

“Despite that war-charged atmosphere, we traveled to Alexandria in 1939 during the summer vacation, when there was little danger and few air raids, and we also traveled in the following years until 1943.

“My life changed from the year 1940, and the events of the war were taking place in Egypt in the Western Desert. The Italian armies entered Egypt as far as the Sidi Barani area, and the English forces were able to repel the Italian forces as far as the Benghazi area in Libya.

“Germany intervened and sent the African Legion led by Rommel, which defeated the British forces and made them retreat to El Alamein. And the events remained like this until 1942 when the British leadership was changed and General Montgomery assumed the leadership.

“The airstrikes were always at night, and at the time of the strikes, we would go down to the bunker on the ground floor of the building. We felt war more in Alexandria than in Cairo.

“Alexandria was subjected to massive and indiscriminate bombardment, and the Raml station, Mansheya, and one of the Jewish synagogues were hit.

“The general atmosphere was filled with fear, to the extent that many of the wealthy Jews left Egypt for a temporary period, and some of them immigrated to Palestine and Sudan.

“This was due to the advance of the Germans at the gates of Alexandria, so there were friends of my father who offered to hide with them any valuables he owned, and to help him hide if he liked, in case the German armies entered Cairo.

“I cannot precisely imagine what would have happened to us if the Germans had entered Cairo, but despite all these fears, my father did not take any action. He was confident that nothing would happen, and I do not know the reason for that confidence! Is it confidence in the armies of the allies or what?”

“After Rommel’s defeat at El Alamein, the war began to move away from Egypt. Until it ended in 1945 and the extermination camps were opened and the remaining prisoners were released, and here the atrocities committed in them appeared to us, and we heard about them, but we did not imagine how horrific they were until the victorious Allied armies began publishing pictures and showing the films in which, they were depicted.

“That’s why I’m so sensitive to everyone who says there were no gas chambers, no extermination camps.”

I will end here reading from Albert Arie’s memoirs, and I would like to add that the best periods in the history of the Jews were when they lived in peace with their Muslim cousins. Let us work to restore that era and renounce violence and racism.

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Tad Stahnke, Director, International Educational Outreach (USHMM)

On behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC, I would like to welcome all of you to this special event in commemoration of International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

I would like to thank Ambassador Cohen and his team at the Embassy here in Cairo for co-sponsoring the event and for all of their assistance. And also a special thanks to Magda Haroun, the head of the Egyptian Jewish community, who is here with us today.

The United Nations General Assembly has designated January 27 as an annual day of commemoration, to honor the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, one and a half million of whom were children, and millions of other victims of Nazism.

Why do we remember this horrible event, a watershed in human history?

Just last week, the UN General Assembly reaffirmed that the Holocaust will forever be a warning to all people of the dangers of hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice.

And it urged all Member States to develop educational programmes to teach future generations the lessons of the Holocaust in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide.

This is also the mission of our Museum in Washington.

The Congress of the United States created our Museum because it believed that Americans should have a place to come and learn how and why the Holocaust happened. While the Holocaust took place in Europe, the Holocaust had global repercussions.

So as we honor the lives of the one-third of the world's Jews killed by the Nazis, the millions of others persecuted, and the thousands who chose to help, we seek both to commemorate this tragic history and to reflect on the lessons it holds for our lives today.

In the words of Holocaust survivor Estelle Laughlin, "It's not enough to curse the darkness of the past. We have to illuminate the future."

The lessons of the Holocaust have never been more relevant. Today, as we witness an alarming rise in antisemitism, racism and extremism, we must recommit ourselves to learning those lessons, and acting on them. That commitment to shaping the future is precisely what we owe to the victims of the past.

The theme we have chosen for today is about action. For example, Dr. Mohamed Helmy was an Egyptian physician living in Berlin who lost his job because of the racist Nazi laws. Dr. Helmy risked his life to save a Jewish family. We recognize the heroism of this Egyptian doctor in our permanent exhibition in Washington.

How the Holocaust touched Arab lands is not very well-known, and we thought that it would be appropriate to explore that today, for what we believe is the first Holocaust commemoration in Egypt.

We are very pleased to present the Egyptian premiere of the documentary film, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust in Arab Lands*. At its core, it tells the simple yet powerful story of people who chose to stand up on behalf of their fellow countrymen, regardless of religion - a choice we all hope we would have made but one that few actually did. And we have with us the man whose research gave birth to the film, a longtime friend and advisor to our Museum, Dr. Robert Satloff, who will be part of a panel discussion following the presentation.

Thank you very much.

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Dr. Robert Satloff, Executive Director of The Washington Institute

“The Holocaust Was an Arab Story Too”: Holocaust Remembrance in the Arab World

For me, this event is the culmination of twenty years of effort. Twenty years ago next month, I moved with my late wife and children from Washington to Morocco and began the adventure you saw on this film. This was five months after the attacks of September 11—at a time when many Americans were moving west, we were moving east. It was an unforgettable experience.

I traveled with a mission: to learn what really happened in Arab countries during the three years that Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Vichy France controlled North Africa.

I traveled with an idea: that within this history, there were lost stories of Arabs who saved Jews from persecution and death.

And I traveled with a hope: that those positive stories, along with the full picture of the different roles that Arabs played during that terrible time, would unlock the door to an honest, open, candid discussion with Arabs about the Holocaust. That is because only with an honest, open, candid discussion—such as the one we are having today—can we fulfill the requirement that the United Nations has set out for this day: to remember what happened and to recommit ourselves to the promise of “Never Again.”

As you can see, I learned that the Holocaust was an Arab story too. When I say that, let me be clear—I do not mean that Arabs have responsibility for the Holocaust. That is false and wrong—it is slanderous. The Nazis are responsible, along with their collaborators and partners.

What I mean is that a story whose main setting was in Europe also happened in Arab lands—racial laws, confiscation of property, forced labor, hostage taking, deportation, execution. And that, just as in Europe, ordinary people in Arab lands played roles. A certain number helped the persecutors, a larger number watched from the sidelines, and a small group risked their lives to protect Jews. In fact, based on my research, the percentage of rescuers compared to the total number of Jews killed in Arab lands was almost exactly the same—no more, no less—than it was among Europeans.

Why is this important? We know that the core lesson of the Holocaust is universal: that genocide can happen anywhere, and that we need to act early against hate and intolerance before it becomes a source of violence and terror. I believe these stories are important because they show that the history on which this lesson is based is, in many ways, universal too.

Think of Egypt—a great country with a full, rich history. One chapter of that history is the Battle of al-Alamein, one of the most pivotal moments of World War II. As we now know, it is a moment that meant the difference between life and death for tens of thousands of Egyptian Jews.

We all can learn from the horror, the evil, and the tragedy as well as from the courage, the faith, and the hope. And together, we can work to fulfill the promise of “Never Again.”



Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates | January 28, 2022

H.E. Noura Al Kaabi, Minister of Culture and Youth for United Arab Emirates

Ladies and Gentlemen,

May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you.

Today we gather to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and to honor the lives of the men, women, and children who perished as a result of this crime. First, we want to express our deepest sympathies with the victims of this event which shook all humanity... and resulted in atrocities that no peaceful, tolerance-loving human being can deny... or underestimate its consequences.

Our gathering today is not only to remember the victims and sympathize with them. It is an occasion for us all, as an international community, to pledge not to forget this crime.. and to continue telling the story of its victims... and to inform the upcoming generations of its repercussions and effects on humanity over the past decades... and to ensure that this never happens again in the future...and give hope to everyone to live in dignity in a world where justice, peace, and hope reign.

Allow me here to stress the importance of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations during the past years which had a great impact on raising awareness of the Holocaust and reminding the world of it, and preventing the occurrence of similar crimes; especially the United Nations Holocaust Awareness Program, which was established 17 years ago in cooperation with a global network of partners, and contributed to the development of multiple initiatives which include educational components, professional development programs, panel discussions, art exhibitions, and others.

Furthermore, we witnessed a few days ago a new resolution adopted by the United Nations calling on all countries to combat Holocaust denial and antisemitism, especially on social media... and it is an important step that requires concerted efforts between countries and digital platforms to combat content that calls for hatred, racism, the violation and abuse of human rights.

Brothers and sisters, the UAE, thanks to the vision of its leadership, is a shining beacon of tolerance and brotherhood initiatives, [it] has a central and peaceful coexistence among all people of different religions and sects by applying the principles of brotherhood and tolerance, establishing places of worship in mosques and churches and spreading freedom

of worship and belief in a harmonious manner among more than 200 different nationalities coexisting on its land... Our leaders realized that it's important to resort to the logic of reason and tolerance, away from the cycle of violence, and the importance of highlighting the tolerance of religions that urge love, harmony, and call for respect for humanity.

The UAE has taken advanced steps in this regard. In 2015, it issued the Anti-Discrimination and Hate Law, which criminalizes acts related to contempt for religions and their sanctities, combating all forms of discrimination and rejecting hate speech through various means and methods of expression.

The UAE is also an active international partner for international organizations, especially the United Nations and UNESCO, in its various programs concerned with raising awareness of the Holocaust and combating hate ideologies, we work to widen these values in our society and educational institutions, as well as understanding and respect for others. I affirm the UAE's commitment to combat antisemitism, racism, and other forms of intolerance that could provoke acts of violence against groups or ethnicities.

Moreover, the UAE opened a new page in the history of the Middle East with the signing of the Abrahamic Accords with Israel in 2020, which gave our region a real opportunity to enjoy peace, stability and prosperity after decades of conflicts and wars, which left nothing but destruction and the killing of innocents.

This treaty has contributed to the dissemination of a new policy based on the concept of ending conflict and tension, and the start of a new phase based on cooperation as the main entrance to achieving prosperity and strength for future generations... These are ideas and concepts that the UAE has always advocated throughout its history, and even put them in the document of human fraternity; a comprehensive document that opens the door to dialogue and builds bridges of communication with everyone in order to save humanity from the consequences of hatred and discrimination.. The UAE continuously calls to spread the values of tolerance, openness and coexistence among different societies, and condemns all forms of violence and discrimination by extremist terrorist groups, especially the Houthi group.

Yesterday, I read an article by Rabbi Marc Schneier, head of the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding, in the Arab News newspaper describing how the terrorist Houthi group carried out a policy of ethnic cleansing against Jews in Yemen, and ended their presence in a country where they lived for more than 3,500 years due to the harassment and abuse they

were subjected to.... This terrorist group continues its propaganda policy against Jews, against everyone, and they broadcast their poisonous ideas to influence the minds of young people... Our mission is to fight their extremist ideas, and to enlighten the minds of generations to build tolerant societies.

Ladies and Gentlemen, today, after more than seven decades of genocide, its effects and repercussions are still present in our world. Our human responsibility requires commemorating their memory and educating the world to their legacy. We are inspired by the stories of the victims, their exceptional courage, and their sacrifices in defense of human dignity.

May the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you.

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H.E. Nickolay Mladenov, Director of Research and Analysis Department - Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy

Your Excellency, the Minister of Culture of the U.A.E., Noura Al Kaabi; Your Excellency, The Ambassador of the State of Israel, Amir Hayek; Your Excellency, Sean Murphy, Chargé d’Affaires of the United States; dear Tad; dear Rob; Excellencies; Ambassadors, honorable guests and dear students:

It is indeed an honor for AGDA to host this important event on International Day in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. We have come together today to honor the memory of 6 million Jews and countless others killed in the Holocaust, to pay tribute to the heroism of those who have survived this tragedy, to recommit to always fight Antisemitism, Islamophobia, genocide, extremism and racism.

In the darkest days of the darkest chapter of human history when millions of people were systematically exterminated for no other reason but for who they were, the world sadly stayed silent. And those individuals, few of them, who were brave enough to stand up to the madness often paid for that with the price of their own lives. Today we will hear also some untold stories about Arabs, who like others in Europe, had the courage and humanity to save the lives of their neighbors and friends, those who didn’t stay silent.

The tragedy of the Holocaust is deeply painful and no words can truly encompass the suffering that it was. It is composed of millions of individual human tragedies. As the great Elie Wiesel said once, “We can only see glimpses of these tragedies through history.” Yet, collectively these tragedies have become the defining moment for the world that we live in

today. We, as human beings, are shaped by our experiences, our histories, our fears, our aspirations, just as much as our faith and our identity. But as with people, so it is with institutions and laws, yet experience with history of the dark tragedies of organized, systematic, and inhumane murder, many have changed and shaped many of the modern day institutions of international law and human rights law that we have.

The fear that genocide may happen again, the aspiration to protect humanity from such tragedy, are at the core of our belief in the universality of human rights. The United Nations basic declaration of human rights were founded to prevent the world from repeating the tragedies of the second world war. Today's event is particularly important for aspiring diplomats, our main target group here at the Academy.

They say that if a diplomat knows history, half of their job is done. But only half. The rest, you will learn here at the Academy. Knowing the history of the Holocaust, no matter what part of the world you come from, no matter what your faith is, is important to understand our world today. And this is even more important for Emirati diplomats. The UAE is not just a country that espouses the values of tolerance and coexistence. It is a country that has the strength and the conviction to fight against radicalism, to oppose extremism, and to stand up to hatred. So, if I have one message today to our students, that message is to know, to learn, and to study the tragic story of the Holocaust in order to strengthen your own convictions, to uphold the values of tolerance that your country holds so dearly.

But, also to look closely at the role that individuals—diplomats included—played in saving lives and speaking out against the hatred and the madness that the Holocaust was. In those stories, I think you'll see, how each and every one of us can and must make a difference for good against evil. Sadly, as time passes, as the memory of the tragedy fades and human stories become just numbers and statistics, the dangers of antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism and discrimination unfortunately increase.

Today, we live in a world that is obsessed with social media, of instant gratification; a world in which we prefer to speak to people who look, and think, and act like us. Less and less do we debate our ideas; less and less do we challenge our biases; less and less do we engage with those with whom we may disagree. Such a world, as we have today, is fraught with danger. That is why, on International Holocaust Day, we pledge to never forget, and never again, allow a tragedy of such propulsion to be repeated and as diplomats, no matter where we come from, no matter where we go, we have a sacred duty to bridge differences, to bring people together, and to seek to resolve conflicts by peaceful means. On behalf of Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy, I would like to thank, once again, our partners today for the

honor of hosting this symbolic ministerial event, the first in the Arab world, here in Abu Dhabi.

Thank you.

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Tad Stahnke, Director, International Educational Outreach (USHMM)

On behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC, I would like to welcome all of you to this special event in commemoration of International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

I would like to thank the Ministry of Culture for co-sponsoring this event, and the Minister for her important remarks. I would also like to thank the US Embassy in Abu Dhabi and the Diplomatic Academy.

The United Nations General Assembly designated January 27 as an annual day of commemoration, to honor the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, one and a half million of whom were children, and millions of other victims of Nazism.

Why do we remember this horrible event, a watershed in human history?

Just last week, the UN General Assembly reaffirmed that the Holocaust will forever be a warning to all people of the dangers of hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice.

And it urged all Member States to develop educational programmes to teach future generations the lessons of the Holocaust in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide.

This is also the mission of our Museum in Washington – as a warning against the dangers of hate and to prevent further acts of genocide.

The Congress of the United States created our Museum because it believed that Americans should have a place to come and learn how and why the Holocaust happened. While the Holocaust took place in Europe, it had global repercussions and it continues to have global relevance.

So as we honor the lives of the one-third of the world's Jews murdered by the Nazis, the millions of others persecuted, and the thousands who chose to help, we seek both to commemorate this tragic history and to reflect on the lessons it holds for our lives today.

In the words of Holocaust survivor Estelle Laughlin, “It’s not enough to curse the darkness of the past. We have to illuminate the future.”

The lessons of the Holocaust have never been more relevant. Today, as we witness an alarming rise in antisemitism, racism and extremism, we must recommit ourselves to learning those lessons, and acting on them. That commitment to shaping the future is precisely what we owe to the victims of the past.

The theme we have chosen for today is about action. About people who made choices. And it is a reminder that choices have consequences.

How the Holocaust touched Arab lands is not very well-known, and we thought that it would be appropriate to explore that today, for this very important Holocaust commemoration here in the United Arab Emirates.

We are very pleased to present the Emirati premiere of the documentary film, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust in Arab Lands*. At its core, it tells the simple yet powerful story of people who chose to stand up on behalf of their fellow countrymen, regardless of religion - a choice we all hope we would have made but one that few actually did. And we have with us the man whose research gave birth to the film, a longtime friend and advisor to our Museum, Dr. Robert Satloff, who will be part of a panel discussion following the presentation.

Thank you very much.

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Dr. Robert Satloff, Executive Director of The Washington Institute

Thank you very much to the sponsors – the Emirati ministry of culture and youth, the American embassy, and the US Holocaust Memorial –Special thanks to the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy, for hosting this pioneering event.

For me, this event is the culmination of twenty years of effort. Twenty years ago next month, I moved with my late wife and children from Washington to Morocco and I began the adventure you saw on this film. This was five months after the attacks of September 11 and most Americans were moving west but we were moving east. It was an unforgettable experience.

I traveled with a mission – to learn what really happened in Arab countries during the three

years that Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Vichy France controlled North Africa.

I traveled with an idea – that within that history, there were lost stories of Arabs who saved Jews from persecution and death. And I traveled with a hope – that those hopeful, positive stories, along with the full picture of the different roles that Arabs played during that terrible time – would unlock the door to an honest, open, candid discussion with Arabs about the Holocaust. That is because only with an honest, open, candid discussion – such as the one we are having today – can we fulfill the requirement that the United Nations has set out for this day: to remember what happened and to recommit ourselves to the promise of “Never Again.”

As you can see, I learned that the Holocaust was an Arab story, too. When I say that, let me be clear -- I do not mean that Arabs have responsibility for the Holocaust. That is false and wrong – it is slanderous. The Nazis are responsible, along with their collaborators and partners.

What I mean is that a story whose main setting was in Europe also happened in Arab lands – racial laws, confiscation of property, forced labor, hostage-taking, deportation, execution. And that, just as in Europe, ordinary people in Arab lands played roles – a certain number helped the persecutors, a larger number watched from the sidelines, and a small group risked their lives to protect Jews. In fact, based on my research, the percentage of rescuers compared to the total number of Jews killed in Arab lands was almost exactly the same – no more, no less – than it was among Europeans.

Why is this important? We know that the core lesson of the Holocaust is universal – that genocide can happen anywhere, and that we need to act early against hate and intolerance before it becomes a source of violence and terror. I believe these stories are important because they show that the history on which that is based is, in many ways, universal, too.

Think of the Emirates – a young country only now celebrating fifty years since its founding. But your country now sits on the Security Council of the United Nations, and shares with some of the oldest countries of the world the same profound obligation that has motivated leaders since that organization was founded in the ashes of the world war and the Holocaust.

We all can learn from the horror, the evil, the tragedy as well as the courage, the faith and the hope. And together, we can work to fulfill the promise of “Never Again.”