Yom Hashoah – Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day
16 April 2015 – 27 Nissan 5775
Letter from the International Committee
"Unto Every Person There Is A Name"

Introduction

The worldwide Holocaust memorial project "Unto Every Person There is a Name", now in its twenty-sixth consecutive year, is a unique project designed to perpetuate the memory of the Six Million - among them one-and-a-half million Jewish children – murdered while the world remained silent. The project allows participants the space and time to memorialize them not only as a collective, but as individuals – one at a time - through the public recitation of their names on Yom Hashoah – Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day - and thus help to restore their identity and dignity.

The most fundamental feature of the Shoah is the systematic murder of six million innocent Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators for the sole reason that they were born Jewish. Each of their deaths was a separate, distinct tragedy that together has caused indelible lasting trauma to the Jewish people. By personalizing the individual tragedies of the Jewish victims of Nazi Germany and their collaborators, "Unto Every Person There is a Name" counters persistent efforts by enemies of the State of Israel and the Jewish people to deny the reality of the Holocaust and cast it as history's seminal hoax. "Unto Every Person" also defies attempts to universalize the Holocaust and cast off its principal characteristic as a unique calamity of the Jewish people, while also building appreciation of the Shoah's tragic impact on the Jewish reality until this very day.

The "Unto Every Person" project also focuses attention on the urgent need to recover additional names of Holocaust victims, to reflect on this year's central theme for Yom Hashoah and to focus attention on contemporary forms of antisemitism which continue to plague many countries around the world.

A World-Wide Effort

"Unto Every Person There Is A Name" ceremonies are conducted around the world in hundreds of Jewish communities through the efforts of four major Jewish organizations: B'nai B'rith International, Nativ, the World Jewish Congress and the World Zionist Organization.

The project is coordinated by Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, in consultation with the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs and enjoys the official auspices of President of the State of Israel, the Hon. Reuven Rivlin (see President's letter, Attachment I).

In Israel, "Unto Every Person There Is A Name" is an integral part of the official Yom Hashoah commemoration ceremonies, with the central events held at the Knesset and Yad Vashem with the participation of elected officials, in addition to local events throughout the country.

Personalizing the Holocaust

The International Committee of "Unto Every Person There is A Name" takes pride in the fact that its raison d'être – advocating the personalization of the Jewish tragedy of the Holocaust – has gained wide recognition in Israel and around the Jewish world as hundreds of Jewish communities now participate in this project. As time passes and fewer witnesses remain, it is of great importance to create a personal link between the Jewish people today and those who perished under the Nazi genocidal regime. Ceremonies in which names of Holocaust victims are recited - together with such information as their age, place of birth and place of murder - personalize the tragedy of the Holocaust. Emphasis is thus put on the millions of individuals – men, women and children - who were lost to the Jewish people, and not solely on the cold intangibility embodied in the term "The Six Million". "Unto Every Person There is a Name" rests on the success of Yad Vashem's Shoah Victims' Names Recovery Project that to date has incontrovertibly identified over four million names of Shoah victims and continues its relentless quest to recover all the six million names.

The Anguish of Liberation and the Return to Life:
Seventy Years Since the End of WWII
The Central Theme for Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day 2015

The day of liberation, the one for which every Jew had longed throughout the years of the Holocaust, was for most a day of crisis and emptiness, a feeling of overwhelming loneliness as they grasped the sheer scale of the destruction on both the personal and communal level. At the war's end, in the early spring of 1945, it became apparent that some six million Jews had been murdered – about one-third of world Jewry. Those who had survived were scattered throughout Europe: tens of thousands of survivors of the camps and death marches, liberated by the Allied armies on German soil and in other countries, were in a severely deteriorated physical condition and in a state of emotional shock. Others emerged for the first time from various places of hiding and shed the false identities they had assumed, or surfaced from partisan units with whom they had cast their lot and in whose ranks they had fought for the liberation of Europe. In the wake of international agreements

signed at the end of the war, some 200,000 additional Jews began to make their way back West from the Soviet Union, where they had fled and managed to survive the war years.

During the Holocaust, many Jews lived with the feeling that they were the last Jews to survive. Nevertheless, after liberation, survivors went far and wide in search of family members, friends and loved ones who might also have stayed alive, against all odds. Many decided to go back to their prewar homes, but they encountered utter destruction. In some places, especially in Eastern Europe, Jews met with severe outbreaks of antisemitism – some 1,000 Jews were murdered in the initial postwar years by the locals. The most appalling episode was the Kielce pogrom, in Poland – a violent attack on Jewish residents in July 1946 in which 42 Jews were murdered – some of them the sole survivors of entire families – and many others were injured.

At the same time, many survivors sought to leave Europe and move to places where they could safely rebuild their lives and their homes. About two-thirds of the survivors who chose not to remain in Europe after the war set their sights on *Eretz Israel*. Yet going to Israel was a formidable struggle, in view of the policies imposed by the British Mandate that barred them from entering into the Land. As part of the effort to break through the borders and prohibitions, the illegal immigration movement – the *Ha'apala* – was organized, whereby survivors boarded old vessels in various Mediterranean ports and sailed for *Eretz Israel*. The remaining third immigrated to the US, Latin America, South Africa, Canada and Australia.

(For further information on this year's theme and texts that can be used in ceremonies, see Attachment II)

Contemporary Forms of Antisemitism

Taking place on Yom Hashoah – the day marking the most heinous antisemitic outrage in history - "Unto Every Person there is a Name" ceremonies also provide a poignant opportunity to focus attention on contemporary forms of this scourge. Antisemitism - in its numerous forms and emanating from divergent sources - remains a unique and dangerous phenomenon that continues to plague societies in most countries around the world, including those in which some of the worst atrocities of the Holocaust were perpetrated, in the Palestinian Authority, and in much of the Arab world.

Any review of antisemitism over the past year must focus on the heinous January 9 Shabbat-eve rampage at the Kosher market in Paris by Islamic radical Amedy Coulibaly that left four innocent Jews dead. That murderous attack – along with the Brussels Jewish Museum shooting perpetrated on May 24 by Islamist Mehdi Nemmouche that left four Jews dead and mob sieges against synagogues during the summer's Protective Edge operation – threw into stark relief the dangerous, sharp rise in violent antisemitic acts and expressions that have plagued many countries over the past year.

(For further information see Attachment III)

Expanded Global Activity to Recover Names of Shoah Victims

"Unto Every Person There is a Name" events provide a unique opportunity to continue the quest to collect the names of all the Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

Since its inception, one of Yad Vashem's central missions has been the attempt to recover the name and personal story of each and every victim of the Shoah. While the Germans sought not only to destroy the Jews but also to obliterate any memory of them, The Shoah Victims' Names Recovery Project realizes our moral imperative to remember each victim as a human being, and not merely a number. To learn more about the project click here.

The relentless endeavor has to date identified 4.5 million names of Shoah victims, documented in the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names online at: www.yadvashem.org. Roughly half of the victims' names in the database were derived from various archival sources and postwar commemoration projects. The other half are recorded on "Pages of Testimony" submitted by relatives and others who knew of the victims. The outstanding universal value of the Pages of Testimony Memorial Collection has been recognized by UNESCO, which inscribed it in its prestigious Memory of the World Register in 2013.

The entire online Names Database, where one may access the victims' brief histories and, when available, photographs, and submit additional names, is available in English, Hebrew and Russian. Nearly 2 million victims' names are still missing, and it is incumbent upon us today, to recover them before the generation that remembers is no longer with us. "Unto Every Person" ceremonies should be utilized to call upon members of your community to complete a "Page of Testimony" for each unregistered victim, or to volunteer to assist others with this urgent task.

(For further information, see Attachment IV).

Recitation Ceremony Planning Recommendations

1. Outreach: The International Committee urges organizers of "Unto Every Person" ceremonies to invite all Jewish organizations and institutions in their community, including schools, synagogues of the various streams and community centers, and Israeli diplomatic representatives, to take an active part in the name recitation ceremonies and in the Names Recovery Campaign. The Committee specifically requests that the four sponsoring organizations be actively engaged in each ceremony and that all local agencies cooperate to make the ceremony as inclusive and meaningful as possible. The Committee also recommends that non-Jewish groups and leaders in the larger community be invited to participate in the recitation ceremonies, which can be held in an appropriate public setting.

2. Press: Local and national media, especially television, should be encouraged to cover the ceremonies. Any visual products from the ceremony should be sent to Yad Vashem in order to be archived and exhibited in the future.

3. Family names retrieval: We urge you to encourage members of your community to search for names of relatives and friends who were victims of the Holocaust, to compile your own personal and local lists of names and family members for commemoration, and to submit names to Yad Vashem's Database (see above).

4. Names recovery campaign: Should you choose to utilize the ceremony to kick-off a names recovery campaign, please refer to Yad Vashem's Community Outreach Guide for new resources. Packed with tips and materials, including short movie clips and print-quality files of promotional materials, this resource will enable Jewish communities and educators to plan and implement meaningful programs, names collection events and related activities around Yom Hashoah and throughout the year.

5. Ceremony requirements: The recitation ceremonies require coordination and planning but involve little expenditure. Basic requirements for the ceremony are:
* Poem "Unto Every Person There Is A Name" by Israeli poet Zelda (Attachment V)
* Lists of names:
  i. A list of names of Holocaust victims relevant to this year's theme is available here: http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/downloads/pdf/holocaust_victims_1945.pdf
  ii. Other lists are available on-line here: (http://www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/downloads/name_reading_ceremonies.asp)
  iii. **In order to add a further element to your ceremony, there is now a list of names of Holocaust victims with links to their Pages of Testimony, which are all displayed on the domed ceiling of the Hall of Names in Yad Vashem's Holocaust History Museum. The Pages can either be printed in advance of the ceremony and given out, or else, participants in the ceremony can be informed in advance about this list, and encouraged to print out a Page of Testimony of a particular individual, whose memory the participant can then undertake to perpetuate. To access this list, click here:** http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/downloads/pdf/names-with-pots.pdf
* Pages of Testimony (http://www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/downloads/pages_of_testimony.asp)
*Yizkor and El Maleh Rahamim prayer texts (available in Hebrew) http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/he/education/ceremonies/pdf/tehilim.pdf
* Six Yizkor candles
* A sound system
* Professional-standard video equipment
* A table or podium covered in black
* Sufficient volunteers to recite names
* Master of Ceremonies

6. Central Ceremony at Yad Vashem: The official State ceremony marking the commencement of Yom Hashoah will take place at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem on Wednesday, April 15 at 20:00 (8 p.m.) Israel time. The ceremony is broadcast live on Israel's Channels One, Two and Ten accessible via the internet, which might allow you to incorporate it into your own ceremony. Furthermore, the ceremony will be available online on the Yad Vashem website shortly after it concludes. The recording could be utilized as an element in your own ceremony.

We are available to answer any questions that might arise and provide additional material as necessary to ensure the success of your event.

Sincerely,

Members of the "Unto Every Person There Is A Name" International Committee: **Inbal Kvity Ben Dov, Dr. Alexander Avram** (Yad Vashem); **Alan Schneider** (B'nai B'rith International); World Jewish Congress; **Naftaly Levy** (World Zionist Organization); **Amb. Gideon Behar** (Israel Foreign Ministry); **Masha Novikov** (Nativ).

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Attachment II

The Anguish of Liberation and the Return to Life: Seventy Years Since the End of WWII

The Central Theme for Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day 2015

Prof. Dina Porat

The partisan Abba Kovner used to tell the story of a Jewish woman survivor he met in Vilna, when he arrived at the site of the destroyed ghetto with the Soviet liberating soldiers. For almost a year, the woman and her young daughter had hidden in a small nook, and had come out from their hiding place for the first time after liberation. As her mother broke down in tears, relating their experiences for the first time, the child asked her, surprised: "*Mame, men tor shoyn weinen? – Mommy, is it okay to cry now?"*

On 9 May 1945, when the defeated Germans finally capitulated to the Allied Forces, great joy spread throughout the world. The most horrific of wars had come to an end – a war that had wreaked destruction on a scale unprecedented in history: roughly 60 million dead; millions of refugees of every nationality spread throughout Europe; economies and infrastructures shattered. Soldiers from the US and the Soviet Union banded together on the smoldering ruins of Berlin, and throughout the European continent, barely freed from the clutches of the Nazi regime, military parades and celebrations followed one another in close succession. Yet one nation did not take part in the general euphoria – the Jews of Europe. For them, victory had come too late.

The day of liberation, the one for which every Jew had longed throughout the years of the Holocaust, was for most a day of crisis and emptiness, a feeling of overwhelming loneliness as they grasped the sheer scale of the destruction on both the personal and communal level. At the war's end, in the early spring of 1945, it became apparent that some six million Jews had been murdered – about one-third of world Jewry. Those who had survived were scattered throughout Europe: tens of thousands of survivors of the camps and death marches, liberated by the Allied armies on German soil and in other countries, were in a severely deteriorated physical condition and in a state of emotional shock. Others emerged for the first time from various places of hiding and shed the false identities they had assumed, or surfaced from partisan units with whom they had cast their lot and in whose ranks they had fought for the liberation of Europe. In the wake of international agreements signed at the end of the war, some 200,000 additional Jews began to make their way back West from the Soviet Union, where they had fled and managed to survive the war years.

With the advent of liberation, piercing questions arose in the minds of the survivors: How would they be able to go back to living a normal life, to build homes and families? And having survived, what obligation did they bear towards those who had not – was it their duty to preserve and commemorate their legacy? Were the survivors to avenge

them, as they demanded before their death? The overwhelming majority of survivors took no revenge on the Germans, but set out on a path of rehabilitation, rebuilding and creativity, while commemorating the world that was no more.

During the Holocaust, many Jews lived with the feeling that they were the last Jews to survive. Nevertheless, after liberation, survivors went far and wide in search of family members, friends and loved ones who might also have stayed alive, against all odds. Many decided to go back to their prewar homes, but they encountered utter destruction. In some places, especially in Eastern Europe, Jews met with severe outbreaks of antisemitism – some 1,000 Jews were murdered in the initial postwar years by the locals. The most appalling episode was the Kielce pogrom, in Poland – a violent attack on Jewish residents in July 1946 in which 42 Jews were murdered – some of them the sole survivors of entire families – and many others were injured.

The Kielce pogrom became a turning point in the history of the *She'erit Hapleita*, the surviving remnant as Holocaust survivors began to be known, in Poland. In the eyes of many, it was the final proof that no hope remained for rebuilding Jewish life in those lands. During the months following the pogrom, the flow of migrants from Eastern and Southern Europe increased manifold: In any way they could, Jews tried to make their way west and southward. Young surviving Jews, together with delegates and soldiers from the Land of Israel, aided and directed this exodus, the mass migration that came to be known as *Habricha*, "The Escape" – a grand-scale attempt to transfer as many Jews as possible to territories controlled by British and US troops in Germany, as a step before leaving Europe. Upon arrival in these regions, refugees joined the tens of thousands of Jewish survivors liberated in Central Europe, and together they amassed in the DP camps across Germany, Austria and Italy. Oftentimes, these camps were established at the sites of former Nazi concentration camps, among them Bergen-Belsen and Buchenwald.

The activities of the *She'erit Hapleita* in the DP camps were a powerful expression of the survivors' efforts to return to life after the war. As early as the first days and weeks after liberation, survivors began to recover and organize themselves, despite the grief, physical weakness and extensive hardships. They formed new families and an independent leadership, set up educational and foster-care facilities for children and youth, published dozens of newspapers and magazines, collected testimonies on the fate of Jews during the Holocaust, and became a significant factor in the Zionist movement's aspirations and in related international politics.

At the same time, many survivors sought to leave Europe and move to places where they could safely rebuild their lives and their homes. About two-thirds of the survivors who chose not to remain in Europe after the war set their sights on *Eretz Israel*. Yet going to Israel was a formidable struggle, in view of the policies imposed by the British Mandate that barred them from entering into the Land. As part of the effort to break through the borders and prohibitions, the illegal immigration movement – the *Ha'apala* – was organized, whereby survivors boarded old vessels in various Mediterranean ports

and sailed for *Eretz Israel*. The remaining third immigrated to the US, Latin America, South Africa, Canada and Australia.

The *Ha'apala*, as well as immigration to other countries, was a pivotal stage in the survivors' postwar recovery process. Holocaust survivors contributed, each in their own way, to building a better world for themselves, for their children and for future generations that would never know the horrors of the Holocaust. As survivor Riva Chirurg, who lost dozens of family members in the Lodz ghetto and at Auschwitz, said: "If more than 20 people, second and third generation, gather around my *Pesach Seder* table, then I have done my share."

The author is Chief Historian of Yad Vashem.

Texts

"That day… was the saddest day of my life"

"That day, January 17 [1945], was the saddest day of my life. I wanted to weep, not from joy but from sorrow. I am not saying that I wept, but that I wanted to shed tears – for the first time. The tank crews blowing kisses, the flowers hurled at them, the elation of the crowd, the sense of freedom and liberation, and we – Zivia and I and the dog – standing there among the crowd, lonely, orphaned, lost and only too well aware that there was no longer a Jewish people."

Yitzhak (Antek) Zuckerman, who fought in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

… The camp guard who came to open the gate said: "You are free and you can leave."

All the guards with the dogs that used to stand in every corner had disappeared. It was all gone, as though it had never been. It was one of the miracles!

The Russians entered, and we were in such a condition that no one moved, no one went out. We did not laugh, we were not happy, we were apathetic – and the Russians came. A general came in, he was Jewish. He told us that he was delighted, as this was the first camp in which he had found people still alive. He started to cry, but we didn't. He wept and we didn't.

Bela Braver, deported to Auschwitz, liberated at Lichtewerden, Czechoslovakia, by the Red Army

“Freedom is Relative. Very Much So…”

…In the morning we woke up and there was unbelievable quiet. The watchtower was empty. There were no SS men inside. All of a sudden we heard a sound like rumbling coming along the road. By the way, I have to say we were too weak. We were just sitting around the block. We couldn’t move anymore. But some girls ventured outside. There were cars and tanks coming. We heard it. We were very frightened. Maybe the Germans had recaptured something and they were coming back. But then somebody screamed and said these were Americans. The Americans came in and liberated us.

…It was freedom. We were elated. We personally, my group, were too weak to jump up and greet the soldiers because we were already beyond anything. We were drained, exhausted. We just couldn’t move. But everybody was running to them. They were giving out their ration packages. They warned us right then and there that we shouldn’t gorge ourselves on food because such gorging could cause sudden death. We slowly went up and got some food.

You were praying all those months to be liberated and then it hits you all of a sudden – here you are free. But after it sank in, the freedom – I am speaking for myself – I realized that I was hoping the whole time that I would see my father and maybe, hope beyond hope, my mother, although I knew that this was not a realistic hope. But my father, I was sure I would meet him. I was positive. But still there were doubts and I realized that I had to start thinking about the fact of what would happen if I would not [find him].

While I was elated by the freedom, there was tremendous fear. Who would I find? We had survived this but we now have to go back to civilization. How would we react in a normal world again. We are two young girls without anything. Who will take care of us? What will we do? It was euphoria, but it was a very ambivalent feeling. We were frightened.

It’s hard to imagine that you have these feelings, but that was the next step, because once we are liberated what are we going to do? We had nothing. We were afraid that we would have nobody. We need someone who would spoil us, that would take care of us. Mostly I wanted somebody very badly; I was sort of in charge of my sister and this other girl. I wanted someone to take

care of me and relieve me of this burden. It shouldn't be my problem anymore. I wanted to be somebody else's problem. I cannot explain it.

…Freedom is relative. Very much so. The thought of the future weighed very heavily on me. Obviously we knew that it was no longer our problem but still we have to make a future for ourselves and how would we make that future?

Eva Braun, deported to the Auschwitz and Reichenbach camps, liberated at Salzwedel by the US Army"I'm Not Alone Anymore…"

…The gates were opened and we went out toward the town of Salzwedel…I was with my relative, Miriam, and hand in hand we walked to town, like everone else… I will never forget that as we were walking along an avenue with trees, on the sidewalk, with American jeeps on both sides of the road, a German woman came toward us carrying stockings. These were stockings of a kind that I certainly was not wearing then, nylons.

I stopped her. My cousin pinched me and said:
"They will kill us, what do you want, we have been liberated, they will kill us."
The German woman told me that she had daughters at home and that she had to bring them the stockings because during the war they didn't have any.

I told her: "Before the war I had a father and a mother, and now I don't. Now you will drop all those stockings and tear them to ribbons with your teeth and your hands."
I stood beside her until she had torn the stockings. My cousin kept pinching me until I was almost blue. Then I said to the German woman:
"Now pick up the bits of stockings and take them to your girls."
That was how I let off steam…

Suddenly, just as we finished with that, one of the American soldiers said:
"Maidele, maidele, do you speak Yiddish?"
"Yo," [Yes] I replied.
"Come here, come here, " he said in Yiddish. He asked me why I had done that to the German woman. I said:
"What I did was for my mother, for my father, for my brother."
I started to cry. There was a huge black soldier there and he cried, too. The black soldier took a necklace from around his neck and put it around my neck. We were all crying.

…In the children's house in Sweden I was the only girl who had no one. People came from the Red Cross and called out names, maybe someone was still alive. Of course I gave the name of my brother, because father had surely not [survived]. A month later they called my name over the loudspeaker. But I didn't hear because I was busy with the children. Someone said:
"Evika, someone is looking for you."
I went to the office and they handed me a telegram. It was from my brother! The Red Cross had found my brother at Cluj! I left the office holding the cable like a flag, and shouting:
"I'm not alone anymore, I have a brother, I'm not alone anymore." Everyone cried, really….

Eva Goldberg, deported to Auschwitz and Horneburg camps, liberated at Salzwedel, Germany by the US Army

“For Us, the Victory had Come Too Late, Much Too Late…”

I don’t remember who was the first that morning to look out of the window. I well remember his cry of joy: “Boys, the Russians are here.” Thus, we were liberated…

…. As I walked along the road two uniformed men on bicycles came up to me… The two men introduced themselves. They were Jews, officers of the Polish Armored Corps…Suddenly one of the women asked the officers to tell their story…. And then, almost immediately the mood of all of us changed. The joyful atmosphere disappeared, giving way to grief and sorrow. The lieutenant told his story…. To their great sorrow, in all the liberated places they found no Jews. The Germans had murdered an entire nation – our nation. After entering Poland, the lieutenant asked for a few days leave to visit his native Vilna. “There I found only stones, the familiar buildings and streets with none of the people who used to live there before,” the officer told us.

On the long march through Poland, in the hundreds of towns and villages through which they passed, there were no more Jews. Everywhere there were only extermination sites and mass graves. Theresienstadt was the first place they had met so many Jews, thousands of Jews who had survived the Nazi rule.

Thus, we learned that our fate was much worse than we had expected. Although we had seen a lot and experienced the worst, we still had hoped, still had dreamed. All those days we had struggled to survive, hour after hour, day after day, there had been no time to grasp the enormity of our tragedy. Now everything became clear. No longer were our families waiting for us; no homes to go back to. For us, the victory had come too late, much too late.

Shmuel Krakowski, liberated at Theresienstadt

“As I looked around, I was all alone…”

Although we always hoped that one day we would be liberated, we had known that our actual chances of survival were almost non-existent….Yet each of us hoped that maybe God would be gracious to him and grant him the gift of life despite all odds. In our minds, whenever we thought about the possibility of surviving we always envisioned liberation at the hands of the Russians…As free people , we would then resume our lives where we had left off…start a normal life as before the war.

How different was the reality from our visions! Never in our imaginary scenario were the Americans in the picture. Never in all those long four years did we foresee that liberation would come to us in Dachau. The whole thing was so fantastic that for days we were in a fog. Every couple of minutes, I would instinctively turn around to see whether or not a guard was following me. When there was none, I still could not believe it…

This state of fantasy, this state of exultation, quickly evaporated, and reality set in. Not only were we wrong on how and where liberation would come to us, but we were wrong on just about every aspect of our first days of freedom. Who could have thought that hundreds of people would still die after liberation? Yet people were dying, and the causes for death were not only physical. Slowly, mental problems started to surface too. Feelings of happiness over our miraculous deliverance got intertwined with feelings of sorrow and guilt, of fear and apathy. We had been torn apart by scenes of death all around us. Daily somebody dear to us succumbed and died before our eyes. Hundreds had been in a life and death struggle, not knowing whether or no they would make it to the next day. Most of our friends had turned into *Musselmen* and their survival was greatly in question….The only thing, short of good medical care, that kept many people alive was the enormous inner drive to survive, to spite the Nazis and the whole indifferent world which had allowed us to reach this state. Liberation was such a major event that we had to live. Besides, we wanted to survive just in case anyone of our dear ones was alive somewhere.

But while the drive to live was the dominant feeling, we were also haunted by feelings of guilt. Why did we survive? Why were we chosen to live while millions of Jews had perished? Were the others sinners while we were saints? What wrong had the others done, beyond having been born Jewish? We were born Jewish too, yet the hand of the devil had somehow missed us.

This guilt feeling was not easy to bear. Suddenly fear and apathy would set in…

As I worked out the balance of living to dead, fear and despair quickly began to supplant my feelings of elation over our deliverance. As I looked around, I was all alone, in the heart of an antisemitic Germany and an equally antisemitic world which was not willing to admit its guilt. Who cared about the Jews anyway? If anything, the world was sorry that there were any survivors at all! My main hope was that perhaps one of my dear ones had survived. This was the best I could make of my liberation.

William Mishell, survivor of the Kovno ghetto, liberated at Dachau in April 1945

“The Hour of Liberty Rang Out Grave and Muffled…”

… For us even the hour of liberty rang out grave and muffled, and filled our souls with joy and yet with a painful sense of pudency, so that we should have liked to wash our consciences and our memories clean from the foulness that lay upon them; and also with anguish, because we felt that this should never happen, that now nothing could ever happen good and pure enough to rub out our past, and that the scars of the outrage would remain within us for ever, and in the memories of those who saw it, and in the places where it occurred and in the stories that we should tell of it. Because, and this is the awful privilege of our generation and of my people, no one better than us has ever been able to grasp the incurable nature of the offence, that spreads like a contagion. It is foolish to think that human justice can eradicate it. It is an inexhaustible fount of evil; it breaks the body and the spirit of the submerged, it stifles them and renders them abject; it returns as ignominy upon the oppressors, it perpetuates itself as hatred among the survivors, and swarms around in a thousand ways, against the very will of all, as a thirst for revenge, as a moral capitulation, as denial, as weariness, as renunciation.

These things, at that time blurred, and felt by most as no more than an unexpected attack of mortal fatigue, accompanied the joy of liberation for us. This is why few among us ran to greet our saviors, few fell in prayer.

Primo Levi, liberated at Auschwitz on 27 January 1945

“There Is No Past, No Present, No Future…”

“I am sad. Everything saddens me. The general situation of the Jews, the attitude of our American ‘liberators’, the great tragedy of our people, my individual tragedy, an uprooted man, a miserable shade, a man with no shadow… how enormous is each person’s own tragedy. Especially if one is sensitive. How does it feel to bear all the burden, all the great sorrow, the endless pain? There is no past, no present, no future, rootless, with no shadow. Terrible, terrible, with no future, no hope. Justice and revenge. Justice! Justice? Where? A world of evil, a world of violence, falsehood, deceit. How huge is our disappointment! There is no God, no justice, no honesty! There is nothing, everything is false, everything.”

From the diary of Dr. David Wdowinski, one of the most prominent members of the underground in the Warsaw Ghetto, Feldafing camp, 6 October 1945.

“Would I Ever Again Know What It Meant To Be Alive?”

Buchenwald was liberated on April 11, 1945. Actually the camp liberated itself. Armed members of the Resistance rose up a few hours before the magical appearance of the first American units… Some of us organized a *minyan* and said *Kaddish*. That *Kaddish*…. still echoes in my ears. It was a thanksgiving for having spared us, but it was also an outcry: “Why did You not spare so many others?”

Strangely, we did not “feel” the victory. There were no joyous embraces, no shouts or songs to mark our happiness, for that word was meaningless to us. We were not happy. We wondered whether we ever would be.

Later I would hear speeches and read articles hailing the Allies’ triumph over Hitler’s Germany. For us Jews, there was a slight nuance: Yes, Hitler lost the war, but we didn’t win it. We mourned too many dead to speak of victory.

I wandered the camp dazed and confused, joining one group only to drift to another. Glancing at the sky, staring at the ground, I was looking for something, though I didn’t know what. Maybe someone to whom I could say, “Hey, look at me, I’m alive!” Another word that didn’t mean much. Would I ever again know what it meant to be alive?

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To live far from my father, my father who stayed behind, in the invisible cemetery of Buchenwald. I look up at the sky, and there is his grave. When I raise my eyes to heaven, it is his grave I see.

Don’t leave me, Father. No, it is I who am leaving you.

From now on we will be together only in our dreams.

I often close my eyes just to see you.

You are going away, or I am, yet the distance between us is unchanging.

I am leaving the camp, going toward a new life.

And you remain, a fistful of ashes. Not even.

Elie Wiesel

“We Do Not Comprehend Our Freedom…”

“We… celebrate our liberation, but at the same time, it is a time for mourning for us. For every bright and joyful day at present and in the future is shadowed by tragic events of the past years… We are free now, but we don’t know how to begin our free but unfortunate lives… We have forgotten how to laugh, we cannot cry anymore. We do not comprehend our freedom.” Dr. Zalman Grinberg, survivor of Dachau, spoke these words at the first ceremony marking liberation from Nazism, in the summer of 1945.

“I went home. I didn’t have anywhere I could stay… The gatekeeper was living in the house and wouldn’t let me go in… I also had aunts and family. I went to see all their apartments. There were non-Jews living in every one. They wouldn’t let me in. In one place, one of them said, ‘What did you come back for? They took you away to kill you, so why did you have to come back?’ I decided: I’m not staying here, I’m going.”

From the testimony of Shoshana Stark

“Suddenly I’m standing in the middle of the city and I ask myself, “So what? Home – gone, family – gone, children – gone, my friends are gone, Jews – gone. Here and there would be a Jew I hardly knew. This is what I fought for? This is what I stayed alive for? Suddenly I realized that my whole struggle had been pointless, and I didn’t feel like living.”

From the testimony of Shmuel Shulman Shilo

“We are the English Army – You are liberated.”

“All of a sudden out of the blue sky we saw tanks rolling into the camp… We had no idea what kind of tanks they were. Is it the Americans? Is it the Germans? Is it … We just didn’t know. We just suddenly panicked… And loudspeakers started speaking loudly in German and in English:

“You are liberated.”

“We are the English Army – You are liberated.”

“Stay away from danger and stay inside and we’ll help you.”

“Stay alive. Try to hang in there. We’re here to help you.”

And we knew we were liberated. Needless to say, our feelings were very mixed. So we were liberated. So thank God we are alive. But are we really thankful? Who are we? Where are we going to go? What are we? Nothing.

That’s okay, we’re alive.”

From the testimony of Judy Rosenzweig on the liberation of Bergen Belsen

The Roots of the Tree Remained Indestructible

My fervent hope of finding my family after the war became a moving force in me. However, deep-seated fear began to take root, making me feel restless and cold… Then one day came the verdict that I had anticipated with dread and trepidation. The International Red Cross handed me a list with the following statistics:

Father:	Arrived in Camp Westerbork	January 2, 1943
	Deported to Auschwitz	November 16, 1943
	Died in Auschwitz	March 31, 1944
Mother:	Arrived in Camp Westerbork	April 1, 1943
	Deported to Auschwitz	November 16, 1943
	Died in Auschwitz	November 19, 1943
My brother Jackie:	Arrived in Camp Westerbork	April 1, 1943
	Deported to Auschwitz	November 16, 1943
	Died in Auschwitz	November 19, 1943
My brother Paul:	Arrived in Camp Westerbork	April 10, 1943
	Deported to Sobibor	May 18, 1943
	Died in Sobibor	May 21, 1943

Just three lines for each one of them as their epitaph. As I looked at the paper a surge of wild hatred rose within me. The letters and figures ignited within me a fire that I felt was consuming me with an agony such as I had never believed possible.

Someone pulled me away from the wall against which I had beat with my hands until they had become bruised and hurt.

How could I bear this pain?
How could I go on living knowing that they are no more?
How could such young and beautiful lives be snuffed out senselessly?

I saw them all before me: my learned, respected, and charitable father; my sweet, lovely and sensitive mother; my two young, innocent brothers – I could not absorb this torment.

"God why did they deserve such a fate?"
"For what did they have to sacrifice their lives?"
"Why, God. Why?"
"Where were You when all this happened?"

I fought with myself and with my belief as I tried to understand; I fought for my sanity. I fought for my life.

Did the world outside know about these atrocities? Were they not guilty of the gravest sin of omission in not making every effort to put a stop to the atrocities, the moment it became known that Hitler had decided to make real his "final solution" of the Jewish people in Europe?
I could not understand this injustice! I could not absorb such an evil situation!

A heavy, impenetrable, and protective shell closed in on this throbbing cameo of excruciating torment. It opened only at night, in tear-drenched moments and haunting nightmares, in the loneliness of my room.

But from the depths of my grief and mourning for my lost ones, I felt a resolve stirring within me. As it was during the war, so the necessity to act constructively and to help humanity became my purpose in life and at the same time helped to assuage my ever-present sorrow.
I determined that I would study medicine and after completing my studies I would serve my people in Palestine.

More than ever, I now felt inevitably bound up with my Jewish people.

I saw our Jewish existence as a strong, gnarled, life-giving tree rooted in the rich heritage and traditions of the past, which stressed the responsibility of one person for the other. Its strong branches reached far and wide and made its life-giving fruits available everywhere.
Heavy storms might break a branch here and there: intentionally set fires might char many branches; murderers might chop off a great part of the tree – but the loving and life-giving powers of the remaining branches would heal the bleeding tree and their lushness and fertility would make up for whatever was lost, for the roots of the tree remained indestructible.

Leesha Rose, active in the Dutch Resistance during the war, assuming a new name and identity. At the war's end she learned from the Red Cross that her parents and brothers had been murdered.

"Which One of Us is Older?"

I remember the American soldiers entering the camp gates. Later, I learned that they were part of the Sixth Armored Division of General George S. Patton's Third Army. I recall their expressions when they caught sight of the faces of the *Muselmänner*, gaunt as scarecrows in their striped uniforms; the bodies and the rivers of blood from those caught in the hailstorm of bullets. With their remaining ammunition, the departing Germans had shot everyone in their path. I saw the American soldiers freeze in place, shocked into silence. I was also frozen, petrified of the new army that had entered the camp gates. I did not know whether they were for us or against us, so I hid behind the pile of bodies.

The chaplain of the US Third Army was Rabbi Herschel Schacter...In full army uniform, Rabbi Schacter got down from his jeep and stood before the pile of bodies. Many of them were still bleeding; some groaned in pain. Suddenly, he thought he saw a pair of eyes, wide open and alive. He panicked and, with a soldier's instinct, drew his pistol. Slowly, carefully, he began to circle the pile of bodies. Then-and this I recall clearly-he bumped into me, a little boy, staring at him from behind the mound of corpses, wide-eyed. His face revealed his astonishment: in the midst of the killing field, in that sea of blood – suddenly a child appears!

I did not move. But he knew that no child in this place could be anything but Jewish. He holstered his pistol, then grabbed me with both hands and caught me in a fatherly embrace, lifting me in his arms. In Yiddish, with a heavy American accent, he asked me: "Wie alt bist du, mein Kind?" (How old are you, my boy?)

I saw tears dripping from his eyes. Still, through force of habit, I answered cautiously, like someone perpetually on guard: "What difference does it make? At any rate, I'm older than you."
He smiled at me from behind his tears, and asked, "Why do you think that you're older than I am?" Without hesitating, I replied, "Because you laugh and cry like a child, and I haven't laughed for a long time. I can't even cry anymore. So which one of us is older?"

Chief Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, one of the youngest survivors of Buchenwald

Attachment III

Contemporary Forms of Antisemitism - Main Trends and Factors 2014
Compiled by Alan Schneider

Any review of antisemitism over the past year must focus on the heinous January 9 Shabbat-eve rampage at the Kosher market in Paris by Islamic radical Amedy Coulibaly that left four innocent Jews dead. That murderous attack – along with the Brussels Jewish Museum shooting perpetrated on May 24 by Islamist Mehdi Nemmouche that left four Jews dead and mob sieges against synagogues during the summer's Protective Edge operation – threw into stark relief the dangerous, sharp rise in violent antisemitic acts and expressions that have plagued many countries over the past year.

According to the annual report on antisemitism in 2014 issued by the Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs Ministry in collaboration with the Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism and presented to the government of Israel ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27), Muslim extremists have displaced the extreme Right and radical Left as the main instigators of antisemitism in Europe today, while Israel's actions continue to be used as a smoke-screen for hate-infused antisemitism that no longer differentiates between "Israeli" and "Jewish". The source of much of the anti-Jewish sentiment in Europe today are Europeans of Moslem descent and in some countries – particularly those with large Moslem communities such as Germany, France, Great Britain and Belgium - most of the reported antisemitic events were perpetrated by Moslems. During and after operation "Protective Edge", an atmosphere of hate allowed for an escalation against Israel and Jews, with antisemitic outbursts becoming part of everyday life in many Jewish communities.

The report's main findings:
1. In some countries, a 400% rise in antisemtic acts was registered during the IDF's "Protective Edge" operation in Gaza in July-August 2014 compared to the same period in 2013. Many demonstrations that were called to protest Israel's actions in Gaza deteriorated into violent antisemitic hate-fests.
2. 2014 was characterized by a worrisome rise in terrorist acts and in attempted attacks against Jewish targets, particularly by elements identified with radical Islam or the radical Right. At the same time, street violence - violent physical and verbal acts against Jews has increased –– a phenomenon evidenced particularly in Europe in the vicinity of synagogues and Jewish schools.
3. The de-legitimization campaign against the State of Israel continues to pose a major threat to Jewish communities and Israel. Demonization, de-legitimization and BDS campaigns in academia, churches, sports, science, commercial bodies and the arts, along with lawfare, have increased and are likely to lead to a deterioration in the condition of Jews where this phenomenon occurs.
4. The borders between anti-Zionism, anti-Israelism and antisemitism were further blurred in 2014 as radical Leftists and radical Moslems came together to participate in demonstrations that included clear antisemitic messages (for example in Germany "Jews to the Gas" – heard for the first time in public demonstrations since the Holocaust).
5. The report found that antisemitic incidents on college campuses in the United States also increased by 400% during operation “Protective Edge” compared to the same period last year.

6. While the extreme Right continues to be a major culprit of antisemitic activities, most violent attacks were perpetrated by persons of Arab or Moslem descent.
7. The internet, social media and photo apps continued to be a major online platform for traditional forms of anti-Jewish hatred, including the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and various conspiracy theories, with huge reach and impact.
8. France is the most difficult place in all of Europe for Jews to live today, with eight synagogues being attacked in a one-week period and calls to "Slit the Jews' Throats" heard openly at demonstrations. Nevertheless, Chile, Argentina, South Africa, Australia, Canada and Turkey also experienced significant increases in antisemitic incidents in 2014.

In a separate report issued in early 2015, the Community Security Trust, which advises Britain's Jewish community on security issues, recorded 1,168 anti-semitic incidents in the UK in 2014 – the highest yearly total since the group began monitoring anti-semitic events in Britain in 1984 and double the number recorded in 2013. The most common type of incident involved verbal abuse directed at random Jews in public while other forms of abuse included hate mail, threats and abuse on social media, graffiti and the damage of Jewish property. In reaction to the report, a group of British lawmakers proposed 34 recommendations for tackling the escalation.

Attachment IV

Call on the Public to fill out Pages of Testimony at your Memorial Event

Please display Promotional posters (available in English, Hebrew or Russian) together with "Pages of Testimony" (available in a number of languages) and call on the public to help grow the names database. To order posters please contact: names.proj@yadvashem.org.il Additional promotional materials (newsletter texts, website banners, articles etc.) are available in the "materials toolkit" link in our community outreach guide.

If your local synagogue, school or Jewish community organization has created a memorial project commemorating Holocaust victims that you would like to share with Yad Vashem, please contact: names.proj@yadvashem.org.il.

We invite you to make use of this short Video for Memorial Names Recitation Ceremony. **(click here for** video Remembering the Markowicz Family from Trzebinia, Poland)

Since uploading the database to the Internet in 2004 there have been hundreds of families who have been reunited with or discovered relatives with whom they had lost contact in the wake of the Shoah. A sampling of remarkable stories of discovery can be viewed online**.**

Attachment V

Everyone has a name
Everyone has a name
given to him by God
and given to him by his parents
Everyone has a name
given to him by his stature
and the way he smiles
and given to him by his clothing
Everyone has a name
given to him by the mountains
and given to him by the walls
Everyone has a name
given to him by the stars
and given to him by his neighbors
Everyone has a name
given to him by his sins
and given to him by his longing
Everyone has a name
given to him by his enemies
and given to him by his love
Everyone has a name
given to him by his holidays
and given to him by his work
Everyone has a name
given to him by the seasons
and given to him by his blindness
Everyone has a name
given to him by the sea and
given to him
by his death.

Zelda