



**THE PRESIDENT**

Jerusalem, April 2013

To the Jewish Community Leaders

Dear Friends,

As we bow our heads to mark Holocaust Remembrance Day, 70 years later our thoughts still turn to the victims of this inhuman act of cruelty and our hearts go out to their families.

As we again mourn the loss of our brethren and children, we are nevertheless inspired by the power of the human spirit as demonstrated in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, an illustration of heroism and struggle against the forces of evil. In the face of the heinous scheme to annihilate the Jewish people, this uprising constituted the tangible expression of the principles that have united the Jewish people through the ages, the legacy of our Prophets and Sages – solidarity and mutual responsibility.

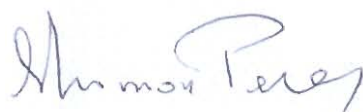
The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising broke out on the Passover eve of 1943 to thwart the Nazi efforts to crush the remnants of Jewish presence in the ghettos as a birthday gift to Adolf Hitler. Their heroic resistance became a symbol of undaunted valor by the few against the many, and the Nazi killing apparatus faltered on its murderous path. On a recent Passover eve in modern Israel, 30 civilians were massacred and 140 injured as they prayed on this holy occasion, a cruel reminder that the fight against evil is not yet over.

Even before the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Jews in the ghettos in Nesvizh and Lachva, Belorussia, and in Tuczyn, Volhynia resisted the impending liquidations and attempted to escape the ghettos. In Vilna, Kovno, Bialystok, Czestochowa and Bedzin, Jews in the underground trained against all odds for battles that took place after the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto. Many thousands of Jews all over Europe also joined the partisans, in a courageous effort to resist their fate. Resistance took place in the concentration and labor camps, and in three of the death camps: Treblinka, Sobibor and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Though only few survived these bold acts of defiance, they remain as a testament to the courage of these heroic Jews, who were determined to strike a blow against their oppressors.

In his last letter, in 1941, David Berger of Vilna wrote: *"I should like someone to remember that there once lived a person named David Berger."*

Each year on Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day, in an effort to return the name to each Holocaust victim we recite the names of men, women and children who perished at the hands of those who sought our destruction.

But the Jewish people lives, and inspired by the spirit of determination to overcome all challenges, we shall prevail.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Shimon Peres', with a stylized, cursive script.

Shimon Peres