

Holocaust Memorial Day: UK statement

Madam Chair,

I would like to express my thanks to Ambassador Kuchler for her introductory remarks, and her work as the current Chair of IHRA.

Yesterday I and my family joined thousands of people across the world – each in our separate places, but united in our actions – to light a candle to honour the memory of the six million Jewish men, women and children who lost their lives during a time of unparalleled depravity and inhumanity. We remembered the thousands of Roma, Sinti, and all other victims of Nazi persecution. And we remembered the victims of other genocides.

Madam Chair,

We must never forget that the Holocaust was committed by ordinary people, its victims were ordinary people.

The [Arolsen Archives](#), a copy of which is housed in London at the [Wiener Library](#) for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide, shines a light on what happened.

It shows it in all its horrible banality. Each bureaucratic record shows that there was once a government that decided to murder any Jew it could get its hands on. That murder was an integral part of its statecraft. Chillingly, it would use the efficiencies of mass production to commit mass murder.

Each record in the archive is a testament to lives cut short, of families wrecked.

Madam Chair,

We should not be lulled into a false sense that the Holocaust happened in darkness, nor should we over emphasise the importance of those few individuals whose acts of courage saved Jews.

The proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre next to our Houses of Parliament will be a powerful symbol of the UK's commitment to remembering the Holocaust. It will explore the role of Britain's Parliament and democratic institutions – what we did and what more we could have done to tackle the persecution of the Jewish people and other groups. Most importantly, our new memorial will allow us to continue to confront the immense human calamity caused by the destruction of Europe's Jewish communities during the Holocaust, and to demonstrate our sincere commitment to mourn, remember and to act.

Today, in a world where Holocaust denial, distortion and revisionism is gaining a foothold, we must remain resolute and recognise that attempts to attack the facts of the Holocaust all undermine the truth and our understanding of history.

We must face this challenge head on. It is not enough to know that facts are on our side; we must actively ensure that we never forget.