
Conference Refugee Policies from 1933 until Today: Challenges and Responsibilities

16–17 February 2017

Palazzo della Cancelleria, Rome



HOLY SEE

IHRA Conference Refugee Policies from 1933 until Today: Challenges and Responsibilities

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, in cooperation with the Holy See, presents a conference for public policy-makers representatives of NGOs from Europe, North America and the Middle East, media representatives and representatives of NGOs and civil society organizations.

At a time when the current situation of refugees in Europe and the Middle East continues to dominate the news and the political arena, this conference brings together experts in Holocaust history and contemporary policy-makers to reflect on the past with a view to concretely informing positive, ethically responsible, and rational policy-making today. The outcome of the conference will be a concrete set of recommendations for international policy-makers endorsed by the IHRA and the Holy See.

The conference consists of three panels exploring refugee policies from the 1930s to 1945, in the period after 1945, and today. Experts from academic, policy-making, NGO and religious organizations will speak about and analyze the perspectives of European countries, America, and the international community as a whole. A fourth and final panel will see rapporteurs reflecting on the previous three panels and proposing new ways for governments, international organizations and religious groups to respond to refugees.

#seekingprotection

Venue:

Sala dei Cento Giorni
Palazzo della Cancelleria
Piazza della Cancelleria 1
00186 Rome, Italy

About the IHRA

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance unites governments and experts to shape and advance Holocaust education, remembrance and research world-wide, to speak out on Holocaust related issues including antisemitism, and to uphold the commitments of the 2000 Stockholm Declaration. The IHRA has 31 Member Countries, eleven Observer Countries, and seven permanent international partner organizations.

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IHRA Conference

Refugee Policies from 1933 until Today: Challenges and Responsibilities

Program

16 February 2017

17:00 – 17:45 *Registration*

18:00 – 20:00 Opening Remarks and Keynote

Opening Remarks: H.E. Ambassador Mihnea Constantinescu (Chair of the IHRA),
H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher (Secretary for Relations with the States, Holy See)

Introduction: Prof. Steven T. Katz (Advisor to the IHRA, Alvin J. and Shirley Slater Chair in Jewish Studies, Boston University)

Keynote Speech: H.E. Mgr. Silvano Maria Tomasi (Secretary Delegate of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Holy See)

17 February 2017

from 08:00 *Registration*

08:30 – 10:30 **Panel 1: From the 1930s to 1945**

This panel will explore the policies formulated in leading political circles in reaction to the refugee crisis of the 1930s, with the rise to power of Hitler and through the war years. Panelists will discuss the main actors, their actions, and to what degree they were successful.

Moderator: Father Norbert Hofmann S.D.B. (Holy See)

- a) **US and European responses – Dr. Susanne Heim** (Institute of Contemporary History, Munich–Berlin)
- b) **The Holy See – Dr. Johan Ickx** (Holy See)

- c) **NGOs and International Organizations – Prof. Dr. Avinoam Patt** (University of Hartford)

10:30 – 10:45 *Coffee Break*

10:45 – 12:15 **Panel 2: Developments since 1945**

The situation created by WWII resulted in a refugee crisis of unprecedented proportions. Governments, intergovernmental organizations, religious organizations, and NGOs all attempted to respond. This panel examines what these actors did and why, evaluates their successes and shortcomings, and considers what lessons can be learned to help deal with the current refugee crisis.

Moderator: Dr. Veerle Vanden Daelen (IHRA; Deputy General Director and Curator, Kazerne Dossin: Memorial, Museum and Documentation Centre on Holocaust and Human Rights)

- a) **International Organizations – Prof. Dan Plesch** (SOAS University of London)
- b) **European Response – Dr. Juliane Wetzel** (IHRA; Centre for Research on Antisemitism, Technical University Berlin)
- c) **American Responses – Prof. Carl J. Bon Tempo** (State University of NY at Albany)

12:15 – 13:15 *Lunch*

13:15 – 15:00 **Panel 3: The Present Situation**

The speakers in this session will evaluate the present situation and the challenges we face today. How have Europe and the EU, international and non-governmental organizations, and religious organizations responded to the current crisis? What are the perspectives of the refugees themselves? The discussions and recommendations made during this panel will support the policy proposals put forward in the final panel.

Moderator: Ambassador Dr. Thomas Michael Baier (IHRA; Republic of Austria)

- a) **EU/Europe – Mr. Stefan Lehne** (Carnegie Europe, Brussels)

- b) **International Organizations and NGOs – Ms. Kristina Touzenis** (Head of the International Migration Law Unit, International Organization for Migration)

- c) **The Holy See – Msgr Giovanni Pietro dal Toso** (Holy See)

- d) **Refugee perspectives – Dr. Mukesh Kapila CBE** (Refugee Crisis Group, University of Manchester)

15:00 – 15:30 *Coffee Break*

15:30 – 16:30 **Panel 4: The Current Challenge: Where Do We Go From Here?**

This panel intends to promote an open conversation about new initiatives and responses to the current refugee situation. Rapporteurs will present key considerations and issues of central importance that were made during the previous three panels. With input from the audience, it is hoped that this panel will result in suggestions for new, pragmatic policies that can be adopted by governmental and non-governmental institutions.

- a) **Dr. Wolf Kaiser** (IHRA; former Director of Education at the House of the Wannsee Conference)

- b) **Dr. Cecilie Stokholm Banke** (IHRA; Senior Researcher for Foreign Policy, Danish Institute of International Studies)

- c) **Dr. Robert J. Williams** (IHRA; Deputy Director, International Affairs, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum)

16:30 – 17:00 **Closing Speech: Mr. Stephane Jaquet** (UNHCR Regional Representative for Southern Europe)

Professor Michael O’Flaherty (Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights)