

Message of the Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, Ambassador
Mihnea Constantinescu, on the occasion of the Holocaust education seminary

El Salvador, 9 January 2017

I am glad to welcome, on behalf of International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, presence of such a great number of history teachers from El Salvador, willing to show their commitment to promote education about the Holocaust. El Salvador is, up to this moment, the only IHRA observer state from Central America and we are glad to cooperate with such reliable partners in this region.

I would like to thank everyone involved in the implementation of this project, especially to Jennifer Ciardelli, coordinator of the IHRA Professional Development Outreach group. I would like to equally express my appreciation for the wonderful efforts and enthusiasm of Ambassador Ricardo Moran Feracutti, head of the El Salvadorian delegation to IHRA, without whose support this seminary would not have been possible.

Today's seminary stands proof of the IHRA, UNESCO – Latin American Network, El Salvadorian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education's efforts. I welcome the participation of El Salvadorian authorities to this project, materialized not only into this activity but also into the responsibility to ensure its continuity.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) 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 to which member countries are signatories.

IHRA is comprised of 31 Member Countries, eleven Observer Countries and seven Permanent International Partners, including the United Nations and UNESCO. Delegates are appointed as members of IHRA's four working groups: Academic, Communication, Education, and Museum and Memorials, and to advance the work of three thematic committees on the Genocide of the Roma, antisemitism and Holocaust denial, and comparative approaches to Genocide studies.

Across national delegations, experts share knowledge, best practices and points of concern, and make recommendations to political representatives from ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs and Culture, to directly shape policy-making. Through its Grant Programme the IHRA fosters international dialogue and the exchange of expertise. The IHRA has funded 390 projects across 44 countries.

Today's activity represents the best expression of the commitment in educating the young generations regarding the consequences of the Holocaust:

- training history teachers (secondary school level);
- employing IHRA educational guidelines about the Holocaust;
- employing the *Schoolology* platform.

These are the „essential ingredients” to build lessons about the history of the past, thus supporting the challenging task of history teachers to instill to young people the importance of fundamental rights and values.

The education of young people is the best reaction that we can generate in addressing contemporary challenges directed against the fundamental values of humankind. It is our responsibility to show them historical facts, to inspire them to be brave and to understand the value of human dignity. It is equally important for youngsters to understand history, to understand the meaning of acknowledging it and to have the courage to stand up to racist, xenophobic, discriminatory and anti-Semitic actions.

It is the duty of us all to learn from the past and to look responsibly to the future. We ought to teach the new generations to take all measures to prevent mistakes from the past to be repeated. We should not cease to tell the historical truth so that young people never lose their courage in the face of history.

I would like to conclude by thanking, on behalf of IHRA, to all participants to this programme and for their interest to this important and responsible topic.

I wish you successful and fruitful discussions!