



11 November 2020

Video Project Speech: The Future of Holocaust Remembrance

Forum on Holocaust Remembrance at German Embassy in UK

With the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration twenty years ago, in the year 2000, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, the IHRA, began its work in uniting governments and experts to strengthen, advance, and promote Holocaust education, remembrance, and research worldwide. This document underlined that the magnitude of the Holocaust, planned and carried out by the Nazis, must be forever seared in our collective memory. Twenty years later, the IHRA reaffirmed this commitment with the 2020 IHRA Ministerial Declaration, pledging to the victims and survivors that they shall never be forgotten and that their legacy will be kept alive.

Much had changed in the meantime, however. Now 75 years after the end of the Second World War, the world today is one in which fewer survivors and eyewitnesses are able to share their stories with us. The important work of Holocaust remembrance is at a critical juncture.

How Holocaust remembrance would look like when this time came has been a central question for a long time. We knew that Holocaust-related memorials and museums, that educational programs would gain in importance. We knew, too, that the role of archives in uncovering the still obscured shadows of the Holocaust would be critical.

What we could not have anticipated is how the coronavirus pandemic, which has also sadly impacted many survivors, would affect the future of Holocaust remembrance. Though it has added new challenges, it has also shown the promise and importance of embracing digital technologies in this effort. Innovative forms of digital commemoration have allowed more people from more parts of the world to take part in Holocaust remembrance than ever before. Projects using new digital technologies to create 3D holograms of survivors that can answer questions from audiences in real time are promising ways to preserve testimony. We must ensure that our memorials, museums and archives are equipped to handle the digital challenges of our present, and that they can explore the potential of these new technologies for the challenges of our future. Doing so will be essential for educating the next generation, for safeguarding the historical truth of the Holocaust, for ensuring that democratic principles remain intact.

The 2020 IHRA Ministerial Declaration also emphasized that remembering the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust is the responsibility not only of governments but of societies as a whole. The promise of digital technology is also in its democratization, in how it can encourage



participation from all corners of the globe. Holocaust remembrance is at a critical juncture. Digital technology can help us work together to ensure that the Holocaust is never forgotten.