



DECLARATION ABOUT IRANIAN PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS ON THE HOLOCAUST

The Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (ITF), which consists of delegations from 24 governments, has released the following statement through its Chair:

“At the recent meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Iranian President, Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, declared that there is a need for an expert commission to examine the claim that there was what is known as the Holocaust (Shoah - the genocide of the Jews at the hands of Nazi Germany and its collaborators). In previous statements, the Iranian President repeatedly questioned the fact that the Holocaust happened. Moreover, the Holocaust was ridiculed in Iran by a Holocaust caricatures contest, the winner of which was recently proclaimed; he had compared Auschwitz to Israel, thus falsifying both past and present. The director of the contest declared that it would continue to take place until Israel's doomsday.

The ITF bases its work on a declaration issued in Stockholm, on January 27, 2000, and signed by a large number of governments attending a conference on the Holocaust that took place at that time; and on the recent unanimous resolution of the United Nations (November 2005), which declared January 27 as the International Memorial Day of the Holocaust.

The above statements of the Iranian President are clearly counter-factual, and stand in stark contradiction to the unanimous view of the international community. By denying or questioning the Holocaust, the most extreme form of genocide to date, he unfortunately places himself on the side of those who, by denying obvious facts, would create a mendacious view of human history and would challenge the essence of the notion of international Human Rights, which was developed by the international community after and because of the Shoah. We are sure that these statements do not represent the view of the Iranian people.

His further statements regarding his wish for the destruction of the State of Israel, a member-state of the UN, could be understood as threatening another genocide. Such positions endanger civilization as such. The Chair of the ITF, following the wording of the above-mentioned Stockholm Declaration, voices its strong objections regarding the denial of the Holocaust in general, the statements of the Iranian President in particular, and any threat to the very life and existence of a member-state of the UN. It calls for a universal rejection of these unfortunate statements, and draws attention to the UN 1948 convention against genocide."