



Austria assumed Chairmanship of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF) from the Czech Republic at a ceremony held in Prague on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008. In presence of Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Kohout, former Czech Chairman Ambassador Milos Pojar handed over the Chairmanship to his successor, Ambassador Ferdinand Trauttmansdorff, Legal Counsel of the Austrian Foreign Ministry. Ambassadors of ITF

Member States attended the event, as did Executive Secretary Kathrin Meyer, who is heading ITF's Permanent Office, inaugurated only yesterday in Berlin.

Trauttmansdorff recalled the special significance of the date for the beginning of the Austrian Chairmanship. On this very day 70 years ago, Nazi troops had invaded Austria. This led to Austria's so called Anschluss to the "Third Reich" with terrible consequences for Austrian Jews and other victims of Nazi persecution. Conscious of the victim's suffering and death, but also of the role of many Austrians in the perpetration of the Nazi crimes, Austria feels a special commitment to fulfil its role in the Chair of the ITF, said the new Chairman. He pledged to build upon the excellent Czech Chairmanship and presented the main lines of his working programme, including increasing the number of Member States, creating a comprehensive ITF-Website and continuing the work already undertaken to streamline proceedings within the Task Force. Finally, Trauttmansdorff affirmed that he and his team would do their utmost to be worthy of the confidence placed upon them.